LEON K. (b.1915)

Leon was born on January 30, 1915, in Warsaw, Poland. His family fled to Moscow, Russia, when he was six weeks old, but returned to Poland in 1918, after the First World War had ended. It was very difficult for Leon's father to make a living in Warsaw, so he returned to Russia. Leon never saw his father again because, while in Russia, he contracted typhus and died. Leon's aunt then moved in with the family, and his mother started a factory to support them.

The family lived in the "spiritual ghetto" of Warsaw — the centre of Jewish life and a very religious area.

Leon attended a secular Jewish school where he studied both Polish and Jewish subjects. At that time, the gentile community was hostile towards the Jewish community, and Leon had many experiences with antisemitism.

After he graduated from high school, Leon left Poland and went to England to study. He received help from both his family and the Jewish community to fund his education. In 1939, he was accepted into medical school in Glasgow. Upon graduating, he volunteered as a doctor on a British Royal Navy vessel.

Through an uncle who had escaped to Tangier, Morocco, Leon managed to communicate with his family in Poland for a brief time during the Second World War. In corresponding with Noemi Judkowski, a woman who worked for an organization near Warsaw, he learned that his entire family had perished.

In 1945, he met his future wife while working as a surgeon at a hospital in the Midlands. In 1947, Leon and his wife immigrated to Edmonton. He also built a house in Israel, which he and his wife would often visit. Leon translated a book, *A Requiem for Two Families*, which tells the stories of both his and the Judkowski families.

SEE THE TESTIMONY RECORD O OF LEON K. (B.1915), 1990 IN THE VHEC'S COLLECTIONS FOR RELATED HOLDINGS AND FOR INTERVIEW DETAILS.