

Daily life during the occupation and the war

1) Life under the occupation of the annexed area from the fall of 1940 to the fall of 1944.

Without the existence of a real network of resistance, we still sought in several localities to save the last Jewish families left behind. Most Jews had anticipated and had left the Moselle in autumn 1939 or in the spring of 1940 for the departments in the West of France; others were expelled to free France by the Germans in July 1940. At that time, in fact, the final solution was not yet developed (it is dated 20 January 1942 from the Wannsee Conference and it was Adolf Eichmann who was responsible for it) and the Jews had three days, from 17 to 20 July 1940, to quit the Moselle. During these three days more than a thousand people left the Moselle, not only Jews but also Asians and North Africans. Some Jews were still left in early August 1940, but in many places in the region of Thionville there remained elsewhere one or two Jewish families often poor. Even if indifference was the majority reflex, there were found Mosellan volunteers who passed some into occupied but not annexed zones and from there into the free zone by complex pathways. Other families were arrested in late 1940 or 1941 and deported. Then it was death in a concentration camp or extermination and in several places houses remained empty in 1945, when the conflict ended. There are no departmental analyses on Jewish victims but only national figures. It is known that there were 320,000 Jews in France in 1940 and that there were 76,000 prisoners including 11,600 children and 25,000 French Jews, 3,000 lives of slaughtered French Jews and 1,000 regroupment camps. There have been only 2,500 survivors to return from the death camps. To go further into a departmental analysis, consult the lists prepared by each consistory. One thing is certain almost all Mosellan Jews who were arrested in 1942 or 1943 were in occupied France or free France and not in the Moselle region.

By patriotism or charity, former officers of the French army or priests and nuns saved human lives by hosting, in hiding or by passing into the non-annexed wanted area. Similarly the hospital's medical staff treated and allowed the escape of soldiers or the passage of fugitives into the free zone. But the form of the most widespread resistance was to hide and save deserters from military service and the German army.

Those who wanted to really resist the force of arms did not return from the evacuation into the Vienne and Charente and these Mosellans joined General De Gaulle in London or then opted in 1941 to return into free France leaving to join the maquis in 1942 or especially 1943 and 1944.

Some fled in 1940 and gained the South of France and Haute-Savoie where they contributed to the country's liberation from the Nazi boot.

Among those who remained or returned to Poitou, some had become resistant when the Vichy regime decreed the S.T.O in 1943 and joined the Southwest or the Vercors maquis.



The history of Lucien Fabing, a rebel who enlisted in the F.F.I.
A- Originally from Blessington where he was born in 1925, and settled as early as 1937 with his family in Thionville, where his father was a railwayman, Lucien Fabing is an example of a refractory that became resistant. During the "phoney war", he was in Montmorillon in the Vienne, withdrew to the primary school of Superior of St-Avold where he studied to become a teacher. In August 1940, after a short stay in Lunéville, the family returned to Thionville and from March 1941 to June 1943, Lucien frequented courses of the normal school of renamed Metz L.B.A by the Germans.



B - It is at this time that he played in a French-German joint senior football team in Thionville, with such partners as Fritz Walter (the 3rd standing from the left), the future German Idol of the 1950s.



C - On July 1, 1943, he was posted to Kriegsfeld, in the Palatinate, as a teacher and remained about 7 months. On 13 February 1944 knowing his next inevitable inclusion would be into the Wehrmacht, he contacted a network of smugglers whose nerve center was at Conflans-Jarny and fled to Moselle before receiving a deserter status. When he arrived at Thionville, the network was discovered and dismantled, he could not provide a false identity card, a fake was very important to be able to move without a working card. A work card is mandatory for all individuals over 18 years old. However false papers provided for three years younger and his small size helped, nobody bothered him. Taking different trains, he reached Nancy then Paris and finally Limoges and Périgueux where he enrolled at the Ecole Normale de Colmar moved to that city. In June 1944, after the allied landings, he arrived in Auch and joined the resistance within the FFI, the battalion Simon, providing service tasks mainly.

The story of the Hotton family of Thionville, a refractory family to the occupier and who joined the savoyard maquis.



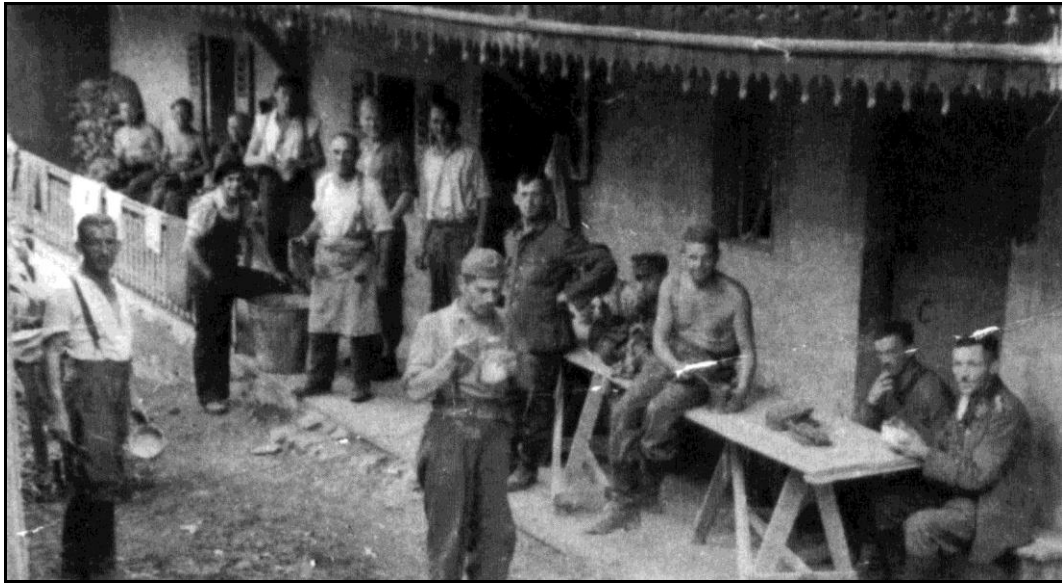
A - Dechelette, "Select" patron, and Arsène Hotton father, Director of "La Scala", mobilized in 1939.

Arsène Hotton, another Thionvillier whose family operated the cinema "La Scala" since the beginning of the 20th century and whose flagship was "Le Paris" after the second world war, was a special case because if his father was French, his mother was German, it caused the son to be considered a "Deutsche Reich" by the Nazis. Not wanting to serve the Third Reich, the family, with a car, fled in the south, to Nice, in late May - early June 1940 and knew all about the challenging months since food was often scarce. But the most serious was that the Gestapo located and found them in June 1941, ordering them to return to Thionville, since they were German citizens.

B - to escape the Gestapo, the family including the mother, hostile to the Nazis, fled again to the small hamlet of Seytroux in Haute-Savoie. This village is under the supervision of good natured Italians; the welcome of the local peasants was very warm. In early 1943, young Arsène, born in June 1925 and so 18 years of age agreed to accompany his father and to enter a resistance movement as members of the Armée Secrète, Bellevaux Group.



***The Bellevaux group:** with papers of good standing, which meant freedom of movement, the two Hottons became "donkeys" of the resistance, retrieving parachuted objects and delivering them to the armed movements. Father, fluently bilingual, was especially sought as a translator during interrogation of prisoners or to translate the mail hijacked. The son was much more actively involved in the actions of the network between December 1943 and October 1, 1944. Therefore, he was a part of the group that recovered a large quantity of weapons on the plateau of Glières on August 1, 1944. From Thonon-les-Bains region, 1,200 men crossed the Haute-Savoie, occupied by the Germans, in gasifier trucks, recovered the equipment at night parachuted by the allies and returned on foot, a distance of about 100 km, the trucks being fully loaded with weapons. Hotton's son was even arrested for a short time and interrogated by the militia of [Joseph] Darnand in Thonon-les-Bains and then released. Weapons recovered enabled the liberation of all of Haute-Savoie.*



C - during the year 1944, their section also captured a large group of Germans and imprisoned them for some time at St Jean D'Aulps in Haute-Savoie. In October 1944, before the reconquest of Provence by the F.F.L, and having kept his car, the family decided to return and managed not without difficulty to return to their own in Thionville, in early November, a town liberated by the Americans

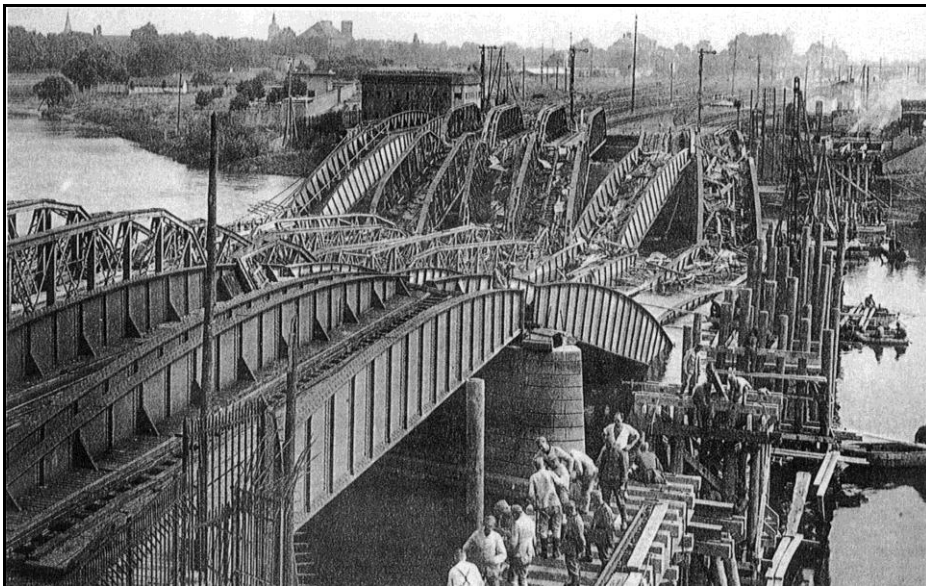




At the end of the war, they had to go to work to restore the House damaged by the fighting and altered by the Germans who had stayed there after having requisitioned it in 1940.

The bizarre history of Pierre Noël.

Originally from Thionville where he was born in 1923, but an inhabitant of Cattenom for many years, this was a case of much greater interest to describe, since he knew all the possible situations in time of war.





First the young Noël, 16 years old, left Thionville-Beauregard with his parents for the Charente during the evacuation of 1939/40. On return he was hired by a German company and participated in the provisional restoration of the railway bridge in Beauregard during the terrible winter 1941/42. The Siberian cold is easy to verify because we see ice formed in the foreground on the bridge piles.

In early 1942, Pierre Noël received the order from the RAD and the appointment was set before St Maximin for a departure to the Netherlands. He decided not to go. It was then that his Odyssey takes a turn. He contacted smugglers and, after many vicissitudes, crossed at night the demarcation line on the side of Bourg-en-Bresse. During this flight, the Germans arrested his parents who were deported. The runner was committed as a volunteer for 3 years in the army of the Free French in April 1942. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion of infantry on foot, and was used especially in Châtillon-sur-Seine in June 1942.

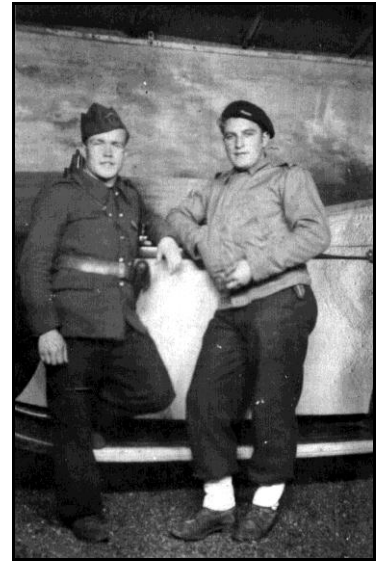




At the dissolution of the army he was placed under the responsibility of the Vichy regime in November 1942, he decided to flee again and hid for several months on a farm in the Massif Central. In 1943 he managed to join one of the maquis movements in the Communist F.T.P, in the Lot-et-Garonne. From 1943 his section joined the F.F.I and agreed to obey the instructions given by the C.N.R created by Jean Moulin.



In this capacity he participated in several armed commitments and operations of harassing the enemy in 1943 and 1944, then he joined, with all of his maquis, the 4th regiment of Tunisian infantrymen (photos above and next page) and participated in Italy, Alsace and Germany campaigns. He finished the war in conquered Stuttgart and received the Croix de guerre and two citations.



His military life did not stop with the liberation since, being patriotic, he joined the colonial infantry. He volunteered for the Indochina war where he fought three times between 1946 and 1954 with stays at the hospital from wounds in Tunisia in the meantime, for law enforcement actions. He was cited 5 times and decorated with the military medal in 1951 for his conduct in the far East. His career ended in 1957 in Algeria where he finished with the rank of Chief Warrant Officer. His bravery explains why he holds the voluntary combatant cross, the Medal of the escapees, the Croix de guerre 1939/45 with 2 citations, the Croix de guerre T.O.E with 5 citations, the military medal, and that he was appointed Chevalier of the Legion of honour a military title in 1975.

His lives currently in Cattenom, where he is active in the patriotic associations, but he is still tormented by the death of his father in deportation, 60 years ago.

A few small active networks were however created in Moselle, in the Orne Valley, but it seemed that acts of sabotage in factories were more individual actions than the actions agreed to by a structured network. There were informal and evolutionary teams such as Mario, Communist controlled around Jean Burger, the Gaullist group Ebran; figures have been officially recognized by departmental officials as Just Scharff, the Abbot Stenger or Mr Krieger. Most often, these networks were dismantled by the Germans and members deported. But true F.F.I brigades were born with the arrival of American troops in the region, more as service orders than as combatants.

