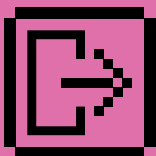


VICTOR BODSON



- 1902:** born in Luxembourg City
- From 1930:** sets up a support network for Jews and political refugees
- 1934:** Socialist member of Parliament and municipal councillor in Luxembourg City
- 1940:** Minister of Justice; flight of the Grand Ducal family and members of the government to France, later to Portugal, Great Britain and Canada; diplomatic relations established with the Allies
- 1944:** return of the government-in-exile to Luxembourg
- 1971:** recognition as 'Righteous Among the Nations' by Yad Vashem

■ ■ One full year of oppression and persecution already weighs on the people of Luxembourg. Its courage, however, is unimpaired, its spirit of resistance as alive as ever. The Grand Duchess and the Government of Luxembourg look to the unflinching patriotism of their people for renewed courage in their struggle for the liberation of their country.

Victor Bodson, *How Luxembourg Lost Her Freedom* (Belgium 1/4), 1941



Group photo in front of the Luxembourg Embassy in London: Minister Bodson meeting some of the Luxembourg volunteers, including Jean and Antoine Neven, London 1942

Victor Bodson became active against Fascism and National Socialism as a young man. In the 1930s, during the Spanish Civil War, he supported Spanish Republicans and Luxembourg volunteers in their struggle against Franco's Fascism. He also helped several Jews and victims of political persecution in Nazi Germany to cross the border into Luxembourg or Belgium. In 1940, as Minister of Justice, Victor Bodson went into exile with the government and the Grand Duchess. There he campaigned for Jewish refugees from Luxembourg to be allowed to enter the USA. While based in London, Bodson promoted international efforts to bring Nazi criminals to justice. He broadcast regular appeals on the BBC calling for Luxembourgers to resist the Germans; he helped Luxembourgers who wanted to take part in the armed struggle against Hitler to leave the country, and he organized aid for political prisoners. The government returned to Luxembourg in 1944 amid tensions between it and resistance organisations, who accused it of having abandoned the country.

■ ■ And you, young Luxembourgers, you are now must-be-Germans, being forced by the Nazis to join their armies. Do never forget that you are nothing but Luxembourgers and that you have but one enemy: The Germans! Save your young lives, join the Allies and desert wherever and whenever there is an opportunity.

Victor Bodson, speech, 15 Feb. 1943





Personne ne reconnaissait l'autorité du gouvernement qui était revenu. [...] J'ai salué les gens et tout à coup j'étais entouré par beaucoup de gens qui parlaient très haut. Je leur ai dit qui j'étais et que j'entendais rétablir l'ordre. Ils m'ont répondu que c'étaient eux qui faisaient l'ordre. [...] Ils étaient tous armés. Victor Bodson, interview, 1978

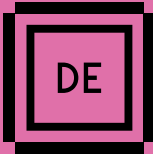


Londres 1944. S.A.R. la Grande Duchesse et ses Ministres

Minister Victor Bodson (above, standing left) at a meeting with Grand Duchess Charlotte and other government members, London, 1944



WILHELM DIEHL



02

- 1889:** born in Ausweiler/Reichenbach (D)
- 1932:** joins the NSDAP
- From** in charge of primary education in Luxembourg; district
- 1940:** administrator of Esch/Alzette
- 1944:** escape to Germany, administrator of Bernkastel district (D) and soldier
- 1946:** extradition to Luxembourg and internment at Grund (Luxembourg City)
- 1950:** trial and conviction in Luxembourg



Wilhelm Diehl giving a speech at the Esch/Alzette trade school

After the First World War, Wilhelm Diehl became a teacher in Trier (D). He joined the NSDAP in 1932, and in 1933 he was appointed district administrator in charge of education. In 1938 he was sent to the Sudetenland (now Czech Republic), which had just been annexed to Germany. There he helped set up the school system along National Socialist lines.

In August 1940 Diehl was posted to Luxembourg and put in charge of ‘Germanizing’ the school system. As district administrator of Esch/Alzette, he was also responsible for numerous business closures, arrests, dismissals of civil servants and confiscations. In 1942 he helped put down the strike against conscription in the Esch/Alzette district, and he coordinated the subsequent ‘resettlements’ of anti-Nazi families. In 1944 he fled to avoid falling into the hands of the Americans and was arrested in Austria in 1945. Extradited to Luxembourg, Diehl was tried and, in 1950, sentenced to 17 years hard labour. However, he was later released.

Wir sind nicht hier, um Euch Eures Volkstums zu berauben, denn wir wissen, dass es gerade Euer Volkstum war, das – bis auf einige Äußerlichkeiten – zum Wächter des deutschen Volkstums im Westen geworden ist. Eure Aufgabe ist es nur [...], als Amtsträger der Volksdeutschen Bewegung die Herzen Eurer Luxemburger Volksgenossen zu erobern. Nicht mit Zwang oder Gewalt werden wir vorgehen, sondern das Luxemburger Volk soll sich mit innerer Bereitschaft zu seinem Vaterland bekennen, das Deutschland heißt.

Wilhelm Diehl, speech, 11 Dec. 1940



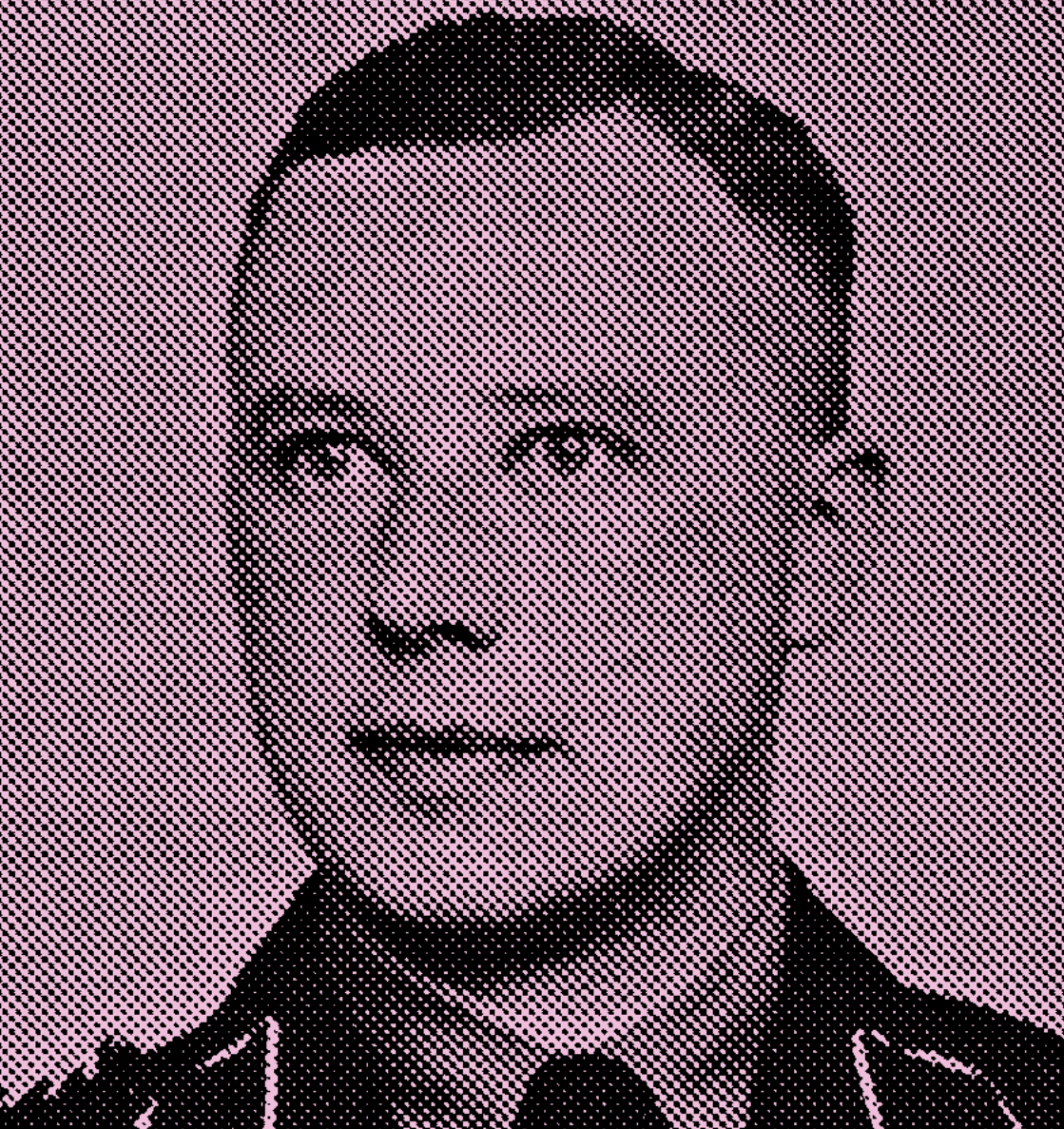


Für uns Deutsche ist Adolf Hitler der Nationalsozialismus. Wir glauben an ihn als an eine von Gottes Vorsehung begnadete Persönlichkeit. [...] In der Volksgemeinschaft findet der Nationalsozialismus seine weitere Verankerung, die auf dem Gedanken von Blut und Boden aufgebaut ist. Daher kann auch nur der ein guter Deutscher sein, der auch ein guter Luxemburger ist.

Wilhelm Diehl, speech, 10 Dec. 1940



NSDAP peaked cap like one worn by Wilhelm Diehl during his time in office



FRITZ HARTMANN



03

- 1906:** born in Rabenstein (D)
- 1933:** joins the NSDAP
- From 1934:** member of the SS working for the Gestapo in Berlin
- 1940:** head of the Gestapo in Koblenz (D)
- From 1941:** head of the Gestapo in Trier (D) and Luxembourg; carries out the large-scale deportations of the Jewish population to the ghettos in the East
- 1942:** president of the Luxembourg court-martial
- 1943:** dismissed as Gestapo head and transferred to the Eastern Front
- 1946:** arrest in Aichach (D) and extradition to Luxembourg
- 1951:** death sentence by the court of war crimes in Luxembourg; later commuted to life imprisonment with hard labour
- 1957:** released after 11 years and extradited to the Federal Republic of Germany



Poster 'Das Standgericht'  
(The Court-Martial),  
Luxembourg, 1942

Fritz Hartmann grew up in normal family circumstances. In 1934, after completing his studies, he was accepted into the SS and worked for the Gestapo in Berlin. He had joined the NSDAP one year earlier. Fritz Hartmann worked his way up: on 8 March 1941, he was appointed head of the Gestapo in Trier and Luxembourg. From then on he spent most of his time in Luxembourg. He was regarded as aloof and coarse, and he was one of the main perpetrators of the persecution of Jews in Luxembourg. He made the situation of the Jews even worse by issuing additional decrees. Starting in August 1941, he had an empty convent in Fünfbrunnen converted into a 'Jewish retirement home'. Over 300 Jews were imprisoned there until 1943. Hartmann inspected the place regularly, made life for the inmates even more difficult, harassed them and stole from them. From October 1941, Jews in Luxembourg were deported to the ghettos and extermination camps of eastern Europe. Fritz Hartmann often personally supervised the process. He also took harsh action against resistance fighters. When a 'general strike' broke out in Luxembourg in August/September 1942, he had it brutally suppressed. A state of emergency was imposed on Luxembourg and courts-martial were held, presided by Hartmann. Strike participants were arbitrarily charged, with no lawyer allowed to defend them. Hartmann intimidated the defendants, insulted them and gave them no opportunity to defend themselves. The court-martial sentenced 20 Luxembourgers to death and resettled their families in Poland or in what is now the Czech Republic.



The convent at  
Fünfbrunnen, site  
of the 'Jewish retirement  
home'





Als ich in Fünfbrunnen war, kam Hartmann wiederholt dorthin. Niemand durfte ihn anschauen. Von den Juden, welche nach Fünfbrunnen gebracht worden waren, hatte dieser oder jener seine Sachen in einen schönen Koffer verpackt. [...] Ich konnte zusehen, wie Hartmann sich verschiedene der schönsten Koffer ausuchte. Hartmann nahm das wahr und sofort begann er zu brüllen: „Sie werden erschossen, Sie werden erschossen!“ Ich stritt [...] ab, ihn beobachtet zu haben.

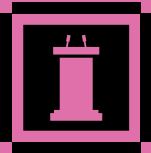
Henriette Kleeblatt, contemporary witness account, date unknown



The skull, symbol of the SS, which included Fritz Hartmann among its ranks



JOHANN KOETZ





- 1907:** born in Esch/Alzette
- 1932:** growing sympathy for National Socialism
- 1935:** joins several National Socialist groups in Luxembourg
- 1940:** volunteer translator for the Wehrmacht
- 1941:** local group leader in Esch/Alzette and member of the NSDAP
- 1944:** Wehrmacht volunteer, deployment to the Eastern Front, and Soviet prisoner of war
- 1948:** death sentence for high treason and execution by shooting

Ich habe mich anfangs gesträubt, derselben (der VdB) beizutreten, weil ich als Mann der ersten Stunde eine zu hohe Nummer erhalten hatte, denn ich war ja bei der Wehrmacht, als die VdB gegründet wurde. Danach auch wegen all des Wustes, der sich hier angesammelt hatte, und der, mir gegenüber, mit niedrigeren Nummern herum lief.

Johann Koetz, interrogation transcript (Tageblatt 278), 3 Dec. 1947



Local group leaders of the *Volksdeutsche Bewegung* (VdB, movement of ethnic Germans) meeting with national leader Damian Kratzenberg (standing in the middle: Johann Koetz)

Johann Koetz was one of the first Luxembourgers to be attracted by National Socialism. Very early on he was involved in distributing propaganda leaflets and in espionage activities. After the German invasion, Koetz volunteered as a translator for the Wehrmacht. In January 1941 he was appointed local group leader in Auf der Acht, a neighbourhood in Esch, and admitted to the NSDAP in June of the same year. Koetz was a fanatical control freak and a tyrannical collaborator who terrorized the population. He threatened ‘anti-German’ citizens with violence, confiscated radios and ordered forced closures of shops. His actions caused at least ten deaths. In January 1944 he volunteered to join the Wehrmacht. He was sent to the Eastern Front, where he became a Russian prisoner of war in July 1944. After his extradition, he was sentenced to death in Luxembourg in December 1947 and shot in Reckenthal on 4 March 1948.



Johann Koetz addressing Nazi sympathizers in Esch

Ich habe in Esch den Streik niedergebrüllt, während in Wiltz, wo mildere Kerls sitzen, Erschießungen vorgenommen werden mussten.

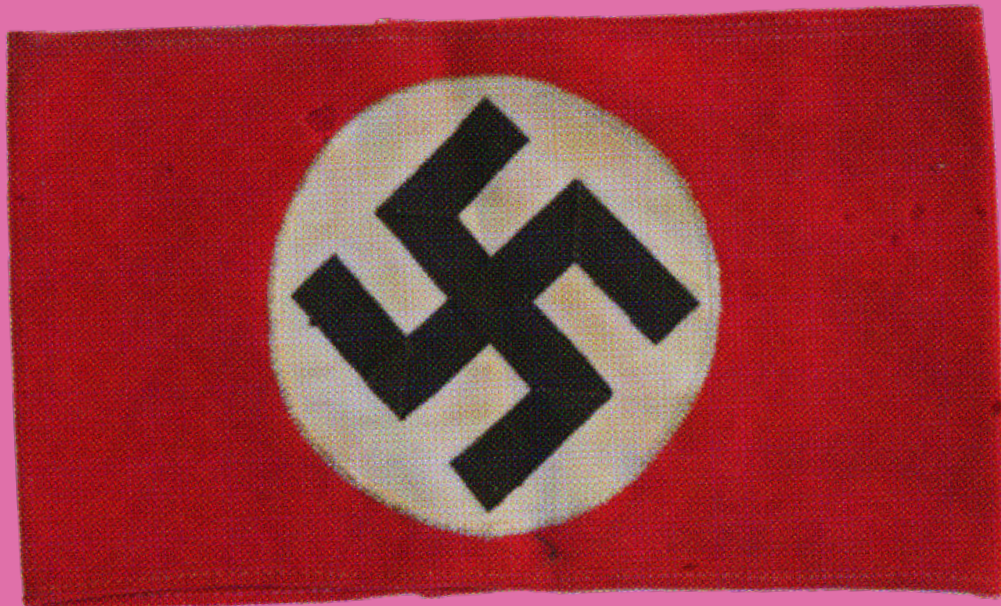
Edmond Dondelinger, testimony to exonerate Koetz (Tageblatt 275), 29 Nov. 1947





# Ich war deutsch, ich bin deutsch und ich bleibe deutsch!

Jean Koetz, according to the testimony of police officer Pletschette (Tageblatt 271), 25 Nov. 1947



Armband with swastika, symbol of the Nazi party, like the one worn by local group leader Koetz



DAMIAN KRATZENBERG



05

- 1878:** born in Clerf (L)
- 1902-** secondary school teacher for German and Greek in
- 1940:** Diekirch, Echternach and at the Luxembourg Athenaeum
- 1935-** president of GEDELIT (Society for German Literature and Art)
- 1940:** national leader of the Volksdeutsche Bewegung (movement of ethnic Germans)
- March 1941:** director of the Athenaeum
- 1946:** death sentence and execution by firing squad

Die Absicht der VdB war rein, hätte uns nur die Partei nicht mit Beschlag belegt, wir hätten es bewiesen, wir wollten das Beste der Heimat. Deutschland hatte gerufen u. die Losung: Heim ins Reich schien uns nicht nur ein Recht, sondern eine Pflicht zu sein.

