

**RG-50.407.0244**

**Summary**

George Koch, born in 1914 in Horodenka, Poland (now in Ukraine). Had one brother, Philip, and one sister, Miriam. Parents Nathan and Rescha (Schultz). Father ran a textile shop. Five thousand Jews in the town. Went to state school and also Hebrew school until Bar Mitzvah. No high school. He helped out in the shop. As a member of a Zionist household and of a Zionist organization, he wanted to go to Palestine, but it was not possible. There was antisemitism in the streets, much of it from Ukrainians who made a portion of the town. His area of Poland was occupied by the Russians in 1939, and father's business closed. George got a job in a sugar factory until 1942 when the Germans came. Ghetto set up by the Germans in 1942. In April 1942, many Jews taken to the synagogue, including his father, and were trucked out of town and killed and buried. Later, women and children were also killed. He escaped by hiding with his brother and sister in an attic for several days. Remaining Jews liquidated in October 1942. Eventually, he was taken over the border to Chernovitz, Romania. His mother and sister remained behind. He was taken in by a woman in Chernovitz for a period of time. He obtained a Polish passport and later was smuggled to Bucharest, Romania. Near the end of the war he obtained a certificate to go to Palestine and eventually went there by ship. He lived in Tel Aviv and worked in a chocolate factory 1944-1947. He learned that his brother's wife and children had survived and had gone to NYC. At some point, he went to Paris to see his niece and nephew and met his future wife. He stayed there 1947-1949, working in a knitting factory. He did not go back to Palestine, but rather, went to Australia, where he worked with his wife's brother. His son is a pilot with Qantas. His advice to others is "be Jewish."