This did not prevent acts of latent resistance to be commonplace, as the fact of dressing in tricolour clothes or wearing badges or medals of double meaning. A delicious anecdote deserves to be told here, although both Longeville-lès-Saint-Avold and Hombourg-Haut are not in the region of Thionville. Young people were encouraged for several days to pick up hundreds of snails, and then to paint in secrecy in blue, white and red. Early in the morning of July 14, 1944 in Longeville-lès-Saint-Avold, these snails were deposited at the foot of the monument to the dead, and in late morning the monument was tricolor to mark the French national holiday, nice thumbing of their nose at the occupier. The same idea was adopted at a ceremony where German officials would be present before the monument at Hombourg-Haut. Obviously at the time of speeches the snails had climbed the monument and it therefore had the colors of France to the chagrin of the occupiers.

Examples of the voluntary option [those choosing to leave] in 1941 from the region of Thionville (study which incorporates the work of Philippe Wilmouth, published in 2003).

Commune concerned	Number of <i>optants</i>	Date of arrival in Lyon and registration
Apach	2	07/04/41
Aumetz	65	07/04/41
Basse-Rentgen	1	07/04/41
Basse-Yutz	34	07/04/41
	18	26/04/41
Bousse	19	26/04/41
Cattenom	6	26/04/41
Guénange	4	07/04/41
Haute-Kontz	3	07/04/41
Haute-Yutz	1	07/04/41
	6	26/04/41
Hettange-Grande	7	07/04/41
	25	26/04/41
Kédange	4	07/04/41
Metzervisse	5	07/04/41
	1	26/04/41
Terville	8	07/04/41
	46	26/04/41
Thionville	209	07/04/41
	40	26/04/41
	5	03/05/41
Volmerange-les-Mines	1	26/04/41

Despite these unusual acts, in the Moselle region, the majority of the inhabitants feared German requirements, more and more stringent as the conflict went wrong for them.

The winters of the second world war were almost all very hard with sharp cold and often lots of snow (the hardest was that from 1942 to 1943). They generally followed very wet autumns causing flooding.



Walk through the St-François district on the corner of avenue Albert 1st and avenue Vauban on 1 January 1942



The rigor of winter, February 8, 1942 the village of Inglange and the surrounding countryside are covered with a thick snow, which makes it perilous for travelling on icy roads.



The cohabitation between civilian and military.

The Germans tried to propitiate the civilian population here by allowing a small daughter of Thionville to go horseback riding. The stable was installed in the current crematorium in the city.

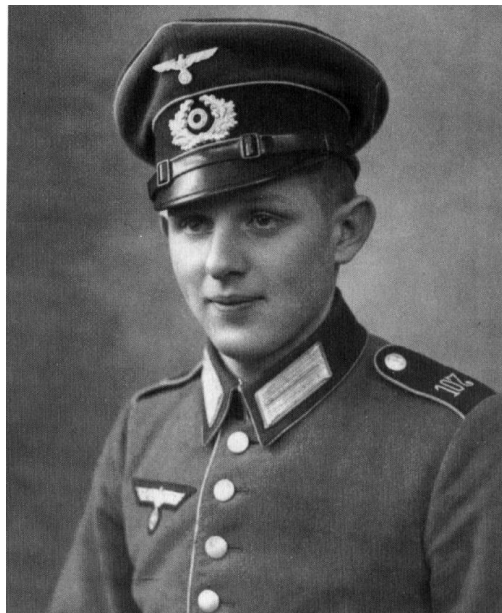
Among the men, it was above all the fear of being inducted into the German army. As already mentioned above, the Mosellans became German citizens and the authorities continually reminded that this situation involved rights and duties including that of defending the motherland. In December 1942 the Gauleiter of Moselle, Bürckel, obliged even those who refused to sign their membership card for the German community to apply for Swiss or Swedish citizenship, i.e. a neutral country nationality.

It was especially after the decree of August, 1942 on German nationality and on the introduction of the German military service that the risk was raised. Whole classes were available: first men born between 1922 and 1926, and then we go class 1914 and even locally 1912, up to class of 1927 or 1928 locally.

The first inductions started in 1941 and those summoned were assigned to the Reichsarbeitsdienst, a sort of preparation for military service for a period ranging from a few weeks to six months, in German uniform and with a spade as a weapon. This is actually for the occupier a way of testing the Mosellan youth to assess their strength and their sports skills while determining their political beliefs and preparing them for military discipline.

At the end of this period of compulsory labour, those that are considered safe or malleable politically and physically strong are incorporated into the Wehrmacht, becoming the "despite us", the others being expelled into the free zone or sent into Germany to a labour camp, often in Thuringia, or even deported into Silesia. Despite these risks, we know for example that Distroff youth, convened February 25, 1943 in Thionville, departed the village singing the Marseillaise. As time passed and there were fewer exempt, even among married men, especially after the invasion of the free zone in November 1942, and in 1944 the Germans inducted even the 16 year olds to serve the Flak guns. The last inductions took place in July 1944.

The compulsory military service:



Required to be inducted into the Wehrmacht.

At the end of the R.A.D and after a few weeks spent with the family the Mosellans are called into the army. At the outset there is very little dissension for fear of reprisals. Here is Paul Paradeis in the Wehrmacht in 1943 as "Despite us".



Departure of youth required from Sierck-les-Bains in 1943 for the Wehrmacht.

It is with a forced smile due to the presence of the photographer that these young people pass down the road to an uncertain fate. Desertions are increasingly numerous as early as the spring of 1944 and in almost every village we cache the deserters.

Forcefully inducted.

99% of Mosellans were inducted by force and did not have to be ashamed of having been obliged to wear German uniforms. Sometimes there was even the express request of their own that they not desert. German reprisals were awful for the family of a deserter. And everywhere there were draft evaders and deserters.



Group of "despite us" from Cattenom including Jean-Pierre Flammant, in Germany in 1943.

At the beginning of his induction into the Wehrmacht, he had a short period in barracks in Germany, the bulk of the training was already completed during the R.A.D.



Chore of peeling.

In the Wehrmacht, as in any other army, the soldiers are subject to chores and embedded Mosellan youth do not escape.

Incorporated on the eastern front.



The "Despite us" in a combat unit near Pilsen. Among them is young Michel Hotton of Yutz, who went through much of Europe during the war, fighting first on the Eastern Front and then in Italy.



Another group from Soetrich is stationed in the village of Bergen-Belsen, notorious for being at an extermination camp. Among these young people is Jean-Albert Marx as a driver.



A group of German soldiers including Mosellans, in full preparation for an attack in 1943, in a Russian forest. The Mosellans which they distrusted were mixed with volunteers from the Baltics and Germans. Until 1944 they fought under duress while awaiting the slightest possibility to escape.

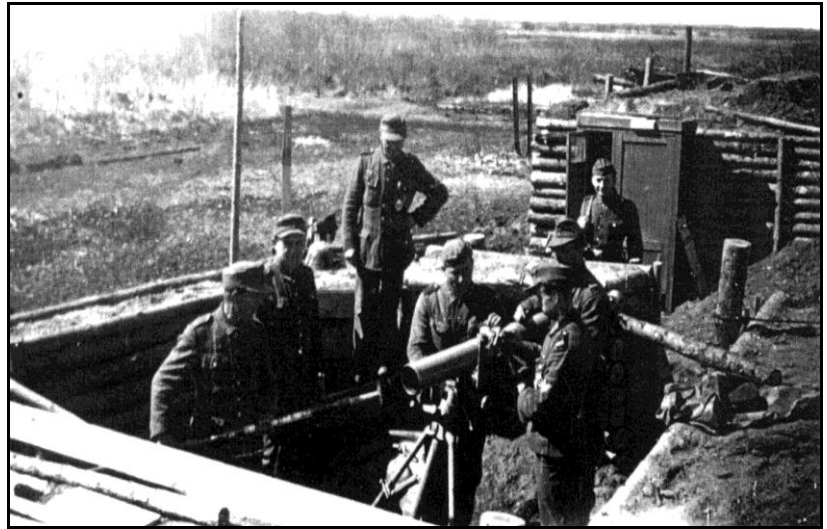


François Harter, "Despite us" of Yutz, attending a religious ceremony, coupled with a popular festival in Poland, in the fall of 1943, not far from Lodz. Despite the war there are a few rare moments of pleasure as at this popular festival.



A few "despite us" including François Harter of Yutz listen carefully to the explanations on the handling of weapons and machine guns in particular. The scene is set in Poland late 1943.





*Fighting on the Eastern front in the end of 1943 with a "despite us" of Fixem and Soetrich which some are forced to fight in the trenches during the winter. Here the crew of a mortar.
In the summer of 1943 the initiative is on the side of the Red Army and the morale of the Germans is affected.*

Other assignments.



The "Despite us" were also been inducted into the German Navy as indicated in the case of the young Weigerding or several young men of Cattenom as Pierre Totin or Célestin Miltgen here in the middle of two other marines.



Some "Despite us" from Yutz on the Italian front on leave in Naples in March 1943, including Michel Hotton. The Mosellans were not only assigned to the eastern front but also, although only in a more limited way, to Italy or to the Balkans.



Some "despite us" from Hombourg-Budange and Kédange in 1943. Among them is the young Fischer of Kédange whose odyssey deserves to be mentioned. He had done his time in the R.A.D from October to December 1942 in Saarland before being inducted into the Wehrmacht on 13 January 1943, first in Wittlich in Germany, and then from May to July 1943 in the port of Antwerp, a quite rare assignment for a Mosellan. In one of the pictures the young Fischer tests with his companions the firing of a machine gun.

In late July 1943, he was posted in the Ukraine in a regiment of motor transport equipped with Renault trucks. He remained there until March 1944 and was shipped to Poland (to repair trucks whose service

life was low given insidious sabotage in factories in occupied France) and a little later in Hungary not far from the border with Romania. From August 1944 to April 1945, while fighting and struggling against the local resistance, he retreated with his regiment before the inexorable advance of the Red Army, to Linz in Austria where he managed to desert. Thanks to the cooperation of French prisoners of war, he took refuge in a stalag in Bruckmuhl. On May 11, 1945 he was liberated by the Americans and returned by plane to Paris. Then it is that he reached Thionville and joined his family in Kedange. Like Fischer, many young Mosellans deserted as soon as they could do so without endangering the lives of their parents.



The war experiences of René Hippert.

René was born in 1925 and, even before his birthday of 18 years, he was inducted into the R.A.D in Germany in 1943. In September 1943, he enjoyed a short leave, and then he was drafted into the Wehrmacht in Wismar, not far from the Baltic Sea. At the barracks where he received training for air defense gunner, there were peculiar balloons, surrounded by very resistant membranes and linked together by very strong ropes, positioned around the barracks to prohibit overflight by enemy aircraft. If a propeller aircraft is caught in a rope or even to touch a balloon, it breaks and the aircraft is lost.



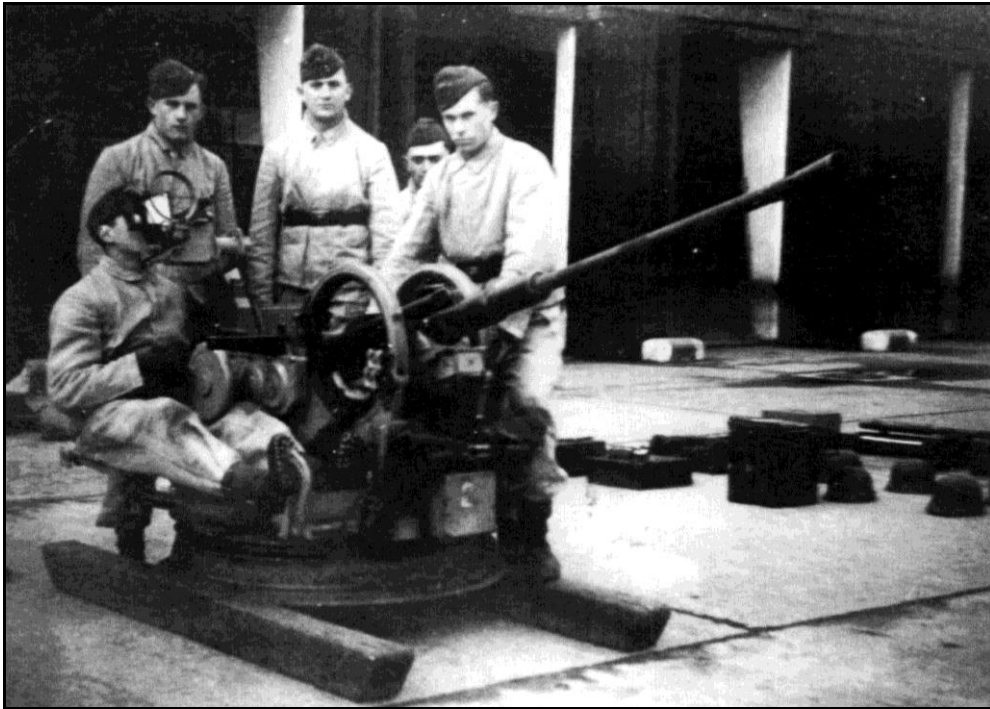


Session statement in Wismar.

The young recruits of the Wehrmacht, including René Hippert, must field strip and reassemble their guns as quickly as possible and clean them.



Training gunners to Wismar in 1943.



By early 1944, René Hippert moved near Belgrade in Yugoslavia, then in the region of Scutari. He fought with his unit throughout the year 1944 against the allied air force and against guerrillas of Tito. On several occasions his unit traveled through the Balkans in vehicles equipped with wheels and tracks. In 1945 he was captured with his section by Americans and found freedom at the beginning of the summer, not returning to Cattenom until July 7, 1945.





A Polish national living in Amnéville, he refused to serve Germany and managed to flee from the Moselle to England via Britany. With other Polish he was inducted into a Polish armored division attached to the Canadian Army. These Poles fought in the Allied armies under the Canadian uniform, but a symbol with a White Eagle, attached to the headgear, proving their nationality.



The history of Ignace Olejniczak.

He was working in a factory in Amnéville and had no time to leave the city.

The Germans forced him to follow them under the threat of shooting his wife and two young children. He was then inducted into the German army and placed on the eastern front, receiving a single leave in 4 years of service. This was somehow the Polish version of the "despite us".

In 1944, taking advantage of the disintegration of the German army, he managed to escape and tried to hide in Poland. About to reach his home town in the company of a friend, they were wounded by shrapnel. His comrade was killed and he was seriously injured in the back. His robust constitution and with the help of his cousin, a brave fellow, after two days without care was taken to a hospital and saved. He returned to Moselle in the summer of 1945.

Those who were deemed ready to fight were shipped to the Russian front and not to the Western front as a precautionary measure. It seems that 80% of the Mosellans were sent East, others being shipped to Italy, to the Balkans or Norway. Returning on leave, some considered defecting as early as 1943 but often they left for the front despite of the risk of getting killed, at the express threat of deportation to a camp. It is estimated that a total of 130,000 Mosellans were enlisted in the Wehrmacht and some were even forced to serve in the SS or guard some concentration and extermination camps.



***Departure to Germany
from Thionville.***

A – In 1943 many villagers were gathered in Thionville, whose names were germanized, and shipped to Germany to work. There are many women among the requisitioned labour



B - Arriving there, the Mosellans, were sent to forced labour and housed in dormitories, they also needed to line up for the distribution of meals at their place of work in Germany.

The massive assignment to the East explains why many "despite us" were seriously wounded on the Russian front or during transport from one area to another; 22,000 died at the front. Other Mosellans who fought to the end with the German troops tasted the Soviet camps in 1944 and 1945, like Tambov, and returned to the Moselle region several weeks or several months after the German surrender on 7 and 8 May 1945. Others died at Tambov of dysentery, typhus and other diseases as tuberculosis, 7,000 apparently in all. The lucky ones had been released by the Soviets in July 1944 and were released to the English in Iran. Their release was made on condition that they serve as spies for the Soviets in their new assignment. Some of those released were paid by the British army and others in the F.F.L via a stay in Algeria. They fought in Italy and Provence.

The basic idea of the Germans was that any adult or teenager should work or fight for the Third Reich. From 1943, even girls were assembled into the R.A.D and, before the shortage in the local labour force caused by the induction of whole classes of men into the Wehrmacht, young women and adolescent girls were subjected to mandatory chores, including in Germany. They were massively employed in enterprises in Moselle under German control. They were often assembled to carry coal or iron ore in Mosellan plants or in factories in Germany, were not allowed to return home during vacation. At Sierck-les-Bains, the foundry, which makes grenades, included hiring massively and mandatorily young women from the sector, in addition to a contingent of Russian prisoners. As early as 1943, Basse-Yutz railway workshops were reactivated thanks to many Russian prisoners.

Moreover, women and girls were required, from August 1944 to help dig trenches and anti-tank ditches designed to prevent the passage of troops and allied vehicles in 1944, work was called "schandsen" in the local dialect and there they wielded pick and shovel. Women were added to the Russian prisoners and coal workers to speed up the progress of the work.

Heavy and mandatory work.



For heavy work and especially starting from 1943, Mosellans and even Mosellan women are obliged to leave to work in Germany. Thus in Saarbrücken a group of women, the majority Russian and Polish, must shovel coal. Two Mosellan women belong to this team of workers.

The young people of Contz-les-Bains even had to go work in the forests in Germany during the winter 1942/43. Note the use of a chainsaw of impressive size.



Elsewhere they dig anti-tank trenches or shelters for artillery, even in mid-summer 1944 when defeat seemed inevitable.



Local examples of prisoners classified as 'Patriots resistant to the Occupation'

As early as 1941 began the first refusal to serve in the German army and the runaways to the free zone and from there to Africa or England. The Germans, in retaliation, punished the families of these deserters, from January 1943, where recruitment is systematized and refusal to serve in the Wehrmacht becomes a crime, whole families are arrested and shipped to the Sudetenland or Silesia. This was also the fate of families in which one member was a "smuggler" whose activity had been discovered or denounced. It made them stay in camps from where they came out every day, including Sundays in some places, to work at the factory (majority status for men) or in the farms of the region (this was often the case of women).



Arbeitsbuch
(Gefes vom 26. Februar 1935, RWDI. I G. 311)

Nr. 2059

Peter Bellenfeld
(Vor- und Zuname, bei Frauen auch Geburtsname)

Nebennummer:

Peter Bellenfeld
(Eigenhändige Unterschrift des Inhabers)

Abfender: _____

Zustand: Reichsarbeitsdienst
Ort des Dienstes: M 291

Vor- und Zuname: Liedenkoren/Westmark

Selbstnummer: _____

(Beschreibung des Kruppenteils verbieten. Als Dienstgrad nicht Schütze, Dienst, Stücker etc. angeben, sondern nur Soldat, Gefreiter, Leutnant etc.)

Feldpost

An Liegn
Johann Lien
J. aulbau
 in _____

Quadr. Koden 1200

Streck-, Hausnummer, Gebiets-, Stedwert oder Postleitzahlnummer

18 **Reichsarbeitsdienst** **Meldamt 291 Orlamünde**

Frei durch Ablösung Reich

„Es ist gänzlich unwichtig, ob wir leben, aber notwendig ist, daß unser Volk lebt, daß Deutschland lebt.“
 (Adolf Hitler am 1.9.35)

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Work documents issued by the Germans.

Each person 18 years of age or older had to be equipped with a work book, a sign of the importance attached by the occupier to mobilize a maximum of arms and energy in the service of the Third Reich and also to check the reasons for travel.

Housing was in dormitories (often chambered for 25 to 30 people of all ages), seldom in family residences, and meals were taken in a dining hall. For the day's work, there were fixed hours and moments of pause and relaxation, as well as an hourly wage. But all this salary was paid at the direction of the camp which was available to cover living expenses, and the worker himself never touched anything (there was also not much to buy on the spot). In the workplace, they were brought to mix with the addition of Czechs or poles returning home each evening, French prisoners of war and "S.T.O" with talking prohibited. These last two categories were housed in special camps. In daily life many things depended on the severity or not of the "Lagerführer" and the requirements of families who hired the deportees. We know that in general, on the occasion of holidays, the deportees could make small trips on foot in the vicinity of the camp. These should in no way be confused with concentration camps or internment camps. When the guard was not a convinced Nazis, conditions of stay were also more flexible and exiles were able to escape and to return clandestinely to the Moselle. This was the case of my great uncle, Jacob Watzky, who traveled through much of Germany from the Sudetenland to Nilvange and remained hidden at Cattenom by his sister Marie Paradeis for more than 6 months in 1944.

If we have photos, it is because Czechs and also, more rarely, the Germans, were willing to take pictures of the deportees and develop the pictures for free. Even in the camp of deportees, humanity existed, and all the Germans were not Nazis, they tolerated a few sprains to the draconian regulations put in place. These pictures were then carefully kept, especially since most of the deportees had changed sides at least two or three times between 1943 and 1945. They had been reported in May or June 1945 during the liberation of the camps. Some camps were liberated by the Americans, under friendly conditions; others by the Russians, and this happened often less well. The deportees were then routed by air to Allied bases in Germany, then to Bourget where, by train and by bus, they returned home, often a month after the German capitulation on 8 May 1945.



Camp in Bohemia and Moravia.

The families Kiffer and Steinmetz of Veymerange were deported to Bohemia and Moravia, to Ober-Kratzau and Grottau, in camps called Umsiedlungslager and where the abbreviation N.S.D.A.P is still very apparent on the building facades. Most often these camps were created in former unused factories. At Ober-Kratzau discipline was very strict and we worked every day including Sunday.



Liberated on May 10, 1945 by the Russians, this family was back in Veymerange on June 10, 1945.

Two examples of families deported from the region of the Valley of the Sierck.

In the canton of Sierck-les-Bain, there were prisoners from many villages, mostly because one of them had refused to serve Germany and fled to free France, others for being surprised listening to English radio, the latter for refusing to sign their accession to the "Deutsche Gemeinschaft". In this place it was necessary to work hard while raising young children who had been deported with their parents.



A) The family Bettenfeld of Kirschnaumen deported to Silesia in 1943.



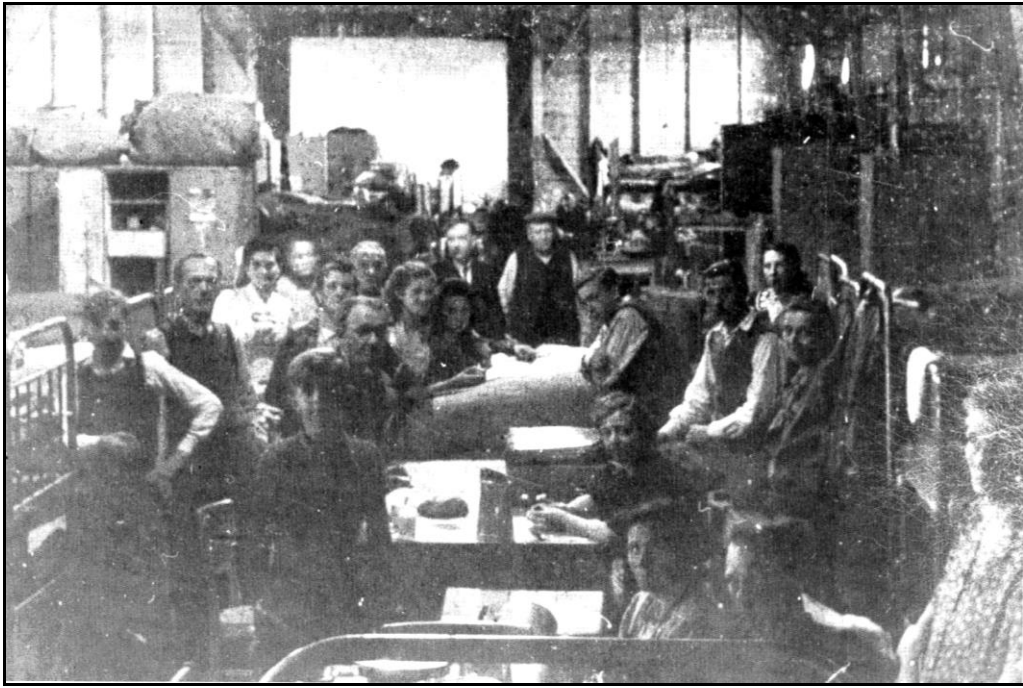
B) The Gambs family of Rustoff deported to Karltal in the Sudetenland in 1943.

The daily life of the deportees:

The conditions in these camps of deportation were highly variable depending on the guards but they were not the concentration camps. For example they kept their clothes and personal possessions. There was a private life (especially at night) even if they were in a community and under supervision.



Despite the deportation of families from the Valley of the Orne they continued to exhibit signs of patriotism, as seen here within housing in Bavaria, Watenstedt-Hallendorf, where one can clearly see the cross of Lorraine on the wall, which could be interpreted by the guards as an additional provocation.



Collective housing was constructed in former factories or converted premises or in barracks of wood specifically built for this purpose. And if housing was for entire families, they slept in dormitories of 20 to 30 people and they ate in a dining hall from mess-kits and after lining up for their food or their ration of milk.



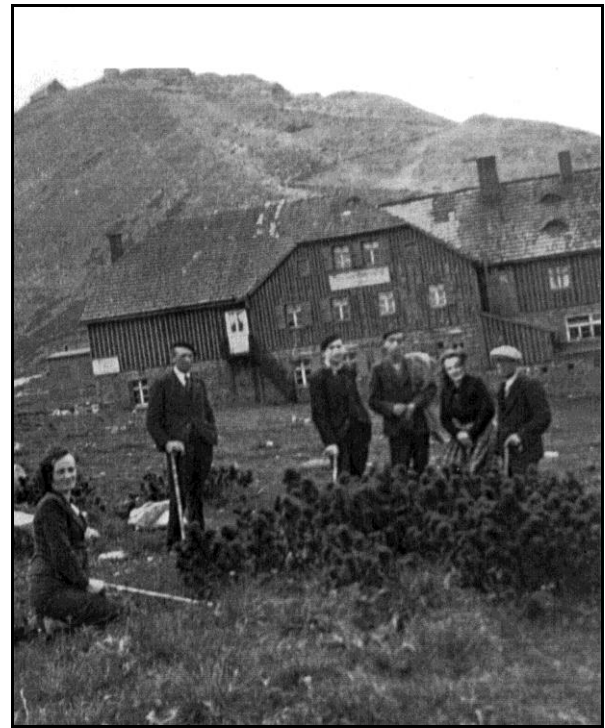


This meal is the last under these conditions because the picture dates from the day of the liberation of the camp, men already dressed in their fine clothes of beautiful white shirts with ties.



As he kept his clothes including those for Sunday, he could walk well dressed and enjoy some days of freedom.

Here is a family in the dormitory at the end of a Sunday walk.



The deportees of Manom.

In January 1943, twenty people of Filstroff families (who had previously stayed at a camp in the Saarland since November 1942), Schmeler, Glatt, Frantz, Dap, Christ, Marx, are sent in the first camps in Bohemia and Moravia and to two others in Silesia. All these families were liberated in May-June 1945.



But soon these deportees were shipped to Leubus in Silesia, in barracks built next to a plant where they manufactured artificial silk parachutes, with only Sundays and holidays for relaxation. However, they were able to walk in the region by making small trips.

Finally they were shipped to Halbstadt, with people from the Valley of the River Orne, to a camp with more than 2,000 people where they manufactured detonators. The winter weather was at the same time both harsh and snowy.

During the trip they sympathized with Czech and Polish factory workers and were relatively well fed. Some families even had an income through retirement of one of them. Nothing could however replace freedom or avoid homesickness. Everywhere the work discipline was strict at least until the end of the summer of 1944.



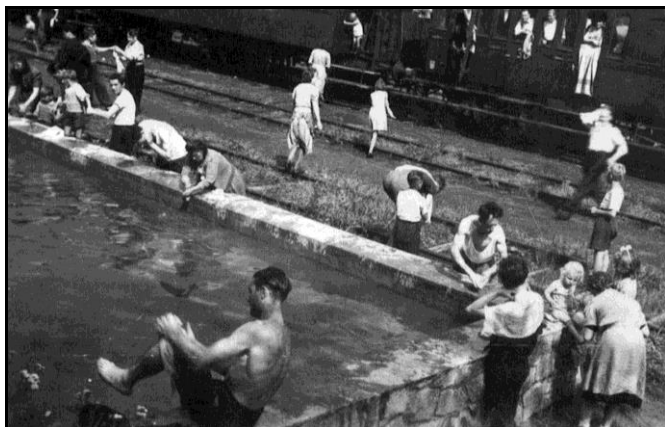
Older deportees continued to collect their retirement and therefore had a nest egg converted into local currency.



The liberation of these families took place in May 1945 when the Americans arrived. Return to France is done by plane, train and bus.

The fate of the Veynachter family de Cattenom.

The family was shipped in early 1943 to Silesia and returned in June 1945. The adventures of the stay in Silesia can be traced through several photos.



First the transport by train to the deportation camp. Here a stopping of the convoy to allow full lavatory in a laundry located along the railway line on the route to Germany.



Then, in 1944, the housing of the family in the camp made up of several buildings of a former brick factory.



Then the return from deportation, first in an American plane to Schweinfurt in the West of the Germany...



... then air transfer to le Bourget...



...and finally a train to the Metz train station June 11, 1945 with the luggage, followed by return by bus to Cattenom.

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE		diriger Chalons s. Marne	
MINISTÈRE DES PRISONNIERS, DÉPORTÉS ET RÉFUGIÉS			
CARTE DE RAPATRIÉ		(1) Catégorie	(2) Date d'arrivée en Allemagne
		P	9.6.40
		(3) Dernier lieu de détention ou de travail en Allemagne	
		Normlingen	
(4) Nom	(5) Prénoms	(6) Sexe	(7) Profession
NOGAREDE	Louis	M.	sans
(7) Pseudonyme	(8) Etat Civil	LE RAPATRIÉ A DÉPOSÉ :	
	c.	LM	RM
			FF
(9) Lieu de naissance	(10) Lieu de naissance	Le Rapatrié a REÇU :	
28.8.17	Nyon (Suisse)	Frs	prime
(12) Nom du Père	(13) Nom de la Mère	Frs	Av. sur
Charles	Yvonne Cuenet		
(14) Nationalité d'origine	(15) Nationalité actuelle	(16) Date de naturalisation	
suisse	suisse		
Lieu de la personne chez qui vous vous rendez		VÊTEMENTS	
St Laurent (Lot et Garonne)		à faire au 10/11/40	
Bureau de Recrutement		(21) Centre mobilisateur	
Bordeaux	Bordeaux		
(22) Classe de mobilisation	(23) Grade		
1937			
(24) Position militaire	(25) Dernière affectation		
active			
PHOTO		TICKETS STUFF TABAG	
1 R. E. C		0380002	

Repatriation card of Louis Nogarède.

Swiss citizen, Louis Nogarède was enlisted in the French Foreign Legion since 1938, first in the infantry and then the cavalry where he was the machine gunner, he was captured in the Oise by the Germans on June 9, 1940 (by wanting to save his horse "Maryam") with the 1st regiment of cavalry and taken captive. He spent the entire war in various prison camps in the North of Germany and had to work hard. He was liberated in May 1945, and in July 1945 received a repatriation card. It allowed him to go to Bordeaux and St Laurent in the Lot-et-Garonne where a family he knew in Germany in one of the camps vouched for him. He remained true to his adopted country, France, the rest of his life, a large portion of which was passed in Sierck-les-Bains and then especially at Cattenom.

REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE MINISTÈRE DES PRISONNIERS DÉPORTÉS ET RÉFUGIÉS		(1) Catégorie	(2) Date d'arrivée en Allemagne
CARTE DE RAPATRIÉ		(3) Dernier lieu de détention ou de travail en Allemagne	
(4) Nom	(5) Prénoms	(6) Sexe	LE RAPATRIÉ A DÉPOSÉ :
(7) Pseudonyme	(8) Etat Civil	(9) Profession	
(10) Date de naissance	(11) Lieu de naissance		
(12) Nom du Père	(13) Nom de la Mère		
(14) Nationalité d'origine	(15) Nationalité actuelle	(16) Date de naturalisation	Le Rapatrié a REÇU :
(18) Nom et adresse de la personne chez qui vous vous rendez	(19) Pièces d'identité produites		
(20) Bureau de Recrutement	(21) Centre mobilisateur		VÊTEMENTS
(22) Classe de mobilisation	(23) Grade		
(24) Position militaire au moment du départ en Allemagne	(25) Dernière affectation militaire en France		TICKETS
			TABAC

Handwritten notes and stamps on the card include:
 - Top right: 19808
 - Date: 20.7.1945
 - Profession: employé de bureau
 - Lieu de naissance: Gemelange (Moselle)
 - Nom de la Mère: Marguerite Haas
 - Nationalité actuelle: française
 - Bureau de Recrutement: St. Avois
 - Centre mobilisateur: SAINT-AVOIS
 - Classe de mobilisation: 1939
 - Grade: 2. classe
 - Position militaire: 22 Tirailleur
 - Dernière affectation: 16 bis 19B 190 19M1
 - Stamps: A circular stamp from 'ST. AVAIS' and a rectangular stamp from 'LE RAPATRIÉ A DÉPOSÉ' with handwritten initials 'L.M.' and 'P.R.'.
 - Compensation: 1000 (Frs) and 809 (Frs) in the 'REÇU' section.
 - Tickets: 195 and 809 in the 'TICKETS' section.
 - Tabac: 809 in the 'TABAC' section.
 - Photo: 4 x 4.

Repatriation card of François Harter.

Same card issued to François Harter of Yutz upon returning from Tambov. First inducted into the French army in October 1939, he was captured by the Germans on 18 June 1940 (famous date due to the appeal launched by De Gaulle), imprisoned in Germany and then released in October 1940, as a Mosellan. Back home in Yutz, he worked in the factory until 25 June 1943 where he was again inducted, but in the German army and became "Despite us". He first stayed in Prague until December 1943 and then fought in Poland near Lodz until March 1944. In April 1944 he was sent to Bobruisk on the Russian front where he was captured by the Soviets on 27 June 1944 and shipped to the camp of Tambov. He was liberated on October 22, 1945 after over a year of living in atrocious conditions in this labour and detention camp. Placed on a train to Frankfurt-on-Oder by the Russians he was taken care of by the British to Strasbourg and finally repatriated. This was a well deserved returnee status with a meager compensation for his suffering.



Families of Basse-Yutz and Haute-Yutz deported to Silesia in 1943. The pictures are taken in the Kalkenhain camp.



Everything was constantly implemented to break the opposition of the population. We know that 200 political trials were held during the occupation. Many patriots were imprisoned at Fort de Metz Queuleu, real antechamber of a concentration camp, or sent to Austria or even to the distant Bukovina in 1943, 30,000 people it seems, altogether.

In vain since 1944, there had been many families who had hidden a "despite us" deserter or more for several months. At Monténach, 24 conscripted by force, had deserted and hid in the woods or in private homes. The same phenomenon existed in almost all villages. These desertions were facilitated when, fortunately, the forcibly conscripted enjoyed a leave and had time to construct a ploy to not return to the front at the end of his leave. One of these ways, one used by my uncle, was to buy before going on leave, a postcard, to entrust it to a comrade, also on leave and from the same sector, who returned to the

front for fear of reprisals against his family, and that then upon his arrival post it in the nearest town to the front. The family of the deserter could present to German police officers (which inevitably came to investigate and were looking for evidence of a possible desertion) said postcard and swear to have heard nothing further of the person concerned since his departure assuming that he was at the front at the end of his leave. A dangerous way to mislead the enemy because the fugitive of interest might be seen by anyone in the village, a denouncement was unfortunately always possible and with merciless retaliation. Deserters lived in barns or in caches located within the houses of the village and sometimes even in the family home, which is what happened for several months in my paternal grandmother's. Six people lived hidden in a narrow space that existed in a double wall of the old butcher's shop and whose access was concealed behind a closet. They needed most often to sleep during the day and come out only at night, hoping not to be seen or heard by anyone. In several localities these deserters were taken after denunciation, anonymous of course, and relatives harshly punished. Some were even found in the southwest of the France by the Gestapo and executed.

(2) Daily life between rationing and shortage in an atmosphere of ideological conditioning.

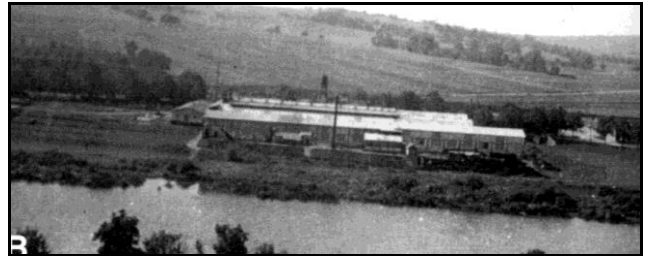
The major concerns of the population was the same as in the other regions of France, namely, feeding, dressing, basking and preserving his own. For this they must first have a job; However only Germans gave work and they had to go to the town hall or subprefecture to sign their application to the "Deutsche Volksgemeinschaft", the Germans being those "Reichsdeutsche". For craftsmen, they needed even to contribute to the N.S.D.A.P to be sure to get raw materials and market access.



Hagondange plant bedecked by the nazis.

Even plants were "germanised" with German coaching and new directors composed of convinced Nazis. Local officials did not hesitate to multiply visits to these plants as here in the Valley of the River Orne, at Hagondange, where the former factory U.C.P.M.I, was turned into a model iron and steel factory, it was bedecked with Nazi flags during a visit by Bürckel.

The work, between a peacetime economy and an economy of war



Rettel Foundry during the war, pictures A, B, C and D.

At Rettel, in the Foundry manufacturing military equipment (grenades and small shells), a workforce from the surrounding villages was required in addition to Russian prisoners in the sector, from 1941 to 1944.



Even women were forced to work.

Here, the female staff of the Foundry in Sierck-les-Bains, but settled at Rettel, gets a moment of rest.



End of the working day.

The workers, who came from the neighbouring villages returning home by bicycle, the most used medium of transport during the war,.

Thionville slaughter house during the occupation.

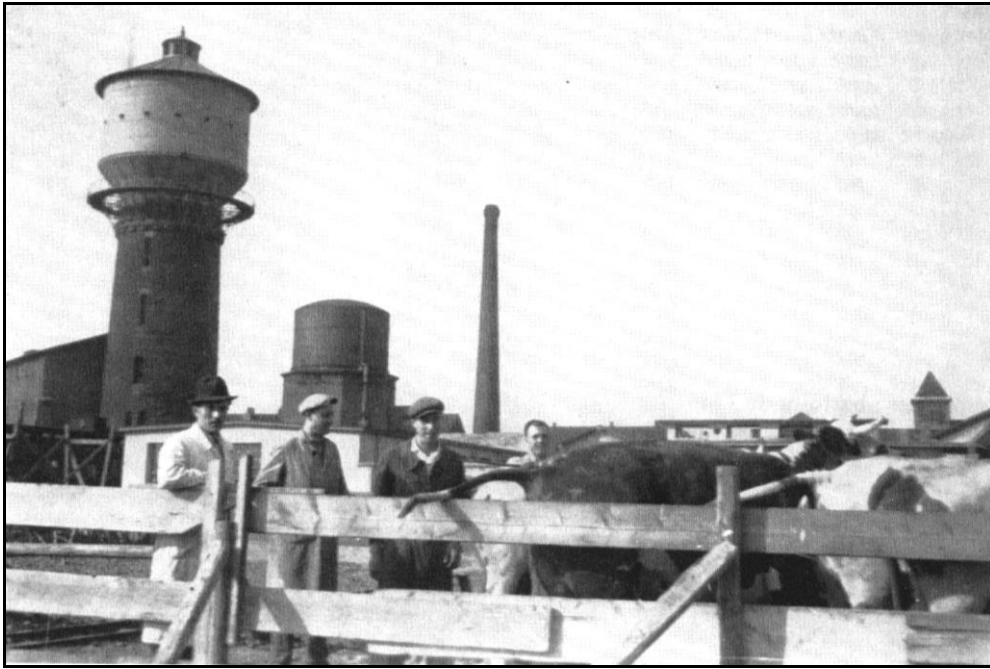


At Thionville, in the slaughterhouse of the city taken over by a German company, men and women of Thionville and the surrounding areas were hired and even invited from August 1941 to expedite deliveries of meat to the German armies. Among the employees there is Odile Filstroff, Secretary to the company Westmerkische Viehwertung, a civilian agency responsible for supplying the Wehrmacht with quality meat.



A team working in Thionville.

The slaughterhouses of Thionville, managed by a German company, continued to provide valuable jobs in time of war.



Inspection of livestock in 1942.

During the war, one of the missions devolved to slaughterhouses was to provide quality meat to the German troops. During this time the Moselle were forced to ration tickets.



Shipping of pigs by train.

The mandatory delivery of cattle and pigs for Veterans was a requirement as before the war, a convoy of pigs is here departing the station at Thionville, near the buildings of the former agency Beyer.

Zur Beachtung

Die Mitgliedskarte bleibt Eigentum der Organisation und ist bei Beendigung der Mitgliedschaft zurückzugeben.

Ummeldungen und Abmeldungen sind sofort der Kameradschaft unter Beifügung der Mitgliedskarte anzuzeigen.

Änderungen auf der Mitgliedskarte dürfen nur von der Reichsdienststelle, Abteilung Mitgliederverwaltung, vorgenommen werden.

Die Mitgliedskarte dient als Ausweis für alle zu stellenden Ansprüche an die Organisation.

Bei einem Beitragsrückstand von mehr als zwei Monaten sind alle Ansprüche verfallen und können durch Nachzahlung nicht wieder aufleben, sondern nur wie beim Neueintritt wieder neu erworben werden.

Der Austritt ist nur zum Schluß eines Kalendervierteljahres möglich und muß drei Monate vorher durch eine schriftliche Austrittserklärung bei der zuständigen Kameradschaft angemeldet werden.

Mit der Mitgliedschaft ist eine Sterbegeldversicherung verbunden. Auskunft erteilt die Kameradschaft.



**Nationalsozialistische
Kriegsopferversorgung e. V.
Sitz Berlin**

Mitgliedskarte Nr. [REDACTED]

für.....

geb. am Beruf *Kulturnote*

Wohnort.....

Straße u. Haus-Nr.

eingetreten am *1. 8. 41*
übergetreten **Diedenhofen**

Kameradschaft.....

Gau Westmark.....

Der
Reichskriegsopferführer


Unrechnungsfähige Beiträge
vom 1. 19.... bis 19....
bestätigt.





Kreuzer

C/1529













Nazi party card and contribution stickers from 1941 to 1943 (the identity was hidden also the N°).

1941

Januar Für jeden	Februar bezahlen Beitrag	März muß eine	April Beitragsmarke
Mai geklebt sein.	Juni Quittungsstempel	Juli oder sonstige	


1942

Einlage zur Mitgliedskarte Nr. [REDACTED]

Nur in Verbindung mit der Mitgliedskarte gültig

1940



September sind ungültig.	Oktober Beitragsmarken	November sind	Dezember Bargeld.
Juli oder sonstige		August Quittungsvermerke	

1941

Januar Für jeden	Februar bezahlen Beitrag	März muß eine	April Beitragsmarke
Mai geklebt sein.	Juni Quittungsstempel	Juli oder sonstige	August Quittungsvermerke
September sind ungültig.	Oktober Beitragsmarken	November sind	Dezember Bargeld.

Everyone was required, first to sign, and then to work diligently for reclamation, a priority, of road and rail infrastructures in the region, including bridges. Large projects were started upon the return of the evacuees in the fall of 1940 and unemployment was unknown. They were of course called German companies and German executives were put in place for the plants, often from the S.S. and convinced Nazis. The “Hermann Goering Werke” Group took possession of the mines and factories of the Wendel's group and the old factories owned by Thyssen in Hagondange between 1871 and 1918. On 22 November 1941 1,270 trading houses of commerce passed into German hands so that banks and French savings banks were liquidated.

The Mosellans had work and a decent salary enough even for saving money because there was not much to buy.

Daily adult life was a life of hard work, in the fields, at the factory, in the crafts and trades, keeping to themselves widely held Pro-French and anti-Nazi beliefs. The use of the French language was forbidden, and German was required in public. Even the wearing of the beret in public was considered by the occupier as a provocation, including young children. Bürckel moved in person into Thionville to organize, on the market square, a large burning of Basque berets. We of course renamed localities, streets and squares and statues of Lorraine Patriots or French military victories of the First World War were removed. We considered even a change of French surnames to German surnames, as was more often the case in Alsace



Uniforms required by the occupier.

Another constraint was accepted willingly or unwillingly: wearing a German uniform. Here it is the obligatory behavior of the post-office worker Anne Mompert, employed in the position at Cattenom in March 1944.

The Germanization of the streets and road signs.



Germanization of the names of the localities.

August 17, 1941, a young Koenigsmacker man summoned for the R.A.D brings together his comrades and the fiancée of one of them before the road sign for the village.



Even the smallest towns are renamed as the village of Hastroff of the municipality of Inglange which became Hasdorf. The hamlet is under a thick snow in this February 8, 1942, attesting to the severity of that winter.



Germanization of the names of the buildings for collective use.

German postcard sent in 1943 and representing the current clinic Ste Elisabeth with its Germanized name.



St Hubert, Thionville theatre and renamed in 1943 in German surroundings.

The signs are renamed as we can see on this German postcard published in Metz.



The Place du Luxembourg in Thionville during the occupation.

The current place du Luxembourg is decked with Nazi flags in 1942. They are two young Mosellans including Michel Hotton of Yutz who pose in front of the space's flower garden, after completing their time at the R.A.D in Germany and pending their departure to the Wehrmacht.

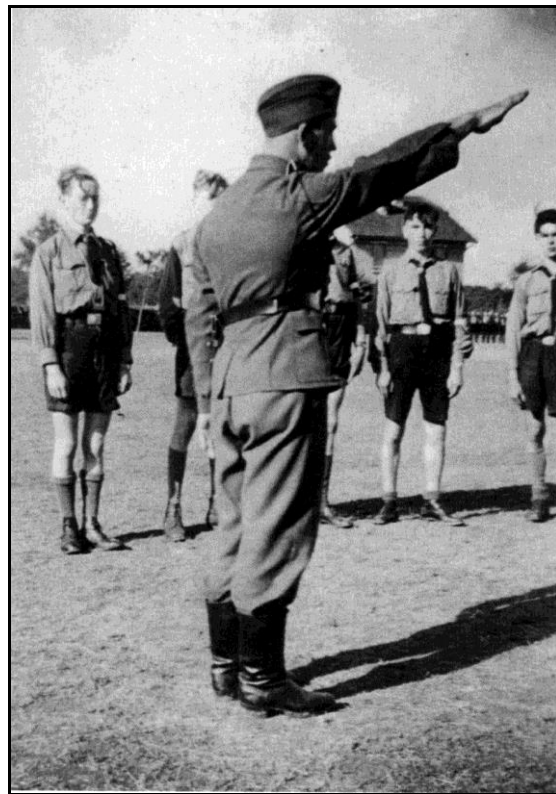


La Grange Château transformed by the Germans.

De Bertier family that frequently received General Giraud, great friend of the family, in 1939 and early 1940, participated actively in the implementation of border guards during the 'phoney war'. However in

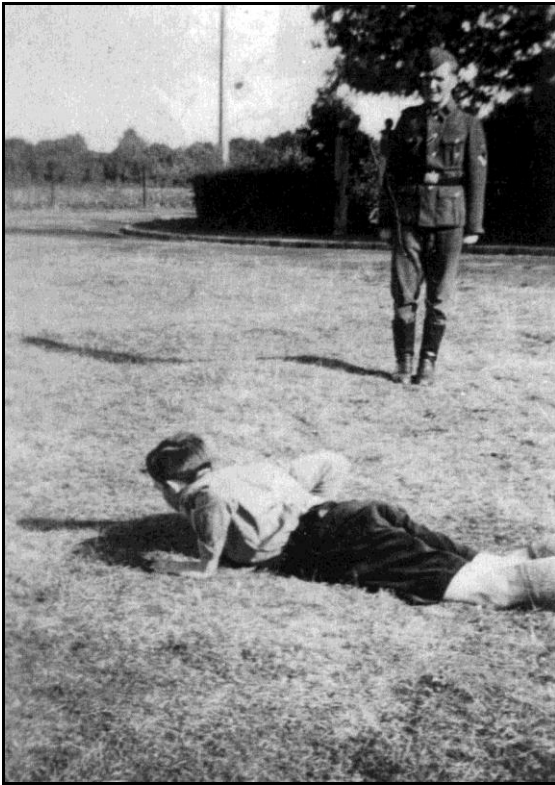
June 1940, she fled to Paris and then to Brittany and did not return to Manom at the end of the conflict. The Germans therefore occupied the Château as early as the summer 1940. They looted furniture and in 1943 a convoy was responsible for taking the finest pieces to Germany. In the meantime, the Château was divided into two separate institutions. Half of the Château became a kind of summer camp for the benefit of the young German school girls to Notre Dame of Providence in Thionville (girls of German settlers in the area). Accordingly, the lounges were transformed into dormitories, classroom, refectory or bathroom as big blue room which was equipped with 24 sinks. The other half was occupied by German territorial police and officers operating in the region. They held on New Year's Eve 1942 a big party where champagne flowed. However the building did not suffer from the war and the family retrieved a nearly intact building in 1945. Finally Siedler settled on farmland of the Château and the crops were sold in Germany.

The frenzied indoctrination.



Week of compulsory sports events at Froidcul.

Periodically for weeks physical and mandatory sports tests were organized for the Mosellan middle school. They were then required to wear the outfit of the Hitler Jugend. Here the week takes place at Froidcul in 1942 and indoctrination and teaching the basics of military life accompany sports events. Lucien Fabing was forced to participate in this politico-sportive week.



The training of Girls: indoctrination is also valid for young girls who are a mandatory part of the Bund Deutscher Mädel.



In this picture, a group of uniformed Mosellan girls walking to Distroff April 1941 at the end of a day of indoctrination.

Note the disparity in the types of shoes.

For the official photo of the B.D.M however, the conduct was regulated. Here a young woman of the region of Thionville in full dress.



Bewertung der Leistungen:

Völkischer Unterricht: *befriedigend*
 Landwirtschaftlicher
 (hauswirtschaftlicher) Unterricht: *befriedigend*

Deutsche Sprache: *gut*
 Rechnen: *gut*

Bemerkungen: _____

Die Schüler *in* hat der Schulpflicht gemäß Abschnitt III des Gesetzes über die Schulpflicht im deutschen Reich v. 6. 7. 1938 Genüge geleistet.

Ländliche Berufsschule in *Rodemachen*, den *30. Juli* 19 *43*.

Der Schulleiter.....:
Richter Eder

Bewertungsstufen 1 = sehr gut, 2 = gut, 3 = befriedigend, 4 = ausreichend, 5 = mangelhaft, 6 = ungenügend.

Gebühr: _____

Sorgfältig aufbewahren!

P/0143. 387/42

The diplomas awarded during the occupation.
The certification is also an opportunity to hold a small ceremony to indoctrinate brains and flatter the Mosellans who quickly learn the German language.

Marie-Louise Harold graduation certificate.
 Here is the degree of final studies of an agricultural school. The Germans were obsessed with agricultural progress.

**Entlassungszeugnis
aus der ländlichen Berufsschule**

Hennion Marie-Louise
(Familienname und Vornamen)

geboren am 1. II. 1926 in Metzerech
 Landkreis: Diedenbofen Staatsangehörigkeit: D. R. g. 25
 Bekenntnis: kath.
 (Deutschblütige Abstammung) ja
 Sohn/Tochter des Arbeiters Hennion Nikolaus
 hat die Volksschulpflicht vom 19. 8. 1933 bis 19. 3. 1940 erfüllt
 und hierauf die ländl. Berufsschule vom 17. IX. 1942 bis 30. VI. 1943 besucht.
Bewertung der Haltung:
 Gut

Bewertung der Leistungen:

Völkischer Unterricht	: Ausreichend
Landwirtschaftlicher (hauswirtschaftlicher) Unterricht:	Ausreichend
Deutsche Sprache	: Ausreichend
Rechnen	: Ausreichend

Vordruck 12
 Nr. 504 F. Ch. Riedel & Cie. Grünstadt Wenden!

Certificate of end of studies by Odilie Hess.
 On July 20, 1941, Odilie Hess (notice that her first name was Germanized) graduated with flattering assessments.

ENTLASSUNGSZEUGNIS

GAU WESTMARK

Volksschule in Simmingen

Odilie Hess
 geboren am 14. Dezember 1924 in Faulbach (Rodemachen)
 Tochter des Landwirts Johann Hess in Faulbach

hat seine Volksschulpflicht erfüllt. Er hat im letzten Jahr am Unterricht des 8. Jahrgangs teilgenommen und wird mit nachstehendem Zeugnis aus der Volksschule entlassen:

I. Führung: Gut

II. Leistungen:

Leibeserziehung befriedigend	a) Spiele	b) Leichtathletik	c) Schwimmen	d) Turnen
Deutsch:	a) mündlich: gut	b) schriftlich: gut	Musik: ausreichend	Zeichnen und Werken: befriedigend
Geschichte: befriedigend	Erdkunde: gut	Naturkunde: gut	Rechnen und Raumlehre: gut	Schrift: gut
a) Lebenskunde: gut	b) Naturlehre: befriedigend			

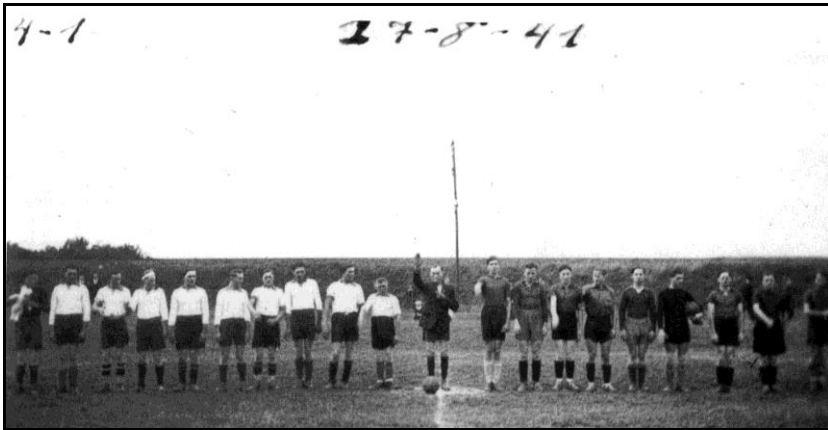
III. Bemerkungen:

Der Klassenlehrer: M. Frisch, den 20. Juli 1941
 Der Schulleiter: A. Frisch

FÜR VOLKSSCHULEN



Nazi propaganda on the walls of a farm whose occupants were Patriots.
 The popularization of Nazi ideas was combined with the stigma and the condemnation of French patriotic ideas. At Launstroff, an evicted French speaking family had the unpleasant surprise to discover, upon their return, the farm facade contaminated by openly Nazi drawings. Graffiti stigmatized responsibility to the Jews and the English for the breakdown of the friendship between Germany and France.