Damian Kratzenberg, interrogation, 8 June 1946

Kratzenberg gives a speech to assembled Hitler youth members, Luxembourg, July/August 1942



In the 1930s, Damian Kratzenberg was an enthusiastic supporter of German language and literature and a convinced advocate of the Deutschstämmigkeit, or ethnic German roots, of Luxembourgers. In 1936 Adolf Hitler awarded him the 'Goethe Medal for Art and Science' in recognition of his services to German culture as a teacher and director of GEDELIT. After the occupation of Luxembourg by the German Reich, Kratzenberg was appointed national leader of the Volksdeutsche Bewegung (VdB, movement of ethnic Germans) in July 1940. In 1941 he was the first Luxembourger to be admitted to the NSDAP. His goal was to lead Luxembourg 'home to the Reich'. In many speeches, leaflets, newspaper articles and brochures he tried to convince Luxembourgers of the importance of joining the German Reich. Even the increasingly brutal, repressive and terrorist measures of Gauleiter Gustav Simon, which claimed numerous lives, did nothing to change his views. On 1 September 1944 he managed to avoid capture by American troops, taking refuge near Lake Constance in Germany. A year later he was arrested, extradited to Luxembourg and put on trial. Damian Kratzenberg was convicted of treason by a special court in August 1946 and executed by firing squad on 11 October 1946.

Mit der Verschickung in Konzentrationslager war ich absolut nicht einverstanden. Wenn man mir gefolgt hätte, wären keine Gewalttaten begangen worden.

Damian Kratzenberg, interrogation, 8 June 1946



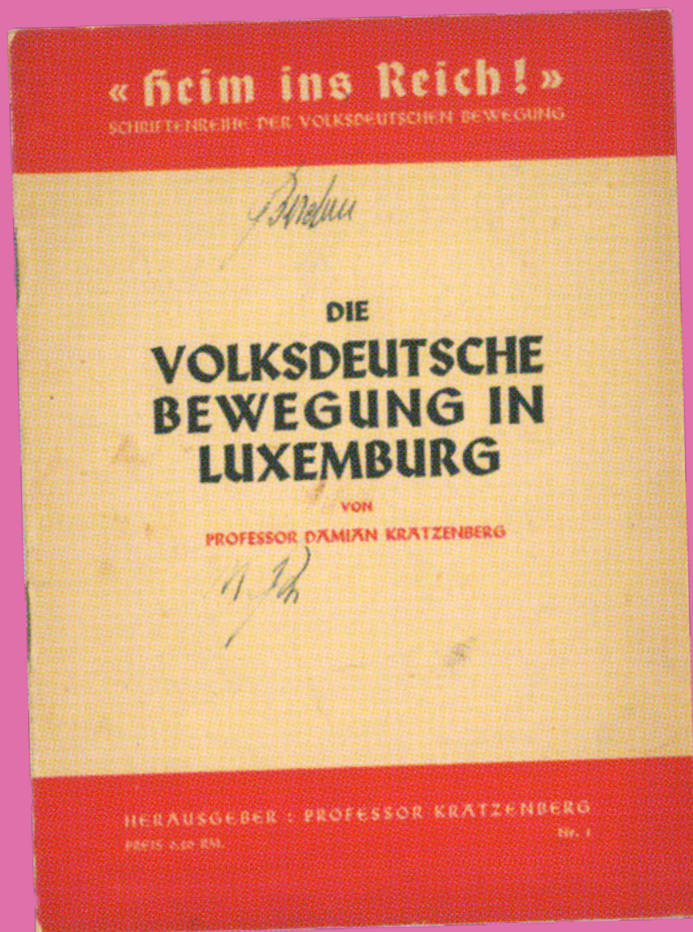
Caricature of Kratzenberg in the dock, artist: Albert Simon





Du bist deutsch nach allem, was du bist und hast, Abstammung, Sprache und Geschichte. Auf Deutschland bist du angewiesen in jeder Hinsicht: sprachlich, kulturell, wirtschaftlich, politisch. Du kannst gar nicht anders als deutsch sein.

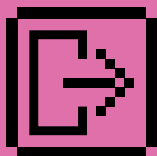
Damian Kratzenberg, brochure, 1940



Damian Kratzenberg published brochures of this type to gain Luxembourgers' acceptance for the Volksdeutsche Bewegung, Luxembourg, 1940



CHARLOTTE DE NASSAU



- 1896:** born at Berg Castle, Colmar-Berg (L)
- 1919:** becomes Grand Duchess and succeeds her sister Marie-Adélaïde; marriage to Prince Félix of Bourbon-Parma
- 1921:** birth of her first son, hereditary prince Jean
- 1939:** centenary of Luxembourg's independence and 20th anniversary of Charlotte's accession to the throne
- 1940:** flees with her family and the government to France, later to Portugal, England and the USA
- From 1941:** start of 'Good Will Tour', and from 1943 'Grand Western Tour' in the USA: Charlotte draws Americans' attention to Luxembourg resistance; Charlotte regularly gives radio speeches
- 1945:** returns to Luxembourg after five years of exile; tour through the devastated north and east of the country

■ ■ Mon peuple et les populations des pays occupés dirigent un regard plein d'espoir vers les Etats-Unis et la Grande-Bretagne. Nous savons que vos armées viendront nous libérer un jour. Ce jour venu, mon peuple se battra à vos côtés.

Charlotte de Nassau, speech, Nov. 1942

Following the abdication of her sister Marie-Adélaïde, Charlotte unexpectedly ascended the grand-ducal throne in January 1919. In 1939, the 100th anniversary of Luxembourg's independence fostered a new sense of national identity among the population. Charlotte thus became a symbol of Luxembourg's national independence. When the Second World War began on 1 September 1939, preparations were made for the head of state and for the government to flee in the event of an invasion. On 10 May 1940 Charlotte went into exile. Her activities in England and the USA secured Luxembourg's place on the side of the Allies. She met with many politicians, including US President Roosevelt. She made broadcasts to Luxembourgers at home via the BBC and thus bolstered the morale of the resistance, for whom she became a cult figure. Charlotte returned to Luxembourg on 14 April 1945. A few months earlier, the Battle of the Bulge had destroyed thousands of homes in the north and east of the country. The Oeuvre Nationale de Secours Grande-Duchesse Charlotte relief organisation was established to help war victims. The Grand Duchess also felt the need to visit the destroyed areas herself. She met with victims, listened to their concerns and sometimes even provided direct assistance.



Charlotte visits the BBC, London, 1943





Döst soll keng politesch Usprooch sinn, nëmmen e Grouss un iech all doheem, déi der ënner friemer Herrschaft liewe musst. E Grouss aus déifstem Häerz, deen ech glécklech sinn, un iech riichten ze kënnen. Dir wësst, wéi gären ech bei iech bliwwe wär, fir mat iech d'Suergen an d'Leed ze deelen, déi di Däitsch den 10. Mee iwwer onst klenzt glécklecht Land bruecht hunn.

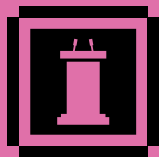
Charlotte de Nassau, speech, 9 Sept. 1940



*Volksempfänger* radio like this one were used to clandestinely listen to the Grand Duchess's speeches on the BBC



ALFONS PEFFER



07

- 1896:** born in Schiffflange (L)
- 1940:** joins the Volksdeutsche Bewegung (movement of ethnic Germans, VdB) and later becomes local group leader in Schiffflange
- 1941:** joins the NSDAP; appointed juror in Esch as well as district organisation leader
- 1943:** manager of the 'UT Lichtspiele' cinema.
- 1944:** flight to Dortmund (D) with his family
- 1948:** extradition to Luxembourg and seven-year prison sentence



A rally of the Volksdeutsche Bewegung on Adolf Hitler Square in Schiffflange

❏❏ Beweisen wollen wir, dass wir Nationalsozialisten sein wollen, dass unser Bekenntnis zum Führer nicht bloß ein Lippenbekenntnis war [...] nimm es auf als geringe Abzahlung der schweren Dankesschuld, die wir alle dem deutschen Volke gegenüber haben.

Alfons Pepper, letter to his son, June 1941

Alfons Pepper joined the VdB in July 1940 and became local group leader in Schiffflange in September. He held this position until 1942. Among other duties, he was responsible for numerous confiscations and shop closures. He supported every Nazi decision, including the incorporation of Schiffflange into Esch/Alzette. Pepper was a devoted Nazi who made a career for himself within the Esch district leadership, the body responsible for the political re-education of Luxembourgers.

In September 1944 he fled to Germany, where he was arrested in 1948 and extradited to Luxembourg. He was sentenced to seven years imprisonment and stripped of his political rights for having collaborated with Nazi Germany.



VdB local group leaders at a meeting with national leader Damian Kratzenberg (second from right Alfons Pepper)

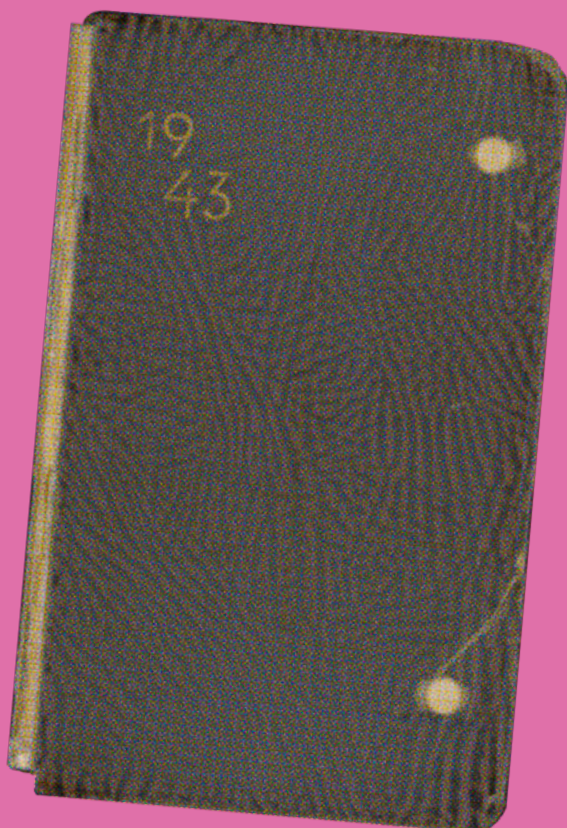




Am ersten Juli werden wir nach Esch eingemeindet. [...] Außerdem ist noch etwas vorgesehen, und zwar dein Vater als Schöffe der Stadt Esch. [...] Wir sind alle gespannt wie ein Flitzebogen, auf die Nachrichten vom östlichen Kriegsschauplatz, das kannst du dir ja denken. Aber wir werden auf eine harte Probe gestellt, denn die sagen uns vorläufig nichts im Heeresbericht. Aber das kann unser Vertrauen in den Führer nicht erschüttern.

Alfons Pfeffer, letter to his son, 25 June 1941

Alfons Pfeffer's diary for the year 1943





GUSTAV SIMON



08

- 1900:** born in Saarbrücken (D)
- 1925:** joins the NSDAP
- 1931:** Gauleiter of the Koblenz-Trier-Birkenfeld region (D)
- 1940:** head of the civil administration in Luxembourg
- Aug. 1940:** begins Germanization and enforcement of policies against Luxembourg's Jews
- Oct. 1940:** after the failed census, Simon starts to actively fight resistance organisations in Luxembourg; the deportation of Jews from Luxembourg begins
- Aug. 1942:** introduces compulsory military service in Luxembourg; has the 'general strike' bloodily put down and resettles Luxembourgers
- Sept. 1944:** flight to Germany
- 1945:** suicide in his cell

Ich darf Ihnen meinerseits versprechen, dass ich gegen alle, die es wagen würden, gegnerisch hervortreten, mit allen Mitteln schärfstens durchzugreifen entschlossen bin. [...] Gegen meine Gegner und die Gegner Deutschlands ist mir keine Maßnahme hart genug. Wer die Vernichtung Deutschlands will, den werden wir vernichten!

Gustav Simon, speech on the founding of the NSDAP in Luxemburg (Escher Tageblatt 222), 22 Sept. 1941

As head of Luxembourg's civil administration, Simon was the country's absolute ruler. His mission was to lead Luxembourg 'home to the Reich'. As part of his Germanization policy, all democratic institutions in Luxembourg were abolished by the end of 1940. French was banned, as were symbols of French culture such as the beret. French-sounding names, for instance of people and streets, had to be germanized. French citizens and other foreigners were forced to leave the country. At first Jews were also forced to leave, but starting in October 1941 they were deported to ghettos in the East and murdered. Simon wanted to make Luxembourg 'judenrein', or cleansed of Jews. With the help of the Gestapo, he also had political opponents and resistance fighters persecuted and murdered. Their families, the intellectual elite, and families of deserters were resettled in Poland or Czechia, their property confiscated. Under Simon, Luxembourg was de-facto annexed to Germany. Simon left Luxembourg on 9 September 1944, shortly before the country's liberation. He hid under a false name but was later arrested, and he committed suicide on 18 December 1945.

Es muss in der Geschichte ebenfalls die Lüge von der Selbständigkeit Luxemburgs behandelt werden. Es hat eine Selbstständigkeit nie gegeben.

Gustav Simon, speech to Luxembourg teachers and educators (Luxemburger Wort 304), 30 Nov. 1940



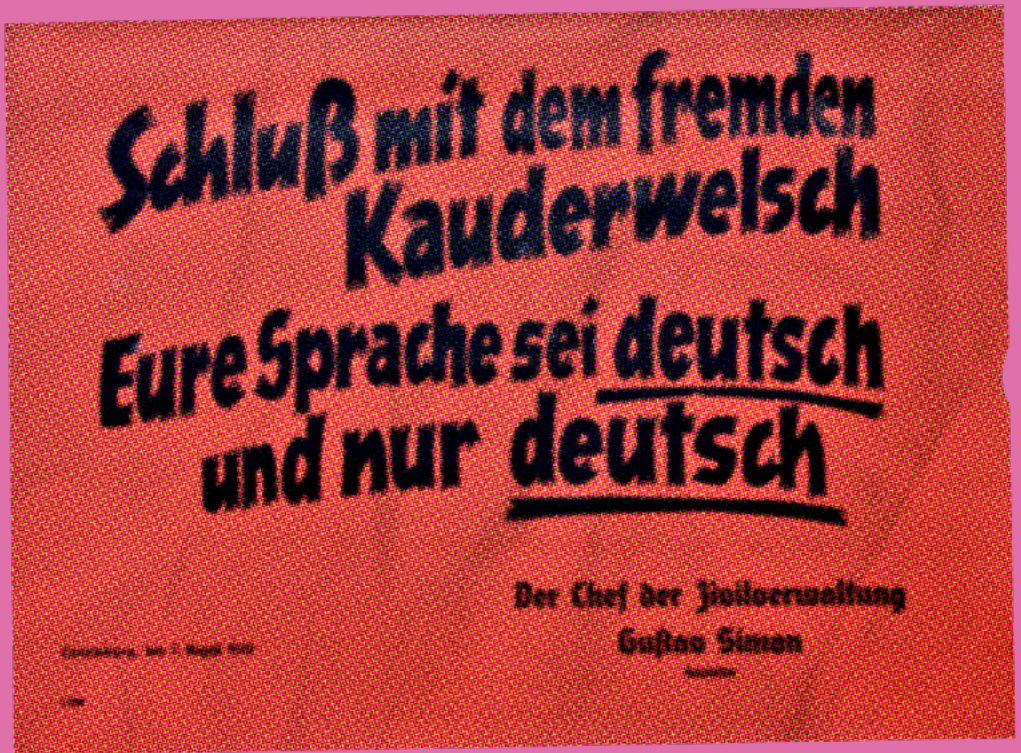
Official visit of Gauleiter Simon to Diekirch, 26 Oct. 1941





## Die Sprache des Landes Luxemburg und seiner Bewohner ist seit jeher deutsch.

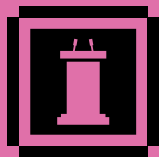
Gustav Simon, decree on the use of language in Luxembourg,  
6 Aug. 1940



With posters like 'Stop the foreign gibberish' Gustav Simon tried to convince Luxembourgers that they were German, Luxembourg, 7 Aug. 1940



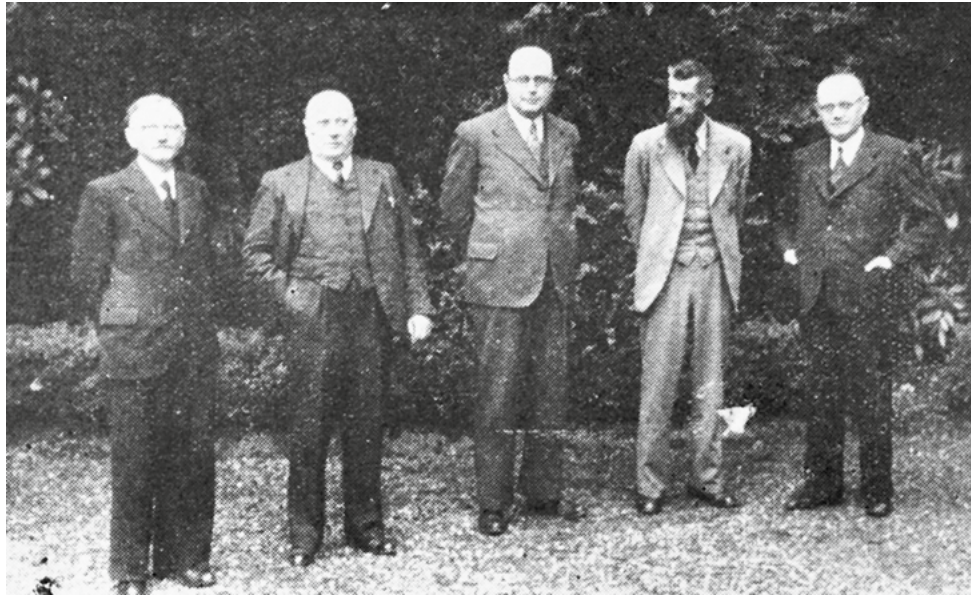
ALBERT WEHRER



09



- 1895:** born in Luxembourg City
- 1938:** Secretary-General of the government and representative of Luxembourg in Berlin (D)
- 1940:** head of the Administrative Commission; tries to preserve Luxembourg's independence and collaborates with the occupying forces; is arrested
- 1941:** sent to Plauen (D) and banned from returning to Luxembourg
- 1942:** settles in Leipzig (D)
- 1945:** returns to Luxembourg and resumes his diplomatic activities; later appointed ambassador to Germany and to France



Members of the Administrative Commission, which assumed political responsibility in Luxembourg after the government had fled, Luxembourg, 1940

Albert Wehrer joined the Foreign Ministry in 1930. In 1938 he became Secretary-General of the Government and Ambassador to Berlin. With the German invasion and the flight of the legitimate government, Wehrer took charge of the Luxembourg administration. As the highest official still in the country, he headed a kind of substitute government which cooperated with the Germans, including in Gauleiter Simon's Jewish policies, in the hope of preserving Luxembourg's independence. However, Wehrer's attempt to wrest absolute control of the administrative apparatus from Gauleiter Simon failed. In October 1940 he was deposed by Simon, arrested and sent to Germany. Albert Wehrer did not return to Luxembourg until 1945.

Le régime politique et administratif que l'Allemagne a établi dans notre pays dès ses premiers mois de l'invasion est un régime spécial, spécial dans son organisation et sa cruauté et différent dans sa structure des régimes établis dans d'autres territoires occupés. Préparant l'annexion pure et simple, il abolissait l'organisation morne de notre Etat et institua avec un personnel importé une administration purement allemande. Il s'empara non seulement de l'organisation de l'Etat, il s'empara aussi avec son propre personnel de l'économie du pays et cette organisation tant administrative qu'économique entraîna de bien lourdes conséquences dans tous les domaines de la vie nationale.

Albert Wehrer, Aide-Mémoire, 1945



La Chambre se réunit dans l'après-midi du samedi, 11 mai 1940, et vota la résolution instituant la commission de Gouvernement „Regierungskommission“ et conférant à cette commission les pouvoirs les plus étendus pour assurer le bon fonctionnement des services publics.

Albert Wehrer, Aide-Mémoire, 1945

Grand-Duché de Luxembourg  
CONSEIL D'ETAT

Avis du Conseil d'Etat.

Le Président soumet au Conseil une lettre lui adressée le 13 mai 1940 par M.le Secrétaire général du Gouvernement et qui est conçue dans les termes qui suivent:

“A Monsieur le Président du Conseil d'Etat:

En exécution d'une disposition du Gouvernement que les événements n'ont pas permis de formaliser, et conformément au vœu unanime des députés qu'il a été possible au bureau de la Chambre de réunir, les cinq conseillers les plus anciens en rang ont pris la direction des affaires selon les modalités résultant de l'annexe jointe.

Le collège des conseillers est contraint par une nécessité inéluctable de prendre les mesures les plus graves, et cependant il lui est impossible d'agir sans violer d'importantes dispositions de notre droit public. Ainsi dans l'état actuel de la situation il se trouve dans un conflit moral, dont il faut qu'il sorte, si le pays ne doit pas être livré à l'anarchie, et il demande pour cela l'appui moral du Conseil d'Etat.

La doctrine admet que lorsque le Gouvernement régulier est dans l'impossibilité d'agir, un Gouvernement de fait non seulement peut se constituer, ce qui peut toujours se faire, mais peut poser des actes valables. Si le Conseil d'Etat pouvait se rallier à cette théorie, l'administration centrale y trouverait, elle l'espère du moins, assez d'autorité pour pouvoir, avec l'appui des deux autorités concourant essentiellement à la formation des lois, prendre en main la direction des affaires. Les conditions nécessaires pour qu'un organe gouvernemental irrégulier puisse agir avec la même autorité et le même droit qu'un gouvernement régulier sont l'urgence extrême, la nécessité de la mesure prise et l'impossibilité de procéder selon les formes normales. Il n'est guère possible de nier que ces conditions sont remplies. Puis-je suggérer que le Conseil d'Etat, en cas d'avis favorable, désigne ceux de ses membres que les conseillers pourraient consulter en cas d'urgence extrême? Il est bien entendu et cette affirmation est sincère, que le Conseil d'Etat serait régulièrement entendu, selon la loi.

Le Secrétaire général du Gouvernement,

s./s. Albert Wehrer

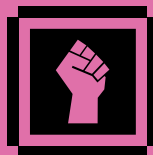
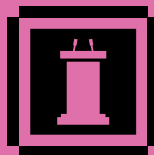
P.S. Les développements qui précèdent reposent sur le désir de l'administration de voir définir et délimiter sa sphère d'action de façon telle que la validité de ses actes soit garantie dans la mesure du possible.”

Le Conseil, sur le vu de la lettre qui précède, reconnaît l'impossibilité dans laquelle se trouve l'administration centrale de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour le fonctionnement normal des services publics et dont l'urgence s'impose.

Duplicate of a letter from Wehrer to the Chairman of the Council of State Ernest Hamilius, Luxembourg, 13 May 1940



JEAN W.



10



- 1894:** born in Osweiler (L)
- 1927:** becomes municipal secretary in Schiffflange (L)
- 1940:** joins the Volksdeutsche Bewegung (VdB, movement of ethnic Germans); head of personnel office in Schiffflange
- 1941:** joins the NSDAP, becomes deputy mayor in Schiffflange
- 1942:** loses legal guardianship of his daughter; turns his back on the Nazis
- 1944:** hides several deserters until liberation; is arrested by police after liberation
- 1946:** sentenced to three years imprisonment and a fine

■ ■ Ohne dass ich eine Frage stellte, sagt er (Jean W.), ich müsse bei Volkszugehörigkeit und Muttersprache „deutsch“ schreiben, wenn ihr das nicht tut, wisst ihr ja, was euch passiert. Ihr bekommt die Lebensmittelkarte entzogen und werdet nach Polen deportiert. 2 Tage später kam er die Zettel abholen. „Wie,“ sagte er „ihr habt luxemburgisch geschrieben, dass ihr deportiert werdet, ist sicher.“ [...] erbot sich er aus: „Wir sind deutsch und wir bleiben deutsch, daran könnt ihr nichts ändern.“

Georg Vogt, testimony against Jean W., 9 Feb. 1945

VdB member Jean W. (above left) at the funeral service of a leading member of the local VdB section, Schiffflange 22 July 1941



After joining the *Volksdeutsche Bewegung* (VdB, movement of ethnic Germans), Jean W. became deputy mayor of Schiffflange. He supported the plan to incorporate Schiffflange into Esch/Alzette. In 1941 he joined the NSDAP and held various positions. Jean W. acted in a very pro-German manner and revoked lease agreements between the municipality and numerous citizens. During the census he pressured citizens to identify as 'Germans'. After the 1942 strike, his daughter was arrested and taken to a re-education camp. Jean W.'s guardianship of his daughter was revoked, and as a result he turned his back on the Nazis. He resigned from all his posts and became subject to harassment and condemnation by his superiors. From 1944 onwards he hid deserters at his home and kept quiet about the resistance activities of other citizens. In 1946, despite these extenuating circumstances, he was given a three-year prison sentence for his collaboration with the Nazis.

■ ■ Auf Grund eines Telegrammes, welches Jean W. [...] schickte, ergriffen wir am 12.8.1944 die Flucht aus Deutschland. [...] Nach der Befreiung Luxemburgs durch die Amerikaner wurde ich [...] W. vorstellig, um ihm für seine Hilfe Dank auszusprechen.

Paul Frieden, testimony, 7 Dec. 1944





Er war eifriger und fanatischer Kämpfer des Volksdeutschtums. [...] Hatte er mit guten Worten und Versprechungen keinen Erfolg, so ging er zu Drohungen über.

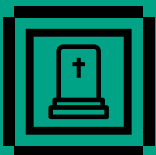
René Emmeringer, chairman of the Schiffflange militia, testimony against Jean W., 9 Dec. 1944



Badge of the 'Volksdeutsche Bewegung' bearing the 'Heim ins Reich' slogan. Jean W. also wore such a badge



HANS BEIN



- 1921:** born in Essen (D)
- 1937:** begins an apprenticeship in the civil service and later works at a savings bank
- 1939:** Reich Labour Service (RAD)
- 1941:** called up for the Wehrmacht and deployed in Russia  
wounded; becomes Wehrmacht instructor in Germany
- 1944:** deployed during the Battle of the Bulge; dies near  
Gralingen (L)
- 1952:** buried at the military cemetery in Sandweiler (L)



Hans Bein and his family, Essen, 1932

Hans Bein was called up for the Reich Labour Service (RAD) in 1939 and drafted into the Wehrmacht in 1941. He took part in the invasion of the Soviet Union but was wounded by shrapnel in July 1941. He returned to Germany to recover and became a Wehrmacht instructor. Bein was very determined and, contrary to his parents' wishes, would have preferred returning to the front. He refrained from volunteering but was nevertheless drafted again at the end of 1944. He resisted his father's suggestion that he injure himself in order to avoid service. He was deployed during the Battle of the Bulge and died in Gralingen in Luxembourg on 25 December 1944.

Er freute sich wenig darüber (Ausbilder zu sein). Vater und Mutter waren froh, ihn einigermaßen sicher aus der Schusslinie zu haben. Freiwillig zur Front wollte er sich melden, doch Vater konnte ihn mit viel Mühe davon abbringen, verbot es ihm direkt – und Hans gehorchte. Helmut Bein about his brother, 1992



Mass grave and memorial stone with the names of fallen German soldiers, among them Hans Bein





Stolz, voller Enthusiasmus, mit dem Glauben an das Gute der Sache – so schrieb er nach Hause – lag er vor Kiew, und die Truppe kam nicht weiter – und dort erwischte es ihn dann auch: einige Granatsplitter im Körper, mittelschwer verwundet.

Helmut Bein about his brother, 1992



Wehrmacht helmet



DOUGLAS CAMERON



12

- 14. June 1914:** born in Kangaroo Falls (Australia)
- 1936:** joins the Royal Australian Air Force, later the British Royal Air Force
- Sept. 1939 - May 1940:** member of an air unit stationed in Reims (F)
- 10. May 1940:** death in Diekirch



Photo of the burning aircraft wreckage at the crash site, Bettendorf, 10 May 1940

When the Second World War began in September 1939, Flying Officer Douglas Cameron joined the 226th Squadron of the Royal Air Force, which flew 'Fairey Battle' light bombers. On the day of the German attack on France, 10 May 1940, Cameron, his radio operator and his gunner were involved in a combat mission against German troops invading Luxembourg near Wallendorf (D). On approach, their aircraft was badly damaged by defensive fire. Despite his severe injuries and damage to the aircraft, Cameron managed to make an emergency landing near Bettendorf. The 25-year-old died of his injuries the same evening. Nevertheless, he had saved the lives of his two companions, who were injured and taken away as prisoners of war. Cameron was buried with military honours at the Diekirch cemetery. A memorial ceremony commemorates Cameron every year.



Monument in honour of Douglas Cameron at the crash site near Bettendorf, 2010





Cool, fine day. Wrote to Jessie. Up at 4.00 this morning & on duty at 4.15 to a 'flap' which started suddenly for no apparent reason.

Played hockey from 18.30-19.30 at Parc Pommery Reims.

The teams were chosen from the squadrons. I played in goals for 'Whites'. The result was a draw, 3-3.

Douglas Cameron, last diary entry before his crash, 8 May 1940



Douglas Cameron's pilot cap



RENÉ F.



13

- 1919:** born in Luxembourg City
- Feb. 1940:** joins the 'Volunteer Company'
- Dec. 1940:** leaves Luxembourg with the 'Volunteer Company' for retraining in Weimar (D)
- June 1941:** transfer to Cologne (D) with his company
- Oct. 1941:** transfer to Slovenia to combat 'partisans and gangs'
- June 1942:** disbandment of the company; transfer to Hamburg and departure for Poland
- From 1942:** participation in deportations and shootings of Jews and partisans
- From 1943:** action against 'partisans and gangs' (12 missions), leader of a 'hunt for Jews'
- July 1944:** missing in Poland in the course of a major Russian offensive



Deportation of Jews from the Międzyrzec Podlaski ghetto in Poland

René F. joined the Luxembourg army, the 'Volunteer Company', in early 1940. After the occupation of Luxembourg by Nazi Germany, he was transferred to Germany and integrated into the German police force. The Luxembourgers were sent to Slovenia to combat resistance fighters (partisans). Many refused to serve and were sent to prison or concentration camp. Others, like René F., swore an oath to Adolf Hitler and joined various police battalions in Germany. With 14 other Luxembourgers, he was assigned to reserve police battalion 101 and took part in mass murders of Jews. Members of this battalion were also deployed to fight the resistance. In mass shootings, Jews were rounded up and killed in the villages. Thousands of other Jews were deported to Treblinka extermination camp, where they were gassed. Jews capable of work were selected for forced labour.