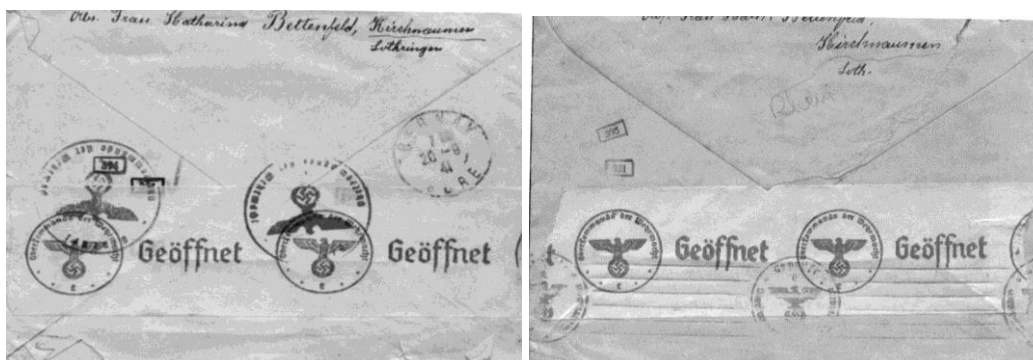
Even leisure activities were monitored.

Here at the kick-off of the St François-Cattenom football meeting, on 17 August 1941, players are obliged to make the Hitler salute. Obviously they are reluctant to obey the orders of the referee and some downright refused to salute. If a Nazi dignitary had been attending the meeting, this refusal could have led to severe penalties.



When no German dignitary was present, conviviality was the rule and no particular protocol was in force. Youth benefited for fun and some flirting formed as here in 1941 in Oudrenne.

Censorship:



Examples of censorship of mail.

Censorship was carried out on diverse level mail: letters are pre-printed with small sections to complete, the mail is opened and read before delivery to the recipient. Mail opened by the services of the German censorship.

Après avoir complété cette carte strictement réservée à la correspondance d'ordre familial, biffer les indications inutiles. — Ne rien écrire en dehors des lignes.
ATTENTION. — Toute carte dont le libellé ne sera pas uniquement d'ordre familial ne sera pas acheminée et sera probablement détruite.

Cavaillon le 11 novembre 1940

je suis en bonne santé ~~fatigué~~
~~légèrement gravement malade, blessé.~~

~~tué~~ je suis toujours sans nouvelles.
 de mon frère René. La famille est toute en bonne santé.
 sante temps mieux ~~besoin de provisions~~ d'argent.

~~nouvelles, bagages~~ est de retour à
 je suis toujours chauffeur ici service
~~général du groupement~~, je suis bien
 mais vive le 31 janvier.

Comment ce fait-il que vous n'avez pas embauché mon frère?
 Affectueuses pensées. Baisers.
 Signature André

Form of pre-printed mail leaving only a very limited choice of information to give.

Note the options:

- killed
- deceased

Cruel examples of administrative curtness...!

Après avoir complété cette carte strictement réservée à la correspondance d'ordre familial, biffer les indications inutiles. — Ne rien écrire en dehors des lignes.
ATTENTION. — Toute carte dont le libellé ne sera pas UNIQUEMENT d'ordre familial ne sera pas acheminée et sera probablement détruite.

Châteaufort le 13 juin 1941

Je suis en bonne santé ~~fatigué~~
~~légèrement, gravement malade, blessé.~~

~~tué~~ prisonnier.
~~décédé~~ sans nouvelles.

de ~~_____~~ La famille ~~_____~~ va bien.
~~_____~~ besoin de provisions ~~_____~~ d'argent.

~~_____~~ nouvelles, bagages ~~_____~~ est de retour à ~~_____~~
~~_____~~ travaille à ~~_____~~ va entrer
 à l'école de ~~_____~~ a été reçu
~~_____~~ aller à ~~_____~~ le ~~_____~~

Prenez cette carte du 15 avril. Bonne santé à tous
 Affectueuses pensées. Baisers
 Signature André

Après avoir complété cette carte strictement réservée à la correspondance d'ordre familial, biffer les indications inutiles. — Ne rien écrire en dehors des lignes.
ATTENTION. — Toute carte dont le libellé ne sera pas **uniquement** d'ordre familial ne sera pas acheminée et sera probablement détruite.

Opame le 6 - 1 1941

en bonne santé fatigué.
légèrement, gravement malade, blessé.
tué prisonnier.
décédé sans nouvelles.
de - La famille va bien.
besoin de provisions d'argent.
nouvelles, bagages. est de retour à
travaille à va entrer
à l'école de a été reçu
aller à le

Présente à vous et à votre famille mes bons vœux et souhaits pour la nouvelle année.
Affectueuses pensées. Baisers.

Signature.
Jean Lorrain

The same form could be used to present his wishes for the new year.

Written in German

PRISONER OF WAR POST
KRIEGSGEFANGENENPOST

Army Form No. W.3494
(Revised)
GREAT BRITAIN

Absender
Vor und Zuname
Ladybarr Fife Scotland
Gefangenennummer
A986642
Lager-Bezeichnung
Ansmuir Camp
No. 77 P.O.W. Camp
Great Britain

ADRESSE

An Mad. E. Rhein-Bettendorf
Empfangsort Kirchnaumen
Strasse Moselle
Land France

Wt. 51866/5128 13,600M. 5/45 S.C.W.S. Ltd. 51-6138

post

**Censorship of mail
exchanged with
prisoners.**

For new prisoners either in one camp or the other, the letters were rare and subject to censorship. Three examples to prove a "despite us" held in England and two French prisoners held in Germany.

Wt. 51866/5128

Kriegsgefangenenpost
Correspondance des prisonniers de guerre

Postkarte Carte postale

04.2.41.-16

Stalag III A
24 An
geprüft

Madame Veuve Courteaux

Gebührenfrei! Franc de port!

Absender: Evoi de	
Vor- und Zuname: Nom et prénom	
<i>Courteaux Lucien</i>	
Gefangenennummer: No. du prisonnier	
<i>52450</i>	
Lager-Bezeichnung: Nom du camp	
<i>Stalag III A</i> <i>969</i>	
Deutschland (Allemagne)	

Empfangsort: Lieu de destination	<i>Villers sous Prémy</i>
Straße: Rue	<i>Par Vandières</i>
Land: Landesteil (Provinz usw.)	<i>Meurthe o Moselle</i>
Dep	<i>Beltes Gebiet</i>

Kriegsgefangenenlager

Datum *16 Avril 1941*

Chers tous,

J'ai reçu le colis que vous avez bien voulu m'envoyer et qui m'a fait grand plaisir. Je vous en remercie sincèrement.

Je profite de l'occasion pour vous rappeler de bien suivre les instructions données précédemment concernant le contenu autorisé et l'emballage bien solide.

Sincères salutations,
Bons Baisers P. Plant

Periodically the population had to submit to a real "brainwashing", by speeches which it was necessary to attend, or through the press or posters. Pro-German newspapers were also specially edited.

Likewise in schools where French teachers of the pre-war period remained mostly in place but with the obligation to educate in German and after having undergone an internship training and conditioning in Germany, a training course called "Umschulung". It was in fact a true rehabilitation that they were experiencing and they were then classified as resistant, docile or zealous. Refractories were removed from office and replaced by German or Austrian teachers, often teachers in this case and on whom celibacy was imposed. Each morning the day started with the Hitler salute and propaganda. Education was to complete one day each week with German ideological training and indoctrination under the direction of German instructors



Kirsch-lès-Sierck children play war in 1941.

Children have adapted their games by imitating the throwing of grenades, typically a German weapon.





The war caught the children even in schools.

Periodical alert exercises were organized in schools.

Here is the school of Buding in 1941 where every child is equipped with his gas mask. It is in the holster worn over the shoulder.

Young girls and boys were summoned separately in the village halls or outdoor venues. Sometimes, for small villages, the convocation was to the capital of the canton or where several villages met in the same place. Adolescents had to participate in sports and gymnastic exercises while following the course of indoctrination. It was of course mandatory to attend this kind of day activity and was better to have a verifiable excuse in case of absence.

Increasingly these young people were enrolled in youth organizations of the Nazi party, the Bund Deutscher Mädel for girls and the Hitler Jugend for boys, organizations made mandatory in August 1942. Many of the Mosellan youth made their instructors dizzy during the indoctrination sessions they were so unruly. The schoolchildren were also convened, under supervision of an adult, when it was the season, for the collection of bugs in the fields of potatoes as early as 1941. When children spotted beetles they had to bring them in a box, and the authorities gave the order to spray the entire concerned sector.

Many directives were regularly given to residents as an obligation for example close any opening at night in a way that light cannot be seen, especially from the beginning of 1944, by the pilots of R.A.F or U.S. planes, nor provide landmarks to facilitate the destruction of any particular locality near military targets.

Finally, in addition to the SA, small sections of the Moselle region were created and organized, for example at Koenigsmacker or localities in the Sierck valley, parades and processions on Sunday morning, a series of para-military organizations existed for coaching civilians. To conscript men and women and anchor the Hitler regime to the population, organizations such as the NSKK (National Sozialistische Kraftfahrer Korps) for drivers of vehicles (paramilitary oriented institution), NSV (National Sozialistische Verband), a kind of German Red Cross, or even KDF (Kraft durch Freude), an organization responsible for the development of leisure, were introduced into the Moselle region.

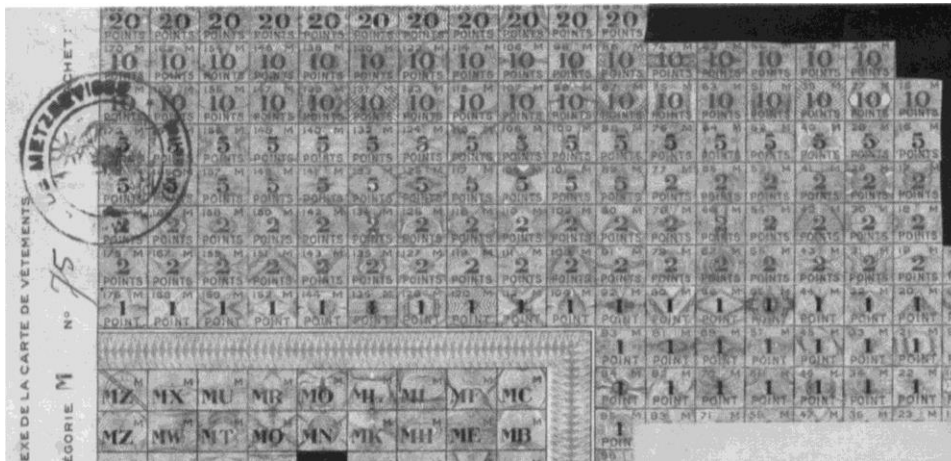
In parallel with this ideological conditioning singularly restricting individual freedoms, there were also restrictions both on food and purchases of clothing or shoes. To meet the daily nutritional needs and provide the basic necessities such as soap, sugar, shoes or clothing, for example, the occupiers created a ticket system for access from the end of 1940 or early 1941.



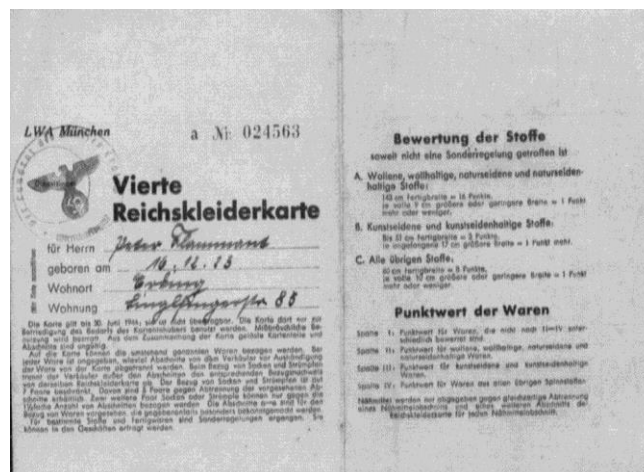
Hunting for bugs.

Children were even mobilized at the economic level. So in the spring, in each school, they were responsible for identifying bugs in the potato fields. Then, with adults, the infected plots are treated with the sprayer.

The scene depicts Joseph Gindt as a group leader and among the children there is Lucien Bruant.



Card for the purchase of clothing ration





Bestien Grocery in 1943.

This grocery store located on Laydecker Street in Thionville certifies well the difficulties of re-supply during the conflict. The shelves are almost empty and the choice of items very limited. Note the list of prices in German on the Blackboard.



Each family had books for such or such a product with a quota per day and per person and coupons that the trader withdrew from as purchases were made. Pregnant women or mothers of infants had a special quota and a specific regime. They had to make a specific request at City Hall to have the power to buy shoes and clothes. The ticket, which authorized a purchase, did not absolve from payment of course. Each interviewee remembers the red tape and long delays for these goods coveted especially by teenagers. Frequently a very strong memory comes to the mind of witnesses: one of the pairs of entirely wooden-soled shoes, one-piece or composed of small strips of wood with crevices to allow for the articulation of the foot and thus a relatively normal walk.

The farmers underwent a precise calculation of harvests made and their cattle was listed including the farmyard animals. There were mandatory deliveries of milk to make each day according to the number of cows. Same thing for the eggs to be delivered each week based on the number of hens counted on the farm or in the household of workers. A "Bauern Führer" periodically controlled the delivered quantities. Finally the slaughter of a pig was allowed only after obtaining an authorization and the family which had just slaughtered an animal did not have any more tickets of meat during a certain number of weeks. Needless to say that the frauds were numerous and that one generally slaughtered two animals instead of one when one had obtained an authorization while arranging to kill them exactly at the same time in order to have only one howl at the time of sticking. Or then one slaughtered clandestinely, at night, after having struck the animal with a sledge or to have made it drunk with plum brandy (what sacrilege!) to avoid the cries. It also happened that the controller himself may have been corrupt and did not declare the slaughter.

Unrechnungskarte
für Selbstversorgung mit Fleisch und Fetten

Inhaber: *Klammer* (Name) *Kyria* (Wirtin)

Beruf: *Vogel*

Anschrift: *Rathulup*

Gültig für die Zeit vom *9.3.46* bis *29.11.46*

Datum	Anzahl der zu versorgenden Personen	Inhaber dieser Karte hat noch Anspruch auf kg Anrechnungsgewicht	Unterschrift und Stempel der Kartenausgabestelle
<i>30.1.46</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>121</i>	
<i>16.3.46</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>71</i>	

Unrechnungsbescheid
bei Hauschlachtungen

An *Johann Klammer*

Auf Grund der von Ihnen am *16.3.46* vorgenommenen Hauschlachtung von *1* Schwein, Kalb, Schaf, Hind und des dabei festgestellten Anrechnungsgewichtes von *60* kg sind von Ihnen

Name: _____

- 1. Klammer J. P.* 8.
- 2. Klammer Kyria* 9.
- 3. Klammer Wrobel* 10.
- 4. Klammer Joz* 11.
5. 12.
6. 13.
7. 14.

auf die Dauer von *18* Wochen (d. h. vom *9.3.46* bis zum *16.4.46*) händig mit Fleisch, Fleischwaren und Schlachtfetten zu versorgen. Bis zu dem genannten Zeitpunkt erhalten die genannten Personen keine Fleischkarten und keine Fettkarten außer für Butter.

Etwasige Änderungen in der Zahl der zu versorgenden Personen sind sofort der Ausgabestelle zwecks Umrechnung des angegebenen Zeitraums zu melden.

Rathulup, den _____ 194

Temporary deprivation of meat tickets.

When a pig was slaughtered, for which it was necessary to request an authorization, according to the weight of the animal, weight checked by a German, and according to the number of people to be nourished in the family concerned, there was a temporary withdrawal of meat tickets.



Milk collection and its distribution.

Farmers were required to deliver milk every day and in imposed quantity. It was even to be delivered to a fixed place in each village. At Haute-Parthe delivery was Wax farm and Cécile Wax was responsible for control and recording deliveries. They stored the milk in large cans and then it was routed to the outlets in the city, those with ration tickets needed to line up.

Work at the spinning wheel.

Similarly to cope with the shortage of cloth young Faulbach women did not hesitate to get back to the spinning wheel and make wool clothes or at least socks for men forcibly conscripted into the German army.



To work around the shortage of products, was tens of kilometres by bicycle to buy food from Luxembourg, either because they were not found in Moselle (it was the case in September 1940 with sugar or chicory used to prepare coffee at the time), or because the quantities purchasable with tickets were higher than at Luxembourg. Luxembourg traders did not hesitate to exceed the official quantities and this was known. Teens at the time, elderly people of our days, all have anecdotes to tell about it and often took foolish risks for such or such product, often smuggled and taunting the occupier. More of the sons or daughters of farmers went also to the Luxembourg to trade with the butter made in secret and exchanged for bacon and eggs, food not found in France. All these movements were mainly by bicycle, first because public transit that functioned was rare but also and mainly because these exchanges asked for discretion. In addition the region was regulated.

GENDARMERIE NATIONALE
 Numéro de la carte: 4905.
 Nom: Gianoli.
 Prénoms: Jean.
 Lieu de naissance: Cattenom.
 Département de la Moselle.
 Date de naissance: 8 novembre 1888.
 Domicile: Cattenom.
 Rue et numéro: de la Cinquième 9.
 Département de la Moselle.
 Profession: employé de bureau.
 (Signature du titulaire.)

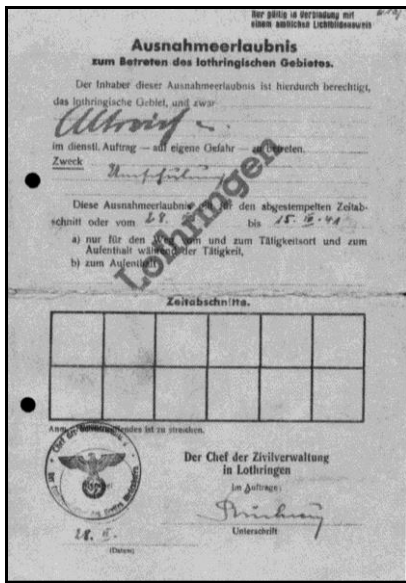
Délivré par (1)
 Mode de locomotion autorisé: autobus
 et bicyclette.
 Périmètre: Chionville.
 A Chionville, le 18 avril 1940.
 (Signature.) Le Capitaine FRENISY, Com^{de} la Section
 (Cachet.)



(1) Indiquer l'autorité.

Traffic authorities.

To travel one also had to have a pass. Sometimes the same document stated the mileage allowed from the village of residence. This process had already been established by the authorities in France in 1940 during the "phony war".



Authorization for travel



Bus lines created by the Germans.

To allow civilians to travel to accomplish some of the constraints imposed, the occupier has implemented bus services. Here a German line bus during a stop at Fixem in 1942; the young Frisch is sitting on the hood. .



The Moselle ferry.

Between Cattenom and Basse-Ham or Kœnigsmacker, The ferry worked as usual in 1942 but German soldiers used it simultaneously with the locals. Here we recognize many inhabitants of Cattenom.

Obviously this system could not last until 1944 and Luxembourg was also affected by the shortages as early as 1942 or 1943. It must be said that the first priority was the war and that the war economy had replaced the peacetime economy. Besides, the ticket system lasted beyond the end of the conflict until 1948 and sometimes even until 1949. During these years, products such as sugar or flour were rare and we travelled away to get to such a mill or such a stall. Couples who married in 1947 or 1948 knew something of it, it was difficult to bake for the wedding due to lack of flour and also buying a wedding dress or footwear was expensive. Even in 1948, a pair of shoes and a suit exceeded the monthly average wage of a worker.

The textile shortages lasted several years and much civilian clothing was made-up from outfits of American or German army clothing reworked by village seamstresses.

There is also a pretty tragic case to remind us about it and which dates back to the month of September 1944. In Cattenom, the Germans had transformed the military camp into a center for storage of outfits and a center for relaxation and convalescence, especially for German sailors. However, 31 August to 1 September, before the rapid breakthrough of the troops of Patton, German troops evacuated this camp in precipitation. In front of the windfall, the people of all the surrounding villages raided the stock held by the German Navy at Camp Cattenom.

The barracks was truly pillaged and not just Cattenom and Sentschich of course but also Boust, Basse- and Haute-Parthe, of Boler, of Evange, of Fixem and many other localities also without doubt, took jackets, pants, shirts, shoes and even furniture by emptying officer housing. This looting almost ended very badly because the Germans who had evacuated the position, returned to the village and to the camp at the delay of the U.S. offensive, the army was blocked by the famous fuel supply problems. Some people were caught in the act of theft, on a Sunday morning, and were slaughtered on the spot (two people of the same Cattenom military camp and two residents of Fixem at Sentschich on the way back carrying a cart full of furniture). Given the scope of the looting (we can talk about sacking, and a real rampage on the premises), the Germans decided to make an example. Order was given to the people of Cattenom and villages surrounding to render effects stolen within a period of a few hours under penalty of public execution of the men of Cattenom, who had in the meantime, been stopped and gathered in the middle of the village at former Café Sindt. And yet time was extended following the intervention of the parish priest; the same time gotten for Fixem. In a few hours a heap of clothes and shoes reappears and these effects were brought back to the camp of Cattenom. Therefore, the Cattenom order was stopped and the gathered men were spared. Exceptional mercy in light of the context!

It prevented the loss in Cattenom and the surrounding area population of lives and in the following days the fear of bloody reprisals and the relief came only later, when Americans permanently liberated the village and settled down with a body of army in the Cattenom forest, in November and December 1944.

(3) The importance of religion in these difficult years.

Many testimonies emphasize the return to regular and sometimes diligent religious practice. Admittedly, the reasons for invoking the aid of God did not fail to pray for the soldiers still trapped in Germany, or being forcibly conscripted into the German army, for those who were killed during the war (in some villages toll is heavy: some 50% of the conscripted died in battle, the record being Haute-Parthe with 7 departures where there were 7 deaths). More generally the role of priests seems to have

been very important since the evacuation and the intensity of the religious practice of the Mosellans was already surprising in the Vienne and Charente.



Religious ceremony in Thionville.

At the congress of non-commissioned reserve officers of Thionville, on 8 and 9 July 1939, accompanied by a solemn Mass celebrations and speeches by military warriors, reflecting the importance given to religion in any official ceremony, the importance of assistance is revealing with more than a thousand attendees.

The occupiers also quickly realized that many clergymen were of French culture and were hostile to the Hitler regime and began a wave of early expulsions and prohibitions of those preaching in French in November 1940. Then very quickly dechristianization began and many parishes had no priest. It was to replace the Catholic religion by the "Nazi religion" and the cult of the Führer. The Germans even tried, unsuccessfully, to transform celebrations as popular as Christmas into a pagan holiday (they also tried in another way, and always in vain, to turn 1 May into a celebration of the Nazi party). As a religious practice it was still a way to resist the occupier, especially if the priest was a renowned Francophile.

The Bishop, Monsignor Heintz, was expelled to Lyon bluntly as early as August 16, 1940, following the precautions manifested in Place St Jacques in Metz the day before, with the priests committed and patriotic, as well as almost all religious, especially the teaching congregations, migrated to the free zone and were replaced by more docile Mosellan or Lorraine parish priests or German priests of the regime orders. More than 400 priests had thus already been expelled in September 1940 and other evictions followed in 1941 as approximately 50% of the workforce. In July 1941 several Mosellan priests had even been arrested, interviewed and sent to Nancy by the Gestapo when the Germans were aware of their double game. Also expelled to the free zone, in July 1941, from the sector of Thionville, Basse-Yutz, Basse-Ham and Thionville were parish priests because they were considered to be undesirable.



The expulsion of the religious of Terville.

Having found that the clergy in Moselle in its vast majority was francophile and hostile to the Nazi ideas, the occupiers quickly decided to proceed to their expulsion. This was also the fate of the religious teachers and nurses, here those of Terville, shipped to Lyon as early as the autumn of 1940. Then there was a specific formation of Lorraine priests in Speyer.

From September 1940 the precautions of the occupier increased as a preventative. Thus they proceeded with the closure of religious schools, transforming the seminary of Metz to a prison and the training of priests in Speyer. Even confessional groups were suspect and were either dissolved, or banned by organizations that depended on the NSDAP. Obviously their cash was confiscated by the Nazi regime. Everywhere the regime sought to make followers to better frame the population but overall the Catholic clergy was refractory. Final measure taken by the Germans as early as 1943 and widespread in July 1944: the bells of the churches were removed to recover the bronze for cannons and the priests who refused the measure were deported. Similarly the processions through the streets were prohibited from 1943.

The Vichy regime protested, in vain, to the German authorities when they took the measure of the importance of the evictions of the Mosellan religious to the free zone. They protested as they wanted to rely on the clergy in its business of 'national revolution'. For example, they urged bishops and priests to multiply efforts to anchor the religious faith in the spirit of the French and to make their contribution to the 'renewal' of France from 1941 and included the annexed area. It basically amounted to ask them to be docile toward the occupier in Moselle and collaborate on the theses of Pétain in the rest of the France.

The Bishops of France made the most of, in July 1942, to organize a pilgrimage in honor of the "great return", the return of France "to God, to Christ, with the Virgin Mary as a mediator" and proposed to carry a statue of the Virgin throughout the country by multiplying the processions and prayers in order to obtain assistance for stopping the war.



Easter mass for the troops.

If religious practice had been somewhat neglected before the conflict, it was not any more the case during the war, including among troops. Here the mass is celebrated on the heights of Mondorff, the morning of Easter 1940, for the French troops of the 44th G.R.R.F (France/ECPAD)

It came at the same time as the commemoration of the consecration of France to Mary, Queen of France, dating back to 1638, at the wishes of Louis XIII. However it was in 1938 that they had just celebrated the thirteenth centennial of the miraculous landing of the "Notre-Dame de Boulogne" (a boat with the bow sculpture of Mary holding a child on her left arm which came aground on the beach at Boulogne in 638, and this docking was followed by the construction of a sanctuary and the development of a pilgrimage especially since there is where miracles occur).