René F. participated in all of his battalion's actions against Jews and led patrols in 'Jew hunts'. Jews living in hiding were tracked down and killed. Reserve police battalion 101 was responsible for the shooting of 38,000 and the deportation of 45,000 people. In addition, there were several killings of Polish civilians, Jews and partisans.

■ ■ Auf dem Weg zum Bahnhof hörte ich Schüsse, meistens einzelne oder auch zwei. Bei der Räumung der Ortschaft war viel geschossen worden. Nachher sagte mir ein Deutscher: „Von den Luxemburgern hat heute auch einer Juden erschossen.“

Jean Heinen, contemporary witness account (letter), Sept. 1998

■ ■ Führung in und außer Dienst: gut [...] ist charakterlich gutmütig, geistig etwas unbeweglich, zeigt aber guten Willen, körperlich zäh und ausdauernd.

Officer in training battalion (L), report on René F., 20 May 1941





Souvenir photo taken after these policemen, including leader René F., had killed Jews and partisans in a barn



**Diese Scheune war voll Juden und Banditen. Der Stoßtrupp nach dem Kampf.** René F., note on the photo, c. 1944



ANDRÉ FLESC



14

- 1925:** born in Rodange (L)
- 1943:** Reich Labour Service and Wehrmacht
- 1944:** deserts during leave from the front and hides in Messancy (B); joins the Belgian resistance; after liberation, joins the Vianden militia and later volunteers as a reconnaissance officer in the US army
- 1945:** scout, translator and driver for the US army until the end of the war



André Flesch was a Luxembourg deserter and resistance fighter. He was called up for the Reich Labour Service at 18 and then drafted into the Wehrmacht. In Luxembourg on leave from the front, he deserted and hid with the help of Belgian civilians.

In Belgium, he joined the local resistance *maquis* and took an active part in its activities until the liberation of Luxembourg. He then joined the Vianden militia and helped defend Luxembourg City. André Flesch was mistakenly arrested by the Americans but later joined the US army as a volunteer and took part in the Battle of the Bulge as a scout, translator, interrogator and driver.

Die Granaten richteten eine furchtbare Verwüstung in der Kolonne an, die nicht mehr rechtzeitig die Straße verlassen konnte, um Deckung zu suchen. Pferde bäumten sich auf und wurden von Splittern zerfetzt; Schreie gellten, Menschenleiber wirbelten vom Luftdruck der explodierenden Geschosse umher. Mehrere Fahrzeuge brannten.

Roland Gaul, quoting André Flesch (*Schicksale zwischen Sauer und Our*), 1987

As a soldier in the US Army during the Battle of the Bulge, 1945





Etwas stimmte hier nicht; wir fühlten es alle. Gegen 05:30 erhielten wir Gewissheit, als die ersten Granaten heranheulten und mit ohrenbetäubendem Krachen hinter Vianden einschlugen. Ein derart starkes Feuer hatte ich bisher noch nicht erlebt; es war unbeschreiblich.

Roland Gaul, quoting André Flesch (*Schicksale zwischen Sauer und Our*), 1987



André Flesch's personal badge as a member of the Vianden militia



ANNE-MARIE GOERGES



15



- 1910: born in Feulen (L)
- 1937: begins nurse training in Colmar (F)
- 1939-1940: nursing in French military hospitals
- 1940: escape to Lyon in unoccupied France, nursing in the *Service des Réfugiés*
- 1941: crossing to Constantine (French Algeria)
- 1943-1945: service in the female auxiliary corps of the French army in Algeria and in Metz (F)

Anne-Marie Goerges was undergoing nursing training in Alsace when the war broke out. Until the French defeat in June 1940, she helped to care for the sick and the war wounded. Instead of working for the Germans in Trier, Goerges went to unoccupied France and later to Algeria.

After Allied troops had landed in Morocco and Algeria, Anne-Marie Goerges distinguished herself by her commitment to nursing the sick and wounded during the heavy fighting in Tunisia (Nov. 1942 - May 1943). As a result she was officially admitted to the *Corps féminin de l'Armée* as a military auxiliary on 15 September 1943 and worked as a senior nurse in military hospitals in Algiers and Metz until her discharge in 1945.



Military pass of Anne-Marie Goerges, Algiers  
20 Oct. 1943

■ Réfugiée à Lyon, j'attendais l'occasion de servir dans les rangs alliés. Recherchée par l'occupant à Lyon, je gagnais l'Afrique du Nord en 1941. En novembre 1941, j'ai réussi après maintes démarches à obtenir un poste d'infirmière de la Croix-Rouge à Souk Ahras. Pendant la campagne de Tunisie en 1942 je faisais partie d'une formation de l'Avant et en raison de ma façon de servir, j'ai pu contracter un engagement militaire dans le Corps féminin de l'Armée en septembre 1943, où j'ai servi jusqu'à ma démobilisation le 30 avril 1946.

Anne-Marie Goerges, excerpt from curriculum vitae, 1948





The French War Merit Cross (*Croix de guerre*), awarded to Anne-Marie Georges in 1940 for treating injured soldiers in battle



MARCEL GONIVA

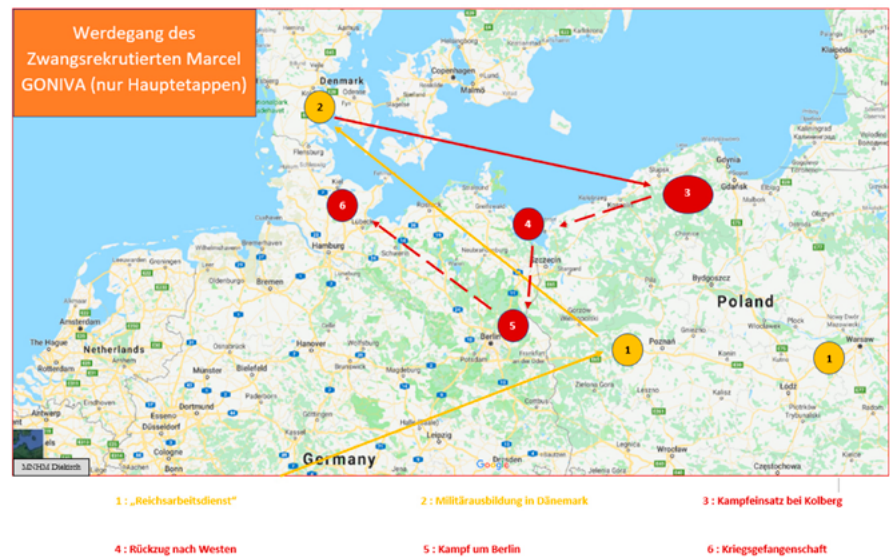


16



- 1926:** born in Goeblange (L)
- 1942-1943:** expulsion from school for refusing the Nazi salute
- 1944:** conscription into the Reich Labour Service
- 1944-1945:** training in Denmark, transfer to Poland to fight against the Red Army
- 1945:** British prisoner of war, early release, adventurous return to Luxembourg

17-year-old Marcel Goniva was drafted into the Reich Labour Service in July 1944 and sent to Poland. There he was trained for military service in a camp. In November 1944 he was drafted into the German army as a machine gunner. He survived the fierce fighting against the Red Army near Kolberg (now Kołobrzeg in Poland). In April 1945 he was deployed in the ‘Final battle for Berlin’ and wounded. One of the last ambulance trains took him out of the city, after which he fell into British captivity near Lübeck. Marcel Goniva was released early with two other Luxembourgers. Meeting French units while on their way west, the three pretended to be forced Alsatian recruits. They returned to Luxembourg via Paris in early summer 1945.



Marcel Goniva's places of deployment as forced recruit

**Nach 14 Tagen Wehrmacht auf dem Transport nach Dänemark. Gestern Nacht Fliegerangriff auf Berlin. Noch zu 20 Luxemburger und 100 Elsässer. Dauernd Fliegergefahr.**

Marcel Goniva, diary entry, 28 Nov. 1944

**Unglaubliches Glücksgefühl, dieser Hölle entronnen zu sein.**  
Marcel Goniva, diary entry, 14 May 1945



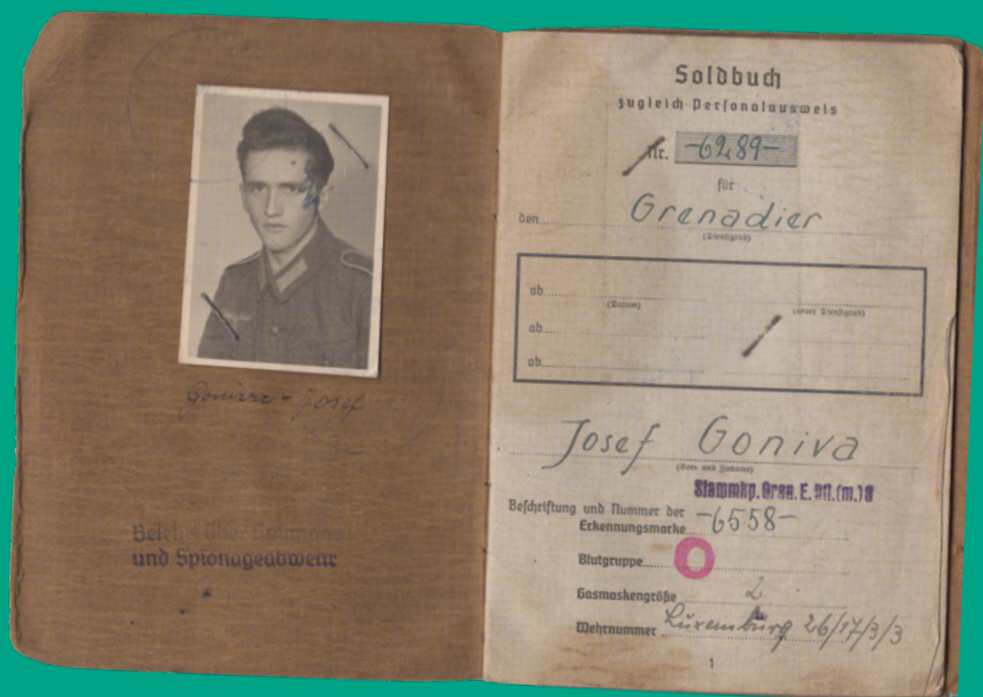
‘Red white and blue’ ribbon that Marcel Goniva always carried with him during his deployment as forced recruit





Da mein Bruder Robert (geb. 1922) während seiner Zwangsrekrutierung 1943 schwer verwundet wurde (Bauchschuss) und nach seinem Genesungsurlaub nach Frankreich desertierte, blieb mir, als ich den „Stellungsbefehl“ zu RAD und Wehrmacht erhielt, keine andere Wahl, als dem zu folgen und dies, um meine Eltern vor einer „Umsiedlung“ nach Ostdeutschland zu bewahren.

Marcel Goniva, contemporary witness interview, 2020



Marcel Goniva's military identity document

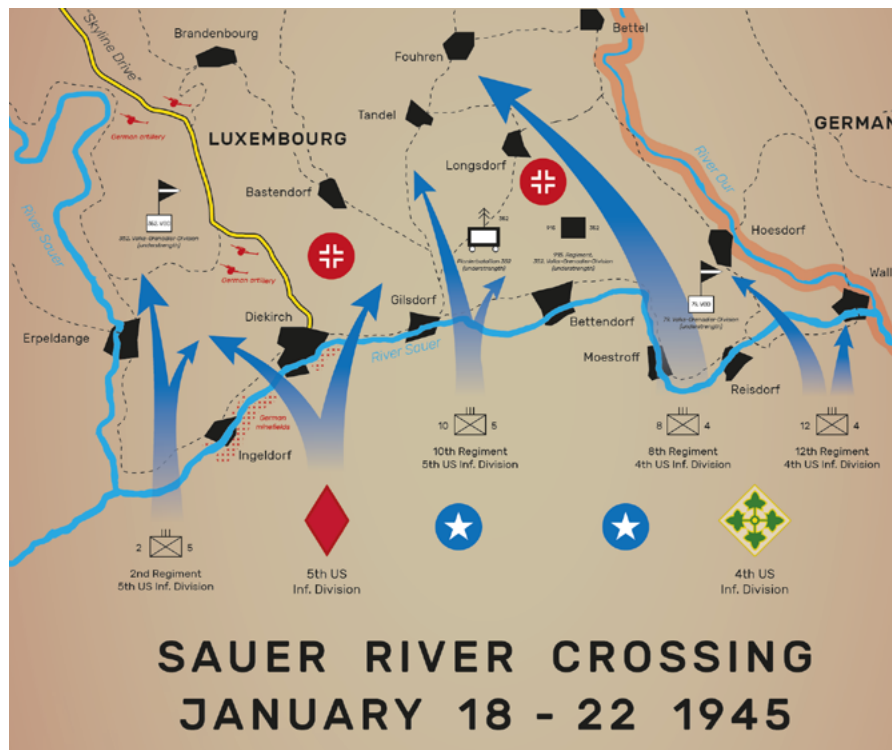


HORST HENNIG



- 1926:** born in Siersleben (D)
- 1940:** early training for a career as non-commissioned officer
- 1944:** participation in the Battle of the Bulge and in battles around Diekirch
- 1945:** capture near Bitburg and transportation to a POW camp in England
- 1946:** return to Saxony-Anhalt (D)
- 1950-** arrest, deportation to a Soviet prison camp (*Gulag*) and
- 1955:** forced labour

Horst Hennig hoped for a Wehrmacht career as a non-commissioned officer. In 1944, at the age of 18, he was deployed during the Battle of the Bulge. He took part in fighting around Diekirch (Dec. 1944 - Jan. 1945) until his capture near Bitburg in February 1945. Released from captivity in 1946, Hennig decided to study medicine in Saxony-Anhalt. In 1950 he was arrested by the Soviet authorities for belonging to an 'opposition group' and sentenced to 25 years of forced labour in the Vorkuta Gulag camp, north of the Arctic Circle.



Crossing of the Sauer River by the Americans  
in January 1945

■ Zur Abwehr an der Sauer befand sich unsere MG-Stellung in einem Haus an der Straße nach Ettelbrück, nahe des Bahnhofs Diekirch. [...] nachts wurden wir alarmiert, mehrere US-Soldaten versuchten ohne Artillerievorbereitung mit Booten über die Sauer zu setzen. In einer Entfernung zwischen 800 und 1200 Metern stürmten weiß-getarnte Gestalten den Abhang herunter, worauf uns Feuerbefehl erteilt wurde. Nach wenigen Minuten eröffneten auch deutsche Granatwerfer auf die Angreifer das Feuer. Schreie der Verwundeten wurden hörbar, der Überraschungsangriff der US-Soldaten scheiterte zunächst in dem fast deckungsarmen Gelände.

Horst Hennig, contemporary witness statement, date unknown

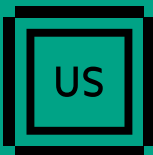




Belt buckle with the inscription 'GOTT MIT UNS'  
(God with us) – a standard part of German uniforms,  
including that of Horst Hennig



HYMAN JOSEFSON



- 1909:** born in New York State (USA)
- 1924:** studies at renowned Cornell University
- 1931:** graduation from law school
- 1942:** voluntary enlistment in the US army
- 1942-1944:** military training and service as a lieutenant
- June 1944:** lands in Normandy with the 5th US Armoured Division and participates in the liberation of France
- Sept. 1944:** death from anti-tank gun hit in Pétange (L)



The scout car a few hours before its destruction in Pétange (Hyman Josefson is top left), Musson, September 1944

After I was wounded, I somehow moved out of the dome [...] and crawled into the ditch [...] Our M8 scout car was burning terribly. Lt. Josefson could no longer get out of the combat vehicle.