The bishops therefore decided to choose this statue and the cult of Notre-Dame de la Mer or Notre-Dame de la Nef for their project. A large pilgrimage to Boulogne-sur-Mer was organized in late July 1942 and then a "cruise" of Notre-Dame de Boulogne was decided across the country. A trailer was built to accommodate the small miraculous boat and carry it across the country and even to the annexed area. To save time the diocese built a replica, so the piety of the faithful could be practiced earlier. Throughout a ceremony during which one prays the Rosary was organized in the region, a ceremony at which the Germans were not included. A celebration in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was also introduced at the same time. This cult of the Virgin of the Grand Return ended then in 1946.

The papacy acted in the same vein and on 31 October 1942, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the apparition of the Virgin Mary at Fatima, Pope Pius XII dedicated the Church around the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary to accelerate the return of peace.



Expelled Mosellans on a pilgrimage to Lourdes.

Among the Mosellans expelled those of Aumetz, including the Thomas family, settled in Millau in the Southwest. From there they organized in 1941 a pilgrimage to Lourdes to pray to the Virgin Mary to stop the war.



Celebration of the feast of Corpus Christi in Thionville June 7, 1942.

The presence of a dense and compact crowd reflects religious fervour at the time. In adversity we find that basic reflexes and religious practices become a comfort. The procession was easier to organize in Thionville than in other parishes. Indeed, Father Wagner was expelled and replaced by two German chaplains (one officiated at St. Elizabeth and the other at Our Lady of Providence) and the two "Deutsche Reichs" had more opportunities to obtain appropriate authorizations.

In a more commonplace but daily way the villagers squeezed up elbows around their priest, when there remained one. Every day and by district, we went to the church to pray in common, with or without a cleric to supervise, in or in front of one of the small chapels situated near villages or included in the cemetery. Sometimes these prayers were held in the countryside before a "wayside shrine". On Sundays the service was full. The processions and collective celebrations of the normal Catholic calendar were overtly organized even ostentatious in a conspicuous manner, as for example Corpus Christi or Rogation Days, even if the bells were silent. Finally the occupier banned these gatherings in 1943. There were even a kind of small local pilgrimages which appeared, as proven in the example of Terville, and communities managed to organize a pilgrimage to Lourdes.

Terville, a commune not evacuated in 1939 and 1940, organized on an idea of the parish priest and throughout the duration of the conflict a procession in honor of St. Therese of the parish church, still unfinished at the time. This ceremony was held the first Sunday of every month and the success was such that the building struggled to contain the pilgrims who flocked from across the region of Thionville. All Church benches were occupied and the crowd massed even in the aisles where following the mass they were standing. It also resulted in a good taking during the collection and work started for the construction of the bell tower of the church.



First communion during the evacuation.

During the evacuation to the Vienne, priests had often contributed to the cohesion of the villagers who were clueless by this exile. Here the children of Kœnigsmacker make their first communion in Lavausseau in Vienne in 1940.

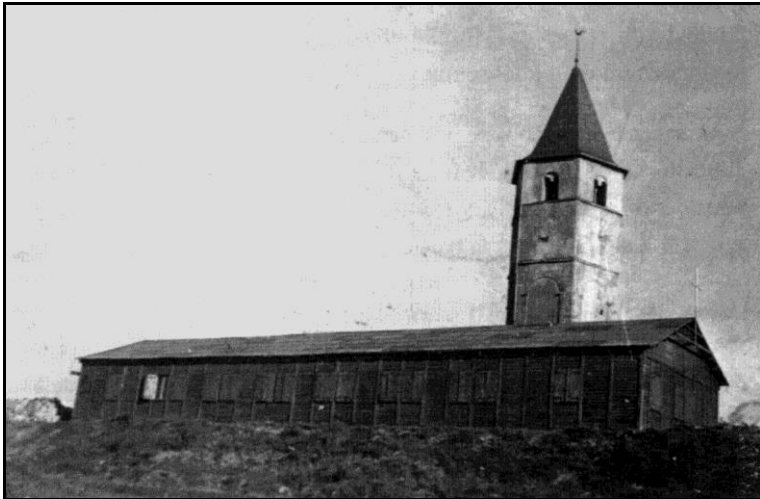
In 1944, Terville in the steel Valley was the only village allowed by the Americans to stay put while all neighbouring municipalities had undergone a second evacuation, due to the violence of the aerial bombardments. Obviously the people attributed this 'miracle' to Ste Thérèse and the intensity of the cult rendered to this Holy throughout the conflict.



The return of the statue of the Christ of Pity in Hagondange.

The statue venerated in the parish for decades, had been evacuated to the Vienne by a decision of Fine Arts and with the help of the French military authorities on 31 October 1939. In the spring of 1941 the Germans found the box and its contents at the City Hall of Dissay, a village where the inhabitants of Contz-les-Bains had sought refuge. At the insistence of the German "Bürgermeister" of Koenigsmacker,

the statue was returned to Metz in June 1941. On June 29, 1941, a German truck brought back the object worshipped at the Church of the village. On the afternoon of Sunday, a solemn ceremony and a grand procession were organized by the Abbot Schneider to return the statue to the Chapel St Roch. It was a wagon that carried the statue up to the Chapel and a packed crowd attended the event.



Wooden church at Usselskirch.

In order to follow as quickly as possible religious services the inhabitants of Basse and Haute-Parthe constructed a provisional Church of Wood around the Bell Tower of Usselskirch from 1945 and at the end of the war. The wood of the German military barracks in the area was quickly recovered.



Procession organized in 1945 in Sierck-les-Bains.

In a village terribly marked by fighting, this procession is through downtown. It is either of St Cyriaque, traditional celebration in the area, or more likely the procession as part of the crusade for peace. In 1945, in turn, each village hosted a cross walking through the main streets of the town procession organized to ensure peace in the world.



The training of youth by the clergy.

Priests who remained in the Moselle region also played an important role especially in organizing choirs. Here is the choir of the parish of Yutz grouped around the parish priest in 1944.

(4) Collaborators and informers.

If narratives left by the witnesses of this history are prolix on the circumstances of the evacuation or on the context of the return to Moselle and poignant when it is a question of telling the misfortunes of such or such family, the adversities of such or such deserter, they are very discreet on the other hand on the business of collaboration or informing.

Everywhere people are afraid and are wary even of their neighbors and officials designated by the Germans to control the population and bring the words of order. Means of pressure available to the Germans are considerable since the annexation in November 1940, including the police means. The occupier could also impose participation in paramilitary organizations and civilian collaboration movements on the Moselle.

If we have to handle with caution documents giving evidence that a person adhered to a Nazi official body, we can consider on the other hand that the mosellan storekeepers were not necessarily obliged to apply scrupulously the German directives. Yet we remember exactly, rather often with resentment, storekeepers who applied with an excessive zeal the instructions and sold only the statutory doses planned for foodstuffs, not hesitating to weigh articles by the gram.

However nobody wants to talk about liable Mosellans whatsoever, established by the occupiers, being overzealous and applying Nazi orders as closely as possible. Nobody wants to remember the denunciations that have been earned by this or that family deported to Germany, Bohemia and Moravia, to the Sudetenland or Silesia. Yet in every village there were pro-Nazi and ideological informers, who were such for expediency or simply for personal reasons for resentment. Everywhere for sordid pecuniary interests or past disputes over land ownership on a particular issue of succession, which led to anonymous denunciations and deportations.

On the other hand nobody mentions either the revenge perpetrated in 1944 and 1945 to some notable contributors who were copiously beaten or received a travel ban in their locality, temporary or permanent. Nobody wants to mention the "clippings" of hair of women who attended the Germans. And yet in many places there were problems, people publicly abused for collaboration, families ostracized by society, women shaved in a public place, people walked through the streets with a rope around their necks, houses vandalized, brawls and exchanges of gunfire.

Also often it was little enough to pass from supposed contributor status (those who have really worked and largely benefited were more often abandoned in time) to that of recognized resistant. It was obviously easy to denounce anonymously during the war and then, before the progress of the Allied troops, to join at the last moment the camp of the "conscience of the last hour". Many have dared to do so!

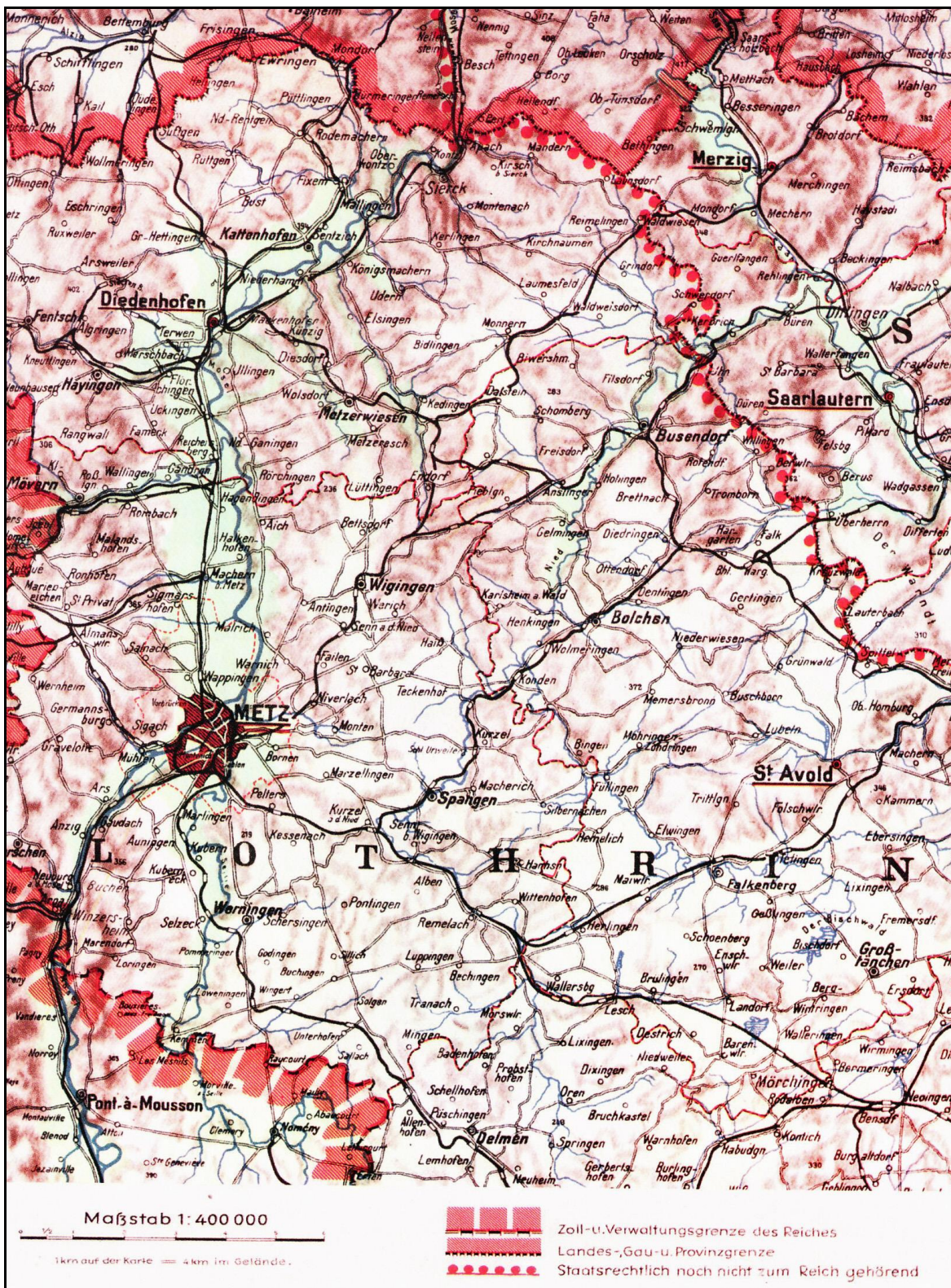
More numerous are stories from another misfortune that hit some "despite us" deserters and other young Gaullist Patriots denounced by unscrupulous neighbours as pro-nazis with the American troops. These Mosellans were shipped by the US Army at the time of the liberation and shipped to a camp in Cherbourg, where they were harshly treated and unjustly detained entire weeks or even months at the end of 1944 to spring 1945. Americans hated and despised the deserters. As to the "despite us" caught with their unit by the Soviets, many have lost their lives or their freedom with a few months to a few years in prison camp.

If we examine a record encrypted by the German occupation in Moselle looking closely at studies, there were nearly 7,800 direct arrests for anti-German propaganda either for breach of the Act of the war economy or for listening to the B.B.C, for assisting prisoners of war to escape or deserters to flee to the free zone. More than 1,000 people were arrested as members of nearly 2,400 Mosellan Jews and resistance movements. Of the total number of people arrested almost 6,000 were deported to Germany in 167 different prisons and in 16 concentration camps and 1,800 were locked in prisons at the fort de Queuleu, true concentration in 1944, or other prison camps in Moselle, Meurthe-et-Moselle and Alsace.

There were nearly 3,000 victims on these 7,800 arrests.

Conversely looking at treatment in late 1944 and early 1945, there had been 7 executions which is very little. After the armistice of May 1945, there were a little more than 4,100 charges and convictions in the courts, the military court of Metz, the Court of justice of Moselle for serious business or for other crimes and those courts served until 1947. It represents after all only one percent of the population that stayed in Moselle and many of the condemned persons were deprived of the French nationality. At the same time there were 859 acquittals.

At each end of the conflict, and there is no exception to the rule, there have been errors, omissions, and some big scandals.



[Customs administrative border of the Empire
 Country's border province Gau
 State law not Belonging to the kingdom]

Germanized map of the region of Thionville.