Cyril J. Mayrose, letter to Camille P. Kohn, May 1985

Hyman Josefson was born in New York State as the son of Romanian Jews. He graduated from school with success and was awarded a scholarship to attend the renowned Cornell University. After studying law, he worked in a social welfare office in New York State. Josefson volunteered to join the US Army in January 1942, a few weeks after the attack on the US military base at Pearl Harbor, as one of 550,000 Jewish soldiers. In 1944 he landed in Normandy as commander of a scout car and successfully participated in the liberation of France. In Pétange, his scout car was hit by a German shell and caught fire. Hyman Josefson was unable to get out and became the first American to die on Luxembourg soil. Although the first US soldier to have died in Luxembourg is commemorated every year in the city, his name remained unknown until 1985, and it was not until 1989 that an initially nameless monument was dedicated to Hyman Josefson and a square named after him.



American soldiers entering Pétange; in the background the burning armoured scout vehicle, Pétange 9 Sept. 1944





[...] dass viru 25 Joer op der Plaz beim Amerikanersteen, wäit vu senger Heemecht, en amerikanesche Jong säi jonkt Liewen huet missten hiergi fir eis Fräiheet. Mir éieren duerch hien dausende vun amerikaneschen Zaldoten, déi hei am Westen hu misse falen, stierwen a verstümmelt ginn [...] Mat grousem Respekt verneige mir eis virun hirem Affer.

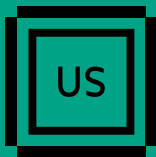
Léo Keiser, speech, 9 Sept. 1969



Monument to the then still unknown Hyman Josefson erected in Pétange after the liberation of Luxembourg



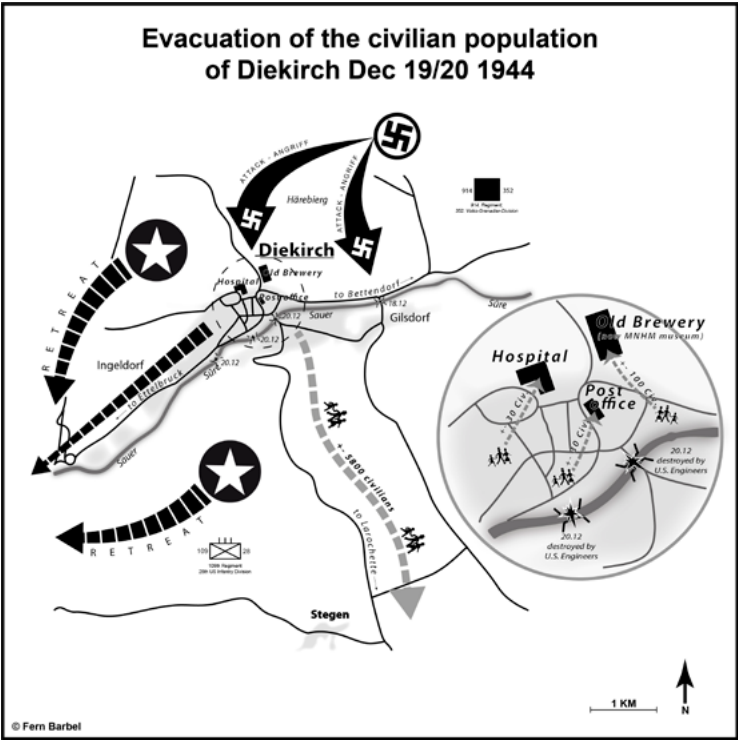
HARRY KEMP



19



- 1919:** born in Berwick (USA)
- 1937:** joins the Pennsylvania National Guard
- June 1944 - Sept. 1944:** commander of an infantry company, later a battalion
- Oct. 1944 - Nov. 1944:** bloody battle in Hürtgenwald, south of Aachen (D)
- Nov. 1944 - Dec. 1944:** stationing near Diekirch
- Mid-Dec. 1944:** organizer of the American retreat from the German advance in Diekirch



Sketch of the American evacuation plan for the town of Diekirch, 19-20 December 1944

Harry Kemp rose to the rank of captain in summer 1944. Between June and September 1944, he gained direct combat experience in France as leader of a company, later a battalion. Until 16 December 1944, Kemp helped hold the sparsely manned American defensive positions along the German border between Vianden and Wallendorf.

When the Battle of the Bulge started, Harry Kemp's unit fought desperately against German superiority for three days until the evening of 18 December. With the enemy breakthrough inevitable, Kemp was ordered to organize the retreat of American troops from Diekirch to Ettelbrück. In the meantime, the town was also overflowing with terrified civilians, and Harry Kemp successfully took care of the emergency evacuation of over 5,500 people. This measure took residents and refugees out of the embattled town to safety before the last bridge was blown up.



Badge of Harry Kemp's unit, the 109th Infantry Regiment



To whom it may concern

This date it has been necessary in the best interest of the civilian population of Diekirch, Lux., to order the town evacuated at 24 hrs.

Harry Kemp, handwritten evacuation order, 19 Dec. 1944

19 Dec. '44

To whom It may Concern:

This date it has been necessary in the best interests of the civilian population of Diekirch, Lux., to order the town evacuated at 2400 hrs.

Capt. H. M. Kemp  
C. O., 3rd Bn.  
U.S. Army.



PAUL KINN





- 1924:** born in Pétange (L)
- 1941:** joins the French Foreign Legion in Marrakesh (MAR)
- Dec.1942-** volunteer in the Tunisian campaign, heavy fighting against Germans and Italians
- June.1943:** member of the British Special Forces in Algeria; several secret missions in southern Italy and France



Wedding photo with his wife  
Bertha Schmit, 1949



View of the prisoner-of-war  
camp at Moutfort, which Paul  
Kinn ran until 1947

Paul Kinn fled to unoccupied France and enlisted in the Foreign Legion at the age of 17. He took part in heavy fighting in Tunisia and, on 1 July 1943, transferred to an elite British unit. Here he trained as a parachutist and was deployed in Italy in September 1943.

After an attempt to blow up a strategically important bridge near Pescara (IT) had failed, Kinn and his injured commanding officer were forced to hide in a mountain hut for seven weeks. He did not manage to escape back to Algeria until December 1943. Once the Allies had landed in Normandy (F), Paul Kinn took part in two successful sabotage missions behind enemy lines. When his unit was disbanded in January 1945, he served in the French forces until 9 May 1945, then transferred to the Luxembourg army. After the end of the war, he commanded the camp for German prisoners of war in Moutfort (L) until July 1947.



Parachutiste Kinn.Paul.99328: French.S.Q.N. 2SAS  
Regt. A.P.O. England. 25-9-44

Chers Parents, Vous allez sans doute être étonnés d'avoir de mes nouvelles, car vous devez sûrement penser que je n'étais plus de ce monde, mais voilà je m'en suis tiré de tous les pays et de tous les coins où ça chauffait. J'ai tellement de choses à vous dire que je ne sais par quoi commencer et cela m'est d'abord défendu. Je vous expliquerai cela quand je serai à la maison car j'espère vous voir bientôt. Votre fils qui pense sans cesse à vous. Je vous embrasse bien fort.

Paul Kinn, postcard to his parents, 25 Sept. 1944





Dagger handmade by German prisoners of war for Paul Kinn, Moutfort 1946-1947



GEORGES KONEN



21



- 1919:** born in Binsfeld (L)
- 1938:** joins the Luxembourg 'Volunteer Company'
- 1940**
- 1941:** 'retraining' in Weimar (D)
- Oct. 1941:** 'partisan operation' in Slovenia
- Mar. 1942:** rebellion of the entire company
- Mar. 1942-** imprisonment in Dachau concentration camp (D)
- Apr. 1945:**

Stonnelaang si mir duerch Meterhéije Schnéi, vun engem jugoslawesche Spitzel ugefouert, op ee ganz an de Bierger ofgeleeënen Haff zoumarschéiert. Kee vun ons huet gegleeft, hei Partisanen unzetreffen. Bei [...] enger Scheier si plötzlech an onerwaart Schëss gefall. Ech wor an dësem Moment op der anerer Säit vun der Scheier, an hu Schmierzensschreier héieren, ouni awer ze gesinn wat geschitt wor. Réischt mi spéit si mer gewuere ginn, dass 4 vun onse Kommeroden vu Partisanen aus der Scheier erschoss gi waren. Mir aner sinn an d'Haus agedrongen an konnten hei uwiesend Partisane festhuelen. E puer Partisane konnten entkommen. Anerer goufen an der Scheier festgeneelt a si spéider wéi d'Gestapo d'Scheier a Brand gestach huet, angeblich am Feier ëmkomm.

Georges Konen, describing a partisan operation in Slovenia, Oct. 1941

As a member of the 'Volunteer Company', Georges Konen was forced to serve in German police uniform from 1941 onwards. On 31 October 1941 he experienced his first bloody operation against Yugoslav partisan groups in Slovenia. But after making sure that the local population was aware of their anti-Nazi views, Georges Konen and a small group of Luxembourgers began to secretly warn the partisans of upcoming operations. In March 1942 the entire company rebelled when the group of Luxembourgers was due to be separated and sent to different German units. Together with 17 other Luxembourgers, Georges Konen was deported to Dachau concentration camp on 25 March. Because he had refused to serve in the police force, he was particularly harassed, isolated from the rest of the prisoners and forced to do hard physical labour. Georges Konen survived the concentration camp and was liberated by American units on 29 April 1945.



On 13 December 1941, 47 policemen killed in the course of another 'partisan raid' were found by Konen's unit in the Slovenian mountains



The German plan was for soldiers of the 'Volunteer Company' to be trained in Weimar according to the National Socialist model





Nodeem d'Haaptportal am K.Z. Dachau  
sech hannenaus geschlossen hat, hate  
mir keng eege Perséinlechkeet méi. Mir  
kruten eng Nummer an d'Hand gedréckt,  
a ware fir d'Aussewelt gegenstandslos.  
Wann ee vun ons ugesprach gouf, huet  
een äntwere mussen „Schutzhäftling  
N:29581 (meng Nummer) meldet sich  
gehorsamst zur Stelle [...]“ Fir d'SS ware  
mir Sauhunde oder Drecksschweine.

Georges Konen, contemporary witness account, Oct. 1941



Helmet of the Luxembourg 'Volunteer  
Company' (1940)



ANTOINE NEVEN



22

# ANTOINE NEVEN

- 1921:** born in Diekirch
- June 1941-** imprisoned in a labour camp of the Vichy regime
- Mar. 1942:** escapes to England
- Mar. 1942-** escapes to England
- May 1942:** escapes to England
- Mar. 1944:** joins a French unit within the British Army
- June 1944:** takes part in the Normandy landing (F) and in front line combat missions
- Nov. 1944:** fighting in the Netherlands (Walcheren Island and later Schouwen Island)

With his brother Jean and his friend Félix Peters, Antoine Neven set off for unoccupied France in June 1941. After being held in a camp for a long time, they managed to escape to England. There, the trio joined a commando unit of the Free French Forces ('Kieffer Commando'). Antoine and his unit landed in France on 6 June 1944. His friend Félix was killed on 17 June 1944 in the fighting around Amfreville (F). His brother Jean was killed on 2 November 1944 in the battle of Walcheren (NL). Antoine survived the heavy fighting and was released from active combat duty at the front on 11 January 1945. He returned to Diekirch at Christmas 1945, the only survivor of the trio of friends.



The three friends in an internment camp for foreign workers in Puy-l'Evêque. (Front row: Félix Peters, Antoine Neven. Back row right: Jean Neven)





Coupé de son commando, a fait preuve des plus belles qualités de courage et d'initiative au cours d'une mission difficile sous le bombardement ennemi près de Breville, le 16 juillet 1944.

Ordre de la Division, certificate, 25 Feb. 1945



Antoine Neven received numerous awards for his war service



WILLIAM NELLIS



23

- 1916:** born in Santa Rita, New Mexico (USA)
- 1939:** marriage to Shirley L. Fletcher, two children
- Aug. 1943:** completion of military pilot training in Albany, Georgia (USA)
- Aug. - Dec. 1944:** deployment as P-47 fighter-bomber pilot in Western Europe
- 23.-27. Dec. 1944:** numerous air missions in support of the American troops
- 27. Dec. 1944:** death in the crash of his fighter-bomber near Nothum (L)
- Feb. 1945:** burial at Henri-Chapelle military cemetery (B)



To The Memory Of LT. WILLIAM H. NELLIS Born 1916-Killed in Action 1944.

With courage and daring he brought the fight to the enemy defending his country without regard for his personal safety or welfare

Inscription on memorial plaque



Gravestone of William Nellis,  
Henri-Chapelle Military Cemetery

William Harrel Nellis entered active military service with the US Army on 2 March 1943. In July 1944 he joined his combat unit in Europe, the 406th Fighter Group 513th Squadron.

Between August and November 1944, Nellis flew a total of 69 missions with his P-47 fighter-bomber. These were mainly air-to-ground support operations in connection with the rapid advance of General Patton’s Third Army through France. Deteriorating weather in early December 1944 meant that his unit flew very few missions at this time.

On 16 December 1944, to the complete surprise of the Americans, the Germans launched their offensive in the Ardennes, the Battle of the Bulge. From 20 December 1944, thousands of American soldiers were encircled in the Belgian town of Bastogne. When the weather finally improved on 23 December 1944, Nellis flew up to five air missions a day to support the encircled units.

On the evening of 27 December 1944, his fighter-bomber crashed in flames during a low-level attack on German positions in a wooded area north-east of the village of Nothum. It was here, not far from the strategic ‘Schumannseck’ crossroads, that the bloodiest battles of the Battle of the Bulge in Luxembourg would take place over the next few weeks, costing the lives of thousands of soldiers on both sides. Nellis’ body was not recovered until early February 1945. On 30 April 1950, one of the largest US Air Force bases near Las Vegas was renamed ‘Nellis Air Force Base’ in his honour.





Fingerprints were not taken as both hands are missing. Photographs and toothchart also not taken as head is missing. All that is left is about 45 lbs of remains. This includes a right leg fractured above and below knee (with the sole of the foot burned away) attached to a flattened pelvis and abdomen. The spinal column is exposed in the chest region. The upper area appears to have been burned severely. Right leg when straightened out is about 29" to 30". No scars or markings are to be found.

Salvage report on the condition of the body, 1 Feb. 1945



Parts of the aircraft, equipment and private belongings of William Nellis found at the crash site

From left to right: piece of headphones, cover of the on-board camera (marked Eastman Kodak) and probably Nellis' private cigarette case



JOSEPH 'JOS' STEICHEN



24



- 1924:** born in Weimerskirch (L)
- Aug. 1942:** participation in the strike against compulsory military service, betrayed
- Sept. 1942:** arrest by the Gestapo and court-martial sentence; transportation to Ruwer (D) for re-education
- Oct. 1942:** Reich Labour Service (RAD) in Gotenhafen (PL)
- Jan. 1943:** basic training in the Wehrmacht, later frontline service
- Aug. 1943:** defects to the Russians and is sent to prisoner-of-war camp 188 near Tambov (R)
- Sept. 1945:** released with 530 other Luxembourgers
- Nov. 1945:** arrival at Luxembourg City train station

■ Eine Woche lang, 200 km weit, barfuß mit einem Kilo Trockenbrot und einer Konservendose Verpflegung für die sieben Tage. Aber die Russen hatten selbst nichts zum Essen und unsere Wache ging neben uns. [...] Unterwegs haben wir Wasser aus dem Graben getrunken. Wasser, wo die Russen vorher mit Panzer darüber gefahren waren, wo die Toten lagen, das haben wir getrunken. [...] Am 25. August 1943 kam ich dann in Tambow an.

Joseph Steichen, contemporary witness account, 10 July 2013



Entrance gate to prisoner-of-war camp 188 near Tambov, Russia, artist: Josy Zeimet

In June 1943 Joseph Steichen was sent to the Eastern Front in Russia. After fighting around Belgorod, Steichen and another Luxembourger defected to the Russians in August 1943. They were arrested. With their boots and socks confiscated, they had to walk 200 km barefoot to Stary Oskol, from where they were then transported in cattle cars to Tambov-Rada prisoner-of-war camp 188. Joseph Steichen was assigned to hauling wood. In September 1943, he seriously injured his back and was sent to the Tambov military hospital. Thanks to help from a doctor, Joseph Steichen was allowed to work in the hospital and nurse the sick, among them several Luxembourgers. Later he had to do other work, including burying the dead. In April 1944, as a result of a false report, Joseph Steichen was returned to camp 188, where he was employed as a paramedic and interpreter until his release. At the end of September 1945 he was sent home together with 530 Luxembourgers. He arrived in Luxembourg City at the beginning of November 1945.

Luxembourgish prisoners of war in the 'Holzkommando' hauling logs to the Tambov camp, Russia; artist: Josy Zeimet



■ Deejeinegen, dee mat schaffe geet, dee kritt méi z'iessen, ne. Dunn hunn ech mech du gemellt fir mat schaffen ze goen an, dunn hunn ech mäin Holzkommando konnt [...] du si mer Holz siche gaang fir de Wanter [...]

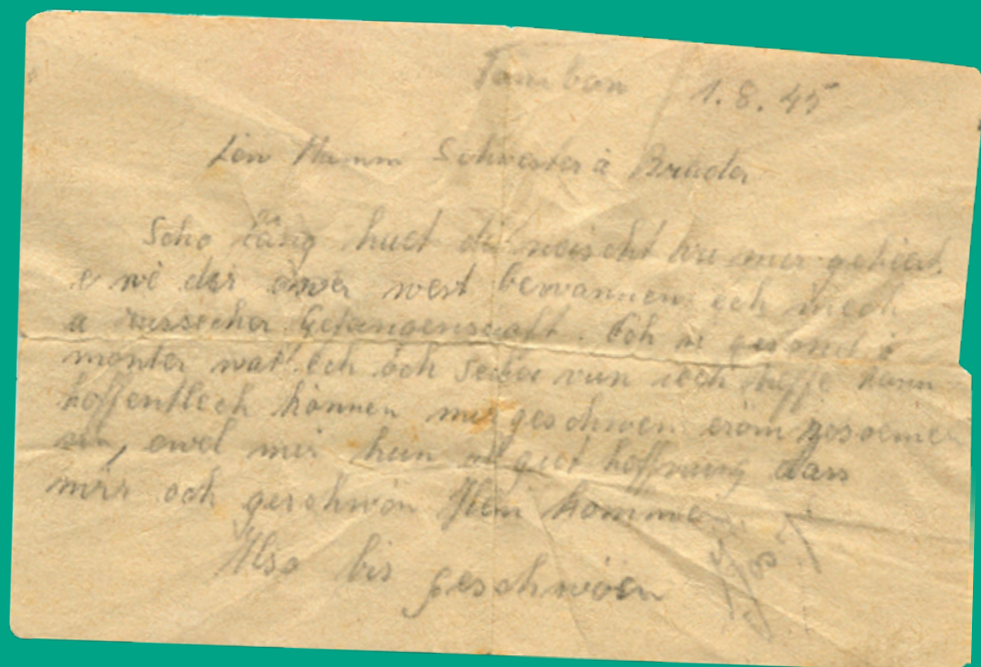
Joseph Steichen, contemporary witness account, 10 July 2013





Ech hunn net méi geduecht, dass ech  
op Lëtzebuerg zeréckkomme géing.  
Mee ech hunn d'Hoffnung ni opginn  
ze iwwerliewen.

Vik Steichen, quoting Joseph Steichen, 7 June 2021



Prisoners in Tambov were forbidden any contact with their  
relatives in Luxembourg. Joseph Steichen had a message  
smuggled out of the camp to tell his family that he was  
still alive, Tambov, 1 Aug. 1945



JOSEPH STEPHANY



25

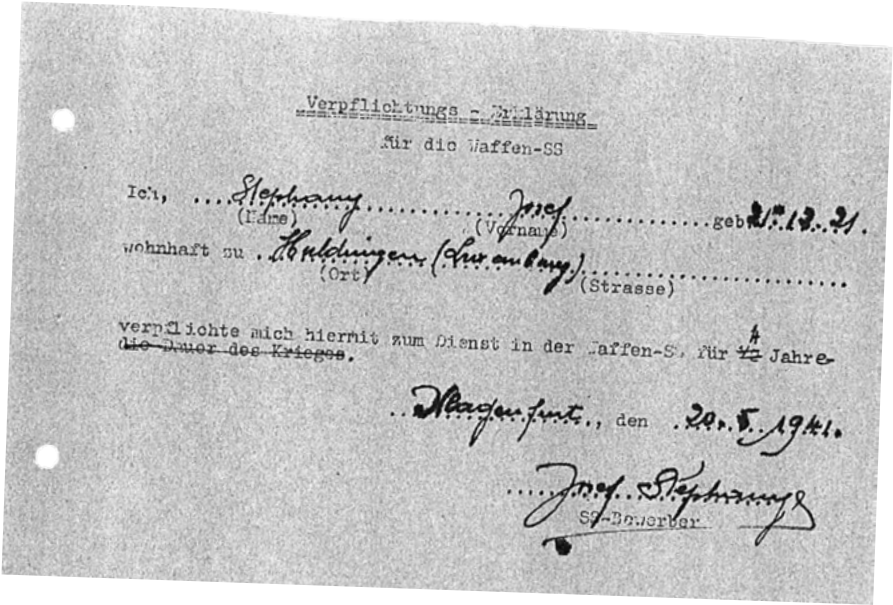
# JOSEPH STEPHANY

- 1921:** born in Huldange (L)
- 1940:** joins the Luxembourg 'Volunteer Company'
- March 1941:** possibly forced entry into the Waffen-SS
- June 1941:** participation in the invasion of the Soviet Union, severe war injury
- 1942:** special leave and desertion; joins the Lëtzebuerger Patriote-Liga resistance movement (LPL), later the Armée blanche in Belgium
- 1944:** arrest by German military police, imprisonment in Torgau-Fort Zinna (D) and other locations
- 1945:** escape during evacuation of the prison and return to Luxembourg

After his 'retraining' in Weimar, Joseph Stephany became a soldier in the Waffen SS. Whether this is due to a thirst for adventure or to threats cannot be completely clarified. In any case, Stephany took part in the invasion of the Soviet Union with the 5th SS Panzer Division 'Wiking', where he was severely injured. He remained in medical treatment for a long time. In June 1942, while on convalescent leave, he deserted. He joined a resistance group in Marloie (B) and took part in sabotage missions and in efforts to hide escaped Soviet forced labourers. He was caught by the Germans in March 1944. Contrary to expectations, Joseph Stephany was not shot for 'desertion' like many other convicted Luxembourgers. He was sent to various German prisons and managed to escape in April 1945.

## Ihr Kopf, der wackelt! Ich würde keine zwei Pfennige mehr auf Sie wetten!

Interrogation officer to Joseph Stephany, quote from Joseph Stephany's diary, 18 May 1944



On 20 May 1941, Joseph Stephany joined the Waffen-SS, the armed arm of the SS

Lt. Watson's crew and their B-17 bomber were shot down over Belgium. Joseph Stephany, by this time already active in the Belgian *maquis*, helped some of the survivors, 6 Feb. 1944







Ich war nicht freiwillig in der SS. Ich bin hineingezwungen worden, weil ich immer Widerspruch gegeben habe. Als Folge einer Diskussion mit unserem Instruktor bin ich viermal zum SS-Polizei-Oberleutnant Schmoll gerufen worden. Beim letzten Mal sagte er mir: „Sie kommen zur Waffen-SS, dort wird man sie schon kleinkriegen. Wenn nicht zur SS, dann ins Gefängnis. Sie wissen ja warum. Wegen Zersetzung der Wehrkraft!“ Ich habe mich nicht geweigert und bin in die SS gegangen, auch weil uns gesagt worden war, wir kämen zurück nach Luxemburg. In dem Moment habe ich mit der Möglichkeit gerechnet, von Luxemburg aus zu desertieren. Joseph Stephany, letter to Mr. Retter, 1 Oct. 1945



Stephany and his three siblings (Jacques, Josette, Jean) were active in the Belgian resistance



DANIEL STRICKLER



- 1897:** born in Columbia (USA)
- 1942:** commander of a regiment of the 28th Infantry Division
- Oct. 1944-** bloody operation in Hürtgenwald (D), then transfer to
- Nov. 1944:** Luxembourg to rest and replace losses
- Dec. 1944:** commander in the fierce defensive battles of his regiment against the Germans; adventurous escape through enemy lines
- Dec. 1944-** participation in the Battle of Bastogne (B)
- Jan. 1945:**

After the outbreak of the Second World War, Daniel Strickler quickly rose to the rank of regimental commander. His unit liberated the north of Luxembourg in September 1944. Later on it suffered heavy losses during the Battle of Hürtgenwald (D) and had to return to Luxembourg for rest and replenishment. On 10 December Daniel Strickler took command of his still weakened regiment in the Hosingen-Vianden area. At the beginning of the Battle of the Bulge, the unit tried to repel the German advance. On 19 December Strickler took over command of the defences of Wiltz, which was in danger of being completely surrounded. Between 20 and 23 December 1944, he managed to escape through enemy lines via Tarchamps and Hollange and meet up with American units near Bastogne, where he took part in the defence of the city.



Daniel Strickler's personal uniform and the helmet he wore during his deployment in Luxembourg

A monument erected to Daniel Strickler and his men in gratitude for their efforts in defending Consthum against the Germans in 1944





In a few minutes we could hear the rumble of tanks and like a flash, a German tank column dashed down the road in front of us. We hugged the ground. On they went by the hundreds, with German soldiers riding the tanks, sprawling all over them, shouting, yelling, and acting like drunken men. We saw many of our American jeeps and vehicles which the Germans had captured and were using in the column. We were afraid the Germans might any moment, send a patrol into the woods, so we back-crawled out of the woods to a little stream line, and headed South parallel to the tank column until we got opposite a big woods to our rear. Then we infiltrated into the woods in full view of the enemy. They were so unaware of the presence of Americans that they just didn't see us.

Daniel Strickler, report on the German Ardennes offensive, 16 Dec. 1944

A US helmet from the  
28th Infantry Division,  
Strickler's unit



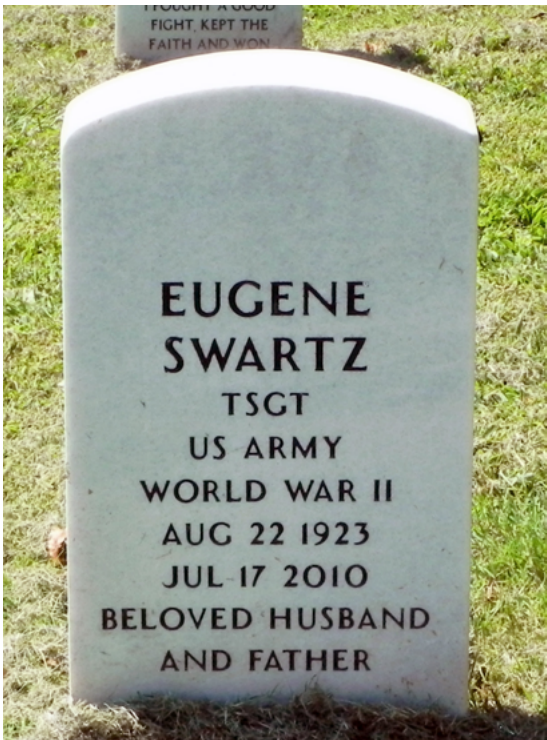


EUGENE SWARTZ



27

- 1923:** born in Washington D.C. (USA)
- 1925:** emigration of the Swartz family to Luxembourg
- 1940:** escape via Portugal to the USA
- 1943:** joins the US Army as intelligence officer because of his knowledge of German and French
- 1944:** lands in Normandy (F), interrogation of German prisoners of war
- 1945:** participation in the hunt for war criminals



Eugene Swartz died in Knoxville Tennessee (USA) on 17 July 2010 at the age of 86. He is buried in the Tennessee Veterans Cemetery

Eugene Swartz joined the US Army in 1943 to liberate Europe and his family in Kayl (L) from the Germans. He had fled from Luxembourg to the US with his father in 1940, but had to leave his Luxembourg family behind. In 1944 he landed in Normandy and took part in the fighting. His tasks included the interrogation of German prisoners of war and translation work. He was finally reunited with his family in Kayl at the end of 1944. Towards the end of the war, Eugene Swartz took part in the search for war criminals.

**I was trying to get America into the war. I tried to do – because I wanted to rescue my family [...] I joined the Reserves, [...] I was not drafted yet. But, I was so intent on getting back to Europe to see my family again, I was afraid they might put me into the Air Force or the Navy, and I would never get back to Europe. So, I wanted to make sure that I would get into the Army because I knew the Army would go back.**

Eugene Swartz, contemporary witness interview, 18 Apr. 2005

An American helmet like the one worn by Eugene during the liberation of Luxembourg







Our house was still there. I knocked on the door. First grandmother, then mother came up to me. They did not recognize me. [...] But the next moment we fell into each other's arms. [...] I was the only American soldier who was home for Christmas.

Eugene Swartz, *Memoirs*, date unknown



After the liberation of Kayl, Eugene Swartz immediately went looking for his family to see how they were doing, Kayl, 1944



ALFRED WALTERSCHEID



28



- 1919:** born in Carlsbad (USA)
- 1941:** US Air Force training as a radio gunner
- June 1944:** first bomber mission in Normandy (F)
- Dec. 1944:** bomber mission to Morscheid (D), shot down
- 1945:** prisoner of war near Rostock, liberation and return to the USA

■ I remember, after being captured, there were about 15 of us pilots going thru a town, we were surrounded by 5 or 6 guards with “burp guns” (small machine guns) slung around their neck. They had us throw our wings or anything that showed we were flyers away. As we passed the crowds, they must have known who we were, for they spit at us, shouted etc. I can understand how they felt for we were hitting them night and day – sirens, bombs etc. It must have been whacking. But it was them who brought on all their, and our, troubles.

Alfred Walterscheid, war memoirs, January 1945

Alfred Walterscheid flew his first mission as gunner on a B-17 bomber in Normandy in June 1944. As the Battle of the Bulge got under way, bad weather made any mission impossible for a week. On 25 December 1944, Walterscheid and his crew were ordered to destroy a bridge and an iron railway line at Morscheid near Trier in order to disrupt German supply lines to Belgium and Luxembourg. Near Bitburg (D), the B-17 received several hits and caught fire. The pilot tried to turn westward, but a short time later the heavy bomber crashed on ‘Goldknapp’ hill near Ingeldorf in the region of Diekirch. Six of the bomber’s nine crew members were killed, but Alfred Walterscheid luckily managed to parachute to safety. He was held prisoner in the German ‘Stalag Luft I’ camp in Barth near Rostock (Germany) until his liberation in May 1945.

■ I remained here, until the Russians liberated us five and a half months later. They asked us if we wanted to write a card to home. I wrote, “Dear pop, am well, will see you soon” [...] This was when he first found out, that I was still alive. I had been reported killed in action.

Alfred Walterscheid, war memoirs, May 1945

Newspaper article – ‘Fear Walterscheid perished in plane when it exploded’ – posted by Alfred Walterscheid in his personal memoirs after his return to the USA. ‘One lucky man from World War II’







You could tell how hard a mission was going to be by the reactions of the soldiers. If the mission was very difficult, the room became quiet.

Alfred Walterscheid, war memoirs, July, 1944



Badge of the 9th US Air Force, in which Alfred Walterscheid served



HEINRICH 'HANS' ADAM



29

- 1894:** born in Ansbach (D)
- 1912:** worker at Arbed steelworks in Esch-Schifflange (L) (machine shop, rolling mill and Arbed mines)
- 1921:** workers' representative; leads strike movement in the Esch-Schifflange rolling mill, resulting in a violent incident against a superior; consequence: Hans Adam is to be extradited to Germany
- 1928:** wants to become a Luxembourger (naturalization); this is not possible and he remains stateless
- 1941:** works for *Ons Zeidong*, newspaper of the ALWERAJE resistance group
- 1942:** member of the strike committee at the Esch-Schifflange steelworks; death sentence and beheading in Cologne (DE)



Siren with which Hans Adam is said to have given the start signal for the strike



Hans Adam is said to have hung this hook on the siren to give the strike signal

Heinrich 'Hans' Adam worked at the Esch-Schifflange steelworks from 1912 to 1942. He was an active trade unionist and took part in strikes in June 1917 and March 1921, where he led the strike movement in the rolling mill as a workers' representative. Because of a violent incident at the plant, an order was issued for his expulsion to Germany. During the German occupation, Adam was active in the resistance. On 31 August 1942, after the announcement of compulsory military service, he was part of the strike committee at the Schifflange factory. The committee called for the staff to go out on strike. Hans Adam gave the strike signal and fled. He was arrested the same day for 'refusing to work' but released on 1 September. A week later he was arrested once again and imprisoned. He confessed under Gestapo torture. On 10 September he was brought before a special court and sentenced to death. That same evening he was taken to Cologne-Klingelpütz prison (DE) and beheaded there on 11 September.

■ Parmi nous il y avait l'ouvrier héroïque qui actionna la sirène donnant le signal de la grève générale du 31 août. Je fus frappé par sa manière de rester toujours debout. Il se maintenait avec les coudes appuyés transversalement sur les barreaux en fer de notre enclos.

Luigi Peruzzi, *Mes Mémoires*, 1969

As this worker recounted after the war, Hans Adam used a siren on 31 August 1942 to signal to the strikers to down their tools







Der Angeklagte hat durch diese Tat entgegen den deutschen Interessen zur Arbeitssabotage aufgefordert. Wer aber die Arbeit in einem kriegswichtigen Betriebe sabotiert, fällt der kämpfenden deutschen Truppe in den Rücken. Seine Tat wiegt besonders schwer, weil er als geborener Reichsdeutscher sich auf die Seite widerstrebender Elemente geschlagen hat. Er hat sich damit außerhalb der Volksgemeinschaft gestellt und sein Leben verwirkt.

Escher Tageblatt, newspaper article, 11 Sept. 1942

## Wer sabotiert — stirbt

Das Sondergericht verurteilte gestern den 48-jährigen Heinrich ADAM aus Esch wegen Aufforderung zur Einstellung der Arbeit und Arbeitsniederlegung zum Tode. Der Angeklagte, von Geburt Reichsdeutscher, war seit 30 Jahren auf dem Werk Schiffingen beschäftigt. Am 31. August, als durch verschiedene Streikparolen bereits eine erhebliche Unruhe in die Belegschaft des Werkes getragen worden war, gab er um 18 Uhr durch ein anhaltendes Sirensignal das Zeichen zum Einstellen der Arbeit, das von einer größeren Anzahl von Gefolgschaftsmitgliedern befolgt wur-

de. Der Angeklagte hat durch diese Tat entgegen den deutschen Interessen zur Arbeitssabotage aufgefordert. Wer aber die Arbeit in einem kriegswichtigen Betriebe sabotiert, fällt der kämpfenden deutschen Truppe in den Rücken. Seine Tat wiegt besonders schwer, weil er als geborener Reichsdeutscher sich auf die Seite widerstrebender Elemente geschlagen hat. Er hat sich damit außerhalb der Volksgemeinschaft gestellt und sein Leben verwirkt.

Das Todesurteil ist bereits vollstreckt worden.

The execution of Heinrich Adam was announced in the press on 11 September 1942. Adam was described as the mastermind of the strike and a 'traitor to the people'



EDOUARD BARBEL



30

- 1905:** born in Bonneweg (L)
- From 1933:** with his father, active against growing Fascism in Europe
- 1940:** escapes to France and later returns to Luxembourg
- 1941:** joins the ALWERAJE resistance group (the name is made up of the initials of its founders)
- 1942:** arrest by the Gestapo and deportation to Hinzert concentration camp (D)
- 1943:** captivity in several prisons and Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp (F)
- 1944:** deportation to Dachau concentration camp (D)
- 1945:** liberation by the Americans and return to Luxembourg
- 1949:** co-founder of the Musée national de la Résistance in Esch/Alzette

■ ■ Statt Unterricht systematische Verdummung, Kartoffelkäfer-, Kräuter-, Tee-, Alteisen-, Knochen- und Lumpensammlungen, statt Erziehung Verrohung, charakterliche Verkrüppelung, geistige und körperliche Peinigung in HJ, BDM, Land- und Arbeitsdienst.

Edouard Barbel, Manifesto to the People of Luxembourg (*Ons Zeidong* 19), July 1942



'Front lesson' in which schoolchildren have to record Wehrmacht 'successes' on a map

Edouard 'Ed' Barbel was the son of a trade unionist. He and his father began campaigning against National Socialism as early as the 1930s. As a teacher, he opposed Nazi school policies from 1940 onwards. In 1941 Barbel joined the Alweraje resistance group in Schifflange; he wrote articles for the group's newspaper *Ons Zeidong* and strongly criticized the regime. After the strike against the introduction of compulsory military service in Luxembourg, Ed Barbel was ordered to work in Germany because of his hostile attitude towards the Germans. Before his departure he was arrested by the Gestapo. Later on he was taken to Hinzert concentration camp, where the SS accused him of having worked for *Ons Zeidong*. Barbel admitted this and was assigned to a commando to harvest potatoes. His family was not informed of his whereabouts. From 1943 he was imprisoned in various prisons before being sent to Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp, where he had to work in the quarry. During his imprisonment, Barbel wrote patriotic songs. In September 1944 he was moved to Dachau concentration camp, where he continued his resistance work. He was liberated on 19 April 1945 and returned to Luxembourg.

Introduction to gruesome concentration camp life, artist: Albert Kaiser



■ ■ Et le soir, nous aussi nous avons couru, sous les coups de quelques SS, dans un cercle fou dans la cour du SS-Sonderlager Hinzert. Après les toilettes sadiques connues, me voilà au premier étage d'une construction appelée « nos lits », dans une baraque puante. Je n'ai pas dormi un instant en pensant aux interrogatoires de la Gestapo qui allaient sûrement commencer le lendemain.

Henri Wehenkel, quoting Barbel (*Hommage au résistant Barbel*), 1995





Notre « Monument aux Morts » sera le témoignage perpétuel de la reconnaissance et du souvenir à l'intention de tous ceux qui sont morts en combattant l'ennemi les armes à la main ; de ceux qui ont été fusillés et ont succombé de privatisations et de maltraitements dans les camps de concentration, dans les prisons et dans la déportation ; de ceux qui ont été les victimes malheureuses des déportations militaires sur tous les champs de bataille ; des victimes de tous les jours de notre cité ouvrière, de ceux qui, par leur travail et leur mort dans les mines, les usines et les ateliers ont construit la base économique de notre indépendance et qui méritent d'être honorés avec leurs camarades qui ont donné la vie pour la sauvegarde de cette indépendance.

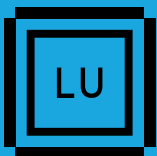
Edouard Barbel, speech at the inauguration of the *Musée National de la Résistance*, 1956

Plaque commemorating Barbel as founder of the *Musée National de la Résistance*





JOSY GOERRES



31

- 1913:** born in Differdange (L)
- Apr. 1941:** helps families of arrested or abducted resistance fighters in Differdange
- July 1941:** sets up escape network
- Nov. 1941:** deported to Hinzert concentration camp near Trier (D)
- 1942:** imprisoned at Luxembourg-Grund and Wittlich (D); formation of PI-MEN resistance organization (*Patriotes Indépendants Luxembourg*)
- Mar. 1943:** acquitted by a Sondergericht, or special court, for lack of evidence
- 1944:** escapes arrest by the Gestapo and goes into hiding; his parents are arrested and forcibly resettled; Josy Goerres remains active in the resistance until the end of the war

Forged identity card, ready to be filled in. Anyone wanting to go underground without a trace had to have a totally new identity. PI-MEN provided conscientious objectors, deserters and political refugees with false passports and identity cards before they were taken across the border to France or Belgium

Josy Goerres opposed the German invasion of Luxembourg on 10 May 1940. He and a friend, Emile Kriepps, decided to resist actively. They participated in the 'war of the insignia', or *Spéngelskrich*, wearing Luxembourgish symbols on or under their clothing. Goerres also wrote and distributed patriotic leaflets.

From 1941 onwards several resistance groups formed in Luxembourg, but Goerres decided not to join them. In April/May, together with Emile Kriepps, he began to support various families in Differdange whose relatives had already been arrested because of their resistance activities. Together with friends, Goerres organized an escape route to France in June 1941. In October he was betrayed and arrested by the Gestapo, interrogated several times and tortured. He did not confess and nothing could be proved against him. All attempts to prove anything against him failed.

On 23 March 1943, he was acquitted by a *Sondergericht*, or special court. After his release he set up the PI-MEN resistance group, which, in addition to helping fugitives to France, also carried out intelligence activities and counter-propaganda. Before crossing the border, fugitives were provided with false papers.

By April 1944 Josy Goerres was once again about to be arrested by the Gestapo. He went into hiding in Differdange and hid until liberation, first with friends, then in a butcher's shop. His protectors ran a serious risk: one of the helpers was shot and killed in the course of the search for Goerres.

■ ■ Nous décidâmes de commencer par des actions locales, plus ou moins individuelles, contre ce soi-disant nouvel ordre, par exemple : publication et lancement de tracts, photos et insignes de Madame la Grande-Duchesse et du Prince Héritier, du pays et du blason luxembourgeois, diffusion de nouvelles captées à la radio de Londres.

Josy Goerres, *Aperçu historique*, 25 Apr. 1960





Au cours de l'été 1941 (juin-juillet), fut organisée la filière d'évasion vers la France, pour empêcher d'éventuelles arrestations de nos membres par la Gestapo. [...] Nous étions d'avis, en effet, qu'il était risqué de cacher les fugitifs à la longue dans le pays même.

Josy Goerres, Aperçu historique, 25 Apr. 1960



Josy Goerres' PI-MEN armband



JULIEN MEYER



32

- 1923:** born in Luxembourg City to a Jewish family
- 1930er:** apprentice in his father's textile business
- 1941:** employment with a timber merchant in the south of France
- 1943:** resistance fighter in France
- Oct. 1944:** return to Luxembourg
- June 1945:** return of his family, rebuilding of his father's textile business



Julien Meyer goes into hiding and assumes a new 'identity'. His papers are forged, and Julien Meyer becomes Julien Mirebeau

Julien Meyer's father's clothes shop was confiscated in 1940 due to the Nazis' policies regarding the Jews. Julien lost his job and went to work for the Jewish community. From September 1940, the community organized the escape of many Luxembourg Jews. Meyer's job was to establish contact with the German authorities and accompany bus convoys to France. On 22 January 1941 the Meyer family also decided to flee to southern France. Only Julien's grandmother Settchen stayed behind in Luxembourg because of her age. She was later murdered in Theresienstadt (CS).

In November 1942 the family had to flee again, as the Germans now also occupied southern France. Julien Meyer worked as a farm labourer under a false name. In August 1943 he and his brother Paul joined the French *maquis*. Julien became a liaison officer and translator. From June 1944, he took part in the fight for the liberation of France. After liberation the resistance groups were integrated into the French army. As foreigners Julien and Paul Meyer were discharged, to their great disappointment. They returned to Luxembourg in October 1944. Julien Meyer later became a translator in the US Army. In the summer of 1945 the rest of his family also returned to Luxembourg and had to rebuild their destroyed livelihood.



Julien Meyer in the armed French resistance, the *maquis* (second from right), where he also participated in the liberation of France in 1944-1945





Um Ufank waren eist Equipement a Waffe ganz spärlech. Lues a lues hu mer méi Waffe kritt, ënnert aanerem och déi kleng Mitraillette „Sten“, fir Schëss a Rafalen. Eis schwéierst Waffe ware Bazookaen. [...] Eng vu menge Missiounen war, reegelméisseg d'Messages ofzelauschten. [...] Enn Mee koum dann d'Alerte. Déi eenzel Kompanien sinn opgestallt ginn, fir d'Hauptverbindungsweeër ze stoppen, duerch Barragen, falsch Barragen, asw.

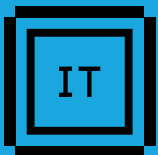
Julien Meyer, contemporary witness account, 1999-2000



Some of Julien Meyer's ammunition from his time in the *maquis*



LUIGI PERUZZI



33

- 1910:** born in Italy
- 1926:** migrates to Luxembourg and works as a bricklayer and a miner
- 1940:** joins the anti-Fascist resistance in Luxemburg
- 1942:** arrest by the Gestapo and imprisonment in the SS concentration camp at Hinzert (D)
- 1943:** extradition to Italy  
joins the Italian army after the fall of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini  
German captivity and forced labour
- 1945:** liberation by the Red Army
- 1946:** return to Luxembourg

Et presque tous les mois, la troupe d'acteurs amateurs organisait des soirées culturelles. La participation était satisfaisante et l'argent allait presque toujours à des œuvres d'assistance pour les familles touchées par les expulsions. [...] mais elle fut aussi une espèce de couverture pour des activités du Parti communiste et de la résistance au fascisme. Aux répétitions, il y avait toujours un groupe de personnes qui n'avaient rien à voir avec les artistes qui répétaient leurs rôles. Ils étaient là, soit pour une réunion d'information, soit pour distribuer les différentes charges toujours liées au mouvement antifasciste.

Luigi Peruzzi, *Mes Mémoires*, 1969

Luigi Peruzzi grew up in an orphanage. In 1926 he came to Luxembourg to live with his grandmother. Already an avowed anti-Fascist before the war, Peruzzi continued his resistance during the occupation: he disrupted Fascist cultural meetings and published an illegal newspaper. He established close links with the Communists and with the French resistance in the border area. In September 1942 he was arrested by the Gestapo and taken to the Hinzert SS concentration camp, where he was regularly maltreated and interrogated. In 1943 he was extradited to Italy and placed under house arrest. Freed after the fall of Mussolini, he joined the Italian army. While fighting against the Germans he was taken prisoner and had to do forced labour in Berlin (D).

J'aurais pu crier de joie en entendant que je suivrais le même destin que tant d'autres antifascistes. Je savais qu'on allait me remettre aux mains de la police fasciste, mais comparés aux Lager allemands, les prisons et l'exil en Italie étaient encore préférables.

Luigi Peruzzi, *Mes Mémoires*, 1969

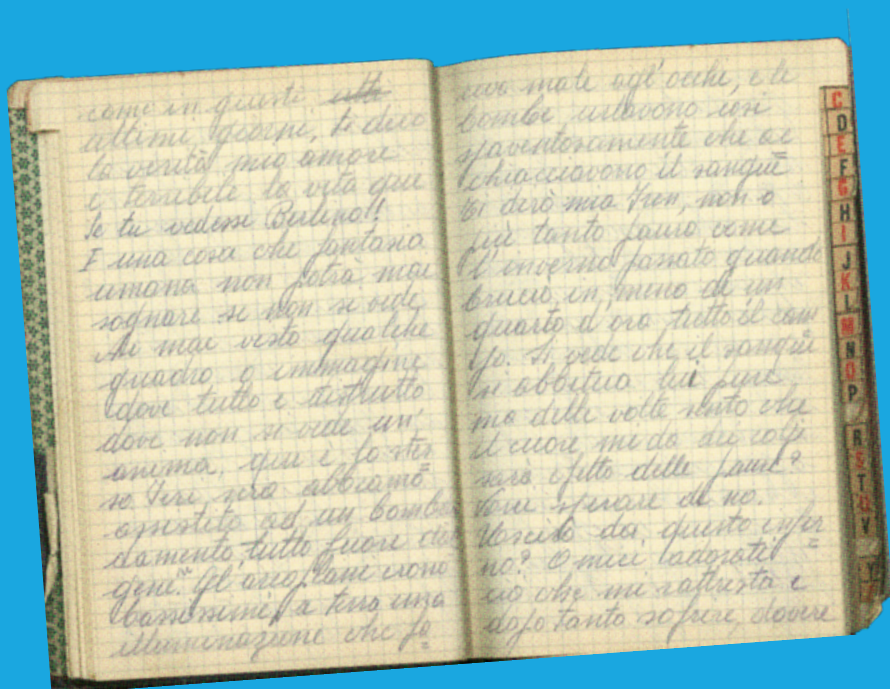


After arriving in Italy, Peruzzi was registered by the police and placed under house arrest. Italian police photos (1943)



I tell you the truth, my love, life here is terrible. If you could see Berlin!!! It's something that human imagination can never dream of unless you see it. Have you ever seen any painting or picture where everything is destroyed, where you can't see a soul? It's the same here. Yesterday we witnessed an absolutely staggering bombing. The planes were so low to the ground, the light hurt the eyes, and the bombs screamed so frighteningly that it froze our blood.

Luigi Peruzzi, diary entry, 1945



Entry in Luigi Peruzzi's diary during his time as a forced labourer in Berlin, 15 Apr. 1945



YVONNE USELDINGER



34

- Nov. 1921:** born in Steinfort (L)
- Feb. 1938:** joins the Communist Party
- 1940:** first activities against the German occupying forces
- July 1941:** first arrest by the Gestapo, release after two weeks
- Aug. 1942:** imprisonment in Trier (D) for 'activities hostile to the Reich'
- June 1943:** detention at Ravensbrück women's concentration camp (D), forced labour for the war industry, for Siemens & Halske and others
- 1944:** several bouts of typhoid fever, rheumatism, otitis and scarlet fever
- Dec. 1944:** begins a secret diary in the camp
- Apr. 1945:** freed by the Danish and Swedish Red Cross



Ich war eingesperrt in einem Zimmer. [...] Die Gestapo war anwesend, als das Kind zur Welt kam, mit ganz furchtbaren Bemerkungen, weil es eine Schweregeburt war. Steißlage. Und man hat mir dann gesagt, dass man das Kind in Stücken rausnehmen würde. Das war natürlich sehr erschütternd für mich. Und ich habe dann gesagt: „Dann tun Sie, was Sie nicht lassen können.“

Yvonne Useldinger, contemporary witness interview, 1996



Yvonne Useldinger's daughter Fernande sketched by Lily Unden, who in 1944 drew the child for Yvonne Useldinger on the basis of a photograph. A concentration camp guard had shown the photo to Useldinger for half an hour.

Yvonne Useldinger was politically active from a very early age. Her family were members of the Socialist Workers' Party who took in refugees from Germany. In 1938 she joined the Communist Party. In 1940 the Communist Party went underground, the only party to do so. Together with her husband she was active in the resistance against the Nazis, helped publish the underground newspaper *Die Wahrheit* (The Truth), procured forged passports and money as well as paper for printing newspapers and leaflets. In April 1941 Useldinger was arrested for the first time, interrogated by the Gestapo and later released. She continued her resistance activities. In August 1942 Yvonne Useldinger and her family were arrested again during a raid. She spent months in a Trier prison, where she gave birth to a child under the most difficult circumstances. She was allowed to see her new-born daughter twice a week at most. In June 1943 she was taken to Ravensbrück women's concentration camp. Her camp uniform was marked with the red badge of political prisoners.

She teamed up with other Communists and took part in sabotage activities at her workplace for Siemens as well as in rescue operations. The situation at Ravensbrück was precarious, especially in the months before liberation. Useldinger painted and kept a secret diary describing the horrors of the camp. She fell ill several times and survived despite the dire circumstances thanks to the solidarity of her fellow inmates. They helped each other to stay alive, distracted each other from everyday life in the camp and gave each other moral support.

Yvonne Useldinger was freed from the concentration camp and taken to Sweden to recover in a convoy of the Danish and Swedish Red Cross. She returned to Luxembourg on 3 July 1945 and was finally able to see her daughter again.

Hard physical labour for prisoners at Ravensbrück women's concentration camp, 1940





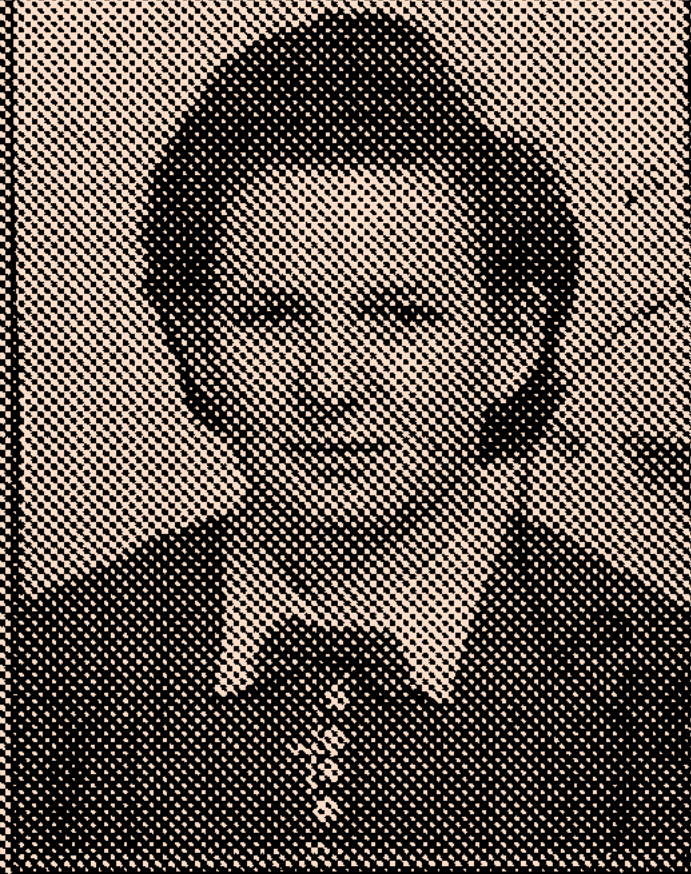


## Alles Leid versuchte man durch liebe Worte u. Handlungen zu beseitigen.

Yvonne Useldinger, letter from Sweden, 3 May 1945



The prisoners tried to raise the morale of their fellow prisoners through gifts, and they tried to show that despite their dehumanization by the Nazis they were still human beings with feelings, fears, dreams and desires. On this card, Yvonne Useldinger recorded some mementos of this solidarity among prisoners, 1945



Eigenhändige Unterschrift

*Marie Bonichaux*

MARIE BONICHAUX



35

- 1924:** born in Niederkorn (L)
- 1940:** evacuation to Préizerdaul (L); forced entry into the *Bund Deutscher Mädel* (BDM)
- 1941:** employment at the municipal treasury in Luxembourg City
- 1942:** wants to participate in strikes but discouraged by her supervisor
- 1943:** Reich Labour Service (RAD) in Thuringia (D)
- 1944:** war auxiliary service (*Kriegshilfsdienst*, KHD), at the Hescho factory in Hermsdorf (D)
- 1945:** liberation by the Americans, return to Luxembourg via Belgium



'Fire drill', probably in the course of air-raid protection training to assist the fire brigade in the event of bombing raids on German cities, Triebes (Thuringia), 1944

**Mir kruten eng grouss Bidden aus Aluminium fir eis ze wäschen. Déi huet misse blénken, datt een sech konnt dra spigelen.**

Marie Bonichaux, contemporary witness interview, 2020

**Mir hu misse Pompjee spillen. An do huet den instructeur gesot: Wann ee vun iech de Schlauch lassléisst, flitt dat anert iwwer d'Haiser.**



Marie Bonichaux was still a schoolgirl on 10 May 1940. In order to be allowed to continue her education, she had no choice but to join the *Bund Deutscher Mädel* (League of German Girls). She finished school, and in February 1941 she went to work for the municipal treasury in Luxembourg City. Her supervisor allowed the staff to secretly listen to foreign radio stations. In 1942 she met two Jews. Even though contact with them was forbidden, Marie Bonichaux nevertheless inconspicuously shared her lunch with them. On 31 August 1942 she wanted to take part in the strike but was prevented from doing so. A year later she was conscripted to the Reich Labour Service (RAD) in Thuringia, where she had to participate in drills, political education and other training activities. Marie Bonichaux also had to do kitchen duty and work on farms. From May 1944 she was forced to work for the Nazi war relief service at the Hescho porcelain factory. She was liberated by the Americans in February 1945.

**Enges Daags hunn ech d'Sicherunge platze gedoen. Déi 2 Ingenieure soten, si géife mir hëllefen, mä wann se net gefléckt kéinte ginn, da wéisst ech jo, wat mir géing blién. Ech wier an d'KZ komm, well se geduecht hätten, ech hätt et express gemaach. Si kruten et dunn awer nach gefléckt.** Marie Bonichaux, contemporary witness interview, 2020

From 1944, Marie Bonichaux had to work in a porcelain factory as part of the war relief service. Work pass dated 17 May 1944



'Inspection of washing bowls' during Reich Labour Service in Thuringia





**Mir goufe kontrolléiert, wéi eis Better waren, eis Schief an esouguer, ob eis Zännbiische propper waren. War dat net esou, huet eis Virgesetzten alles op de Buedem geschmass an et konnt een erëm vu vir ufänken.**

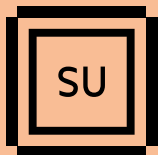
Marie Bonichaux, contemporary witness interview, 2020



After her liberation, Marie Bonichaux made a rucksack out of such a blanket from her war auxiliary service and used it for her journey home to Luxembourg



TINA BOSCHKO



36



- 1920:** born in Ukraine (later part of the Soviet Union)
- 1942:** a fully qualified speech therapist, she is deported to Germany, where she has to do forced labour
- 1943:** *Ostarbeiterin*, or 'eastern worker', at the German rail repair works in Diedenhofen (Thionville) in annexed France
- 1945:** marriage to Luxembourger Mathias Hoor

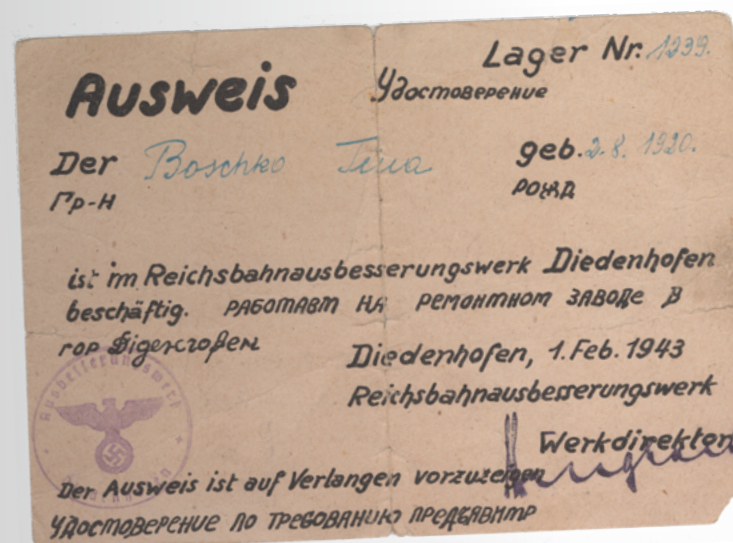
Tina Boschko in front of the fence surrounding the *Ostarbeiter* camp, Thionville 1943-1944



On 15 December 1942 Tina Boschko found herself forcibly mobilized for 'work in Greater Germany'. She was given only one hour to pack her things and leave her family, whom she never saw again. Tina Boschko was even forced to leave her five-year-old daughter behind.

After the Wehrmacht invasion of the Soviet Union, thousands of Soviet citizens from the occupied territories were deported to the Third Reich for forced labour. They were deployed as support for the war economy. From autumn 1942, almost 4,000 Russians, White Russians and Ukrainians were sent to Luxembourg and northern France. Often they were young men, even more often women, and they were called *Ostarbeiter*, or 'eastern workers'. They had to do hard and dangerous work in industry, without protection or training. Their clothes were marked with the letters 'OST'. They were interned in so-called 'Russian camps', where they lived marginalized lives under difficult conditions and constant surveillance.

In the winter of 1943, Boschko was deployed in Diedenhofen and interned in 'Russian camp' No. 1239. She kept in touch with her family through letters. In Diedenhofen she met Mathias Hoor, a Luxembourger, whom she married in 1945. After the end of the war, liberated forced labourers were returned to their homeland, where they were often labelled as traitors and collaborators. Boschko stayed in Luxembourg and started a new family.



Tina Boschko's *Ostarbeiter* ID card, Thionville, 1 Feb. 1943





Les Allemands commencent à envoyer des prisonniers russes dans les usines luxembourgeoises. Ce sont des femmes et des jeunes filles ukrainiennes, anciennes institutrices, élèves de lycées des jeunes filles, qui sont amenées dans un état de dénutrition lamentable. Dans chaque voiture on découvre 1-2 personnes mortes d'inanition pendant le voyage. La nourriture est presque inexistante [...].

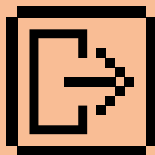
Fernand Schwachtgen, report, 1942



As a forced labourer in Thionville, Tina Boschko had to wear the 'OST' badge, abbreviation for 'Ostarbeiter', on her clothes



GEBRÜDER FERRING



37

- 1929 and 1933:** Marcel and Aloyse Ferring born in Tandel (L)
- 1943:** father Nicolas Ferring imprisoned in the SS concentration camp at Hinzert (D) for involvement with the Luxembourg resistance
- Sept.-Dec. 1944:** liberation of Tandel by the Americans; Americans living in the village
- Late 1944-1945:** Marcel and Aloyse experience the Battle of the Bulge in Tandel; evacuation, accommodation in Larochette (L), later Beckerich (L); return of the family to Tandel

Am nächsten Vormittag um 11 Uhr wurden wir entlassen. Die Häuser waren ausgeraubt. Die Leute mussten die toten Pferde und das Rindvieh begraben, welches durch Granatsplitter oder Flintenschüsse liegengeblieben war. Auch 7 Zivilpersonen, 1 Amerikaner und 6 Deutsche wurden begraben.

Marcel Ferring, war diary entry, 18/20 Dec. 1944

Gegen Mittag wurden wir mit zwei amerikanischen Autos nach Fels verbracht. Hier waren schon viele Evakuierte. Wir wurden auf der Gemeinde angemeldet. Danach ging einer mit uns in unser Quartier. In dem Hause wohnten zwei alte Leute. [...] Die Leute brachten uns eine alte Matratze, worauf wir über Nacht schliefen. Das Zimmer war so feucht, dass das Schneewasser die Mauern entlanglief, sodass am Morgen Wasser im Zimmer stand.

Marcel Ferring, war diary entry, 23 Jan. 1944



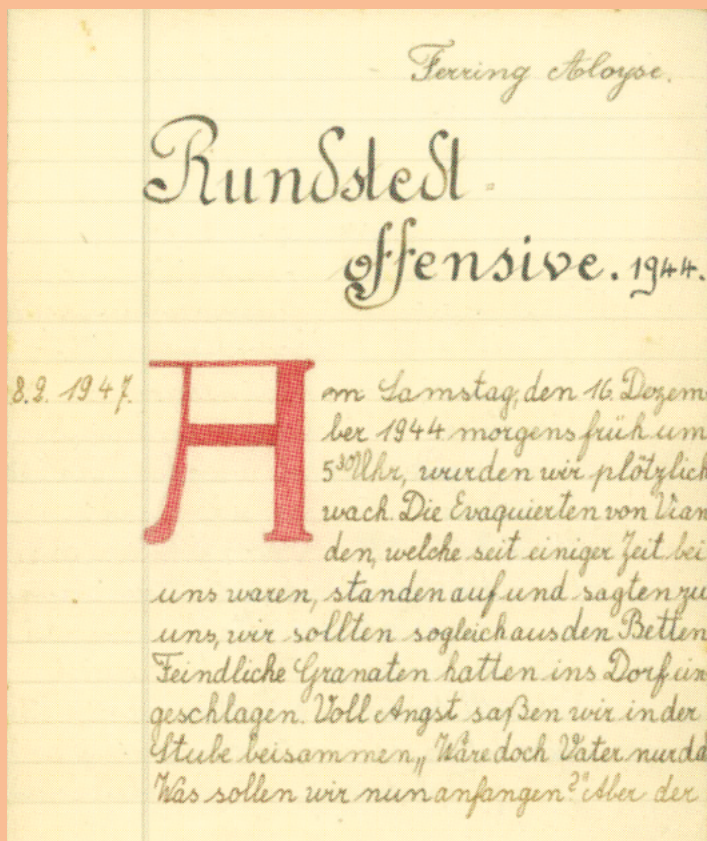
The Ferrings' house after reconstruction (to the left the bullet-riddled barn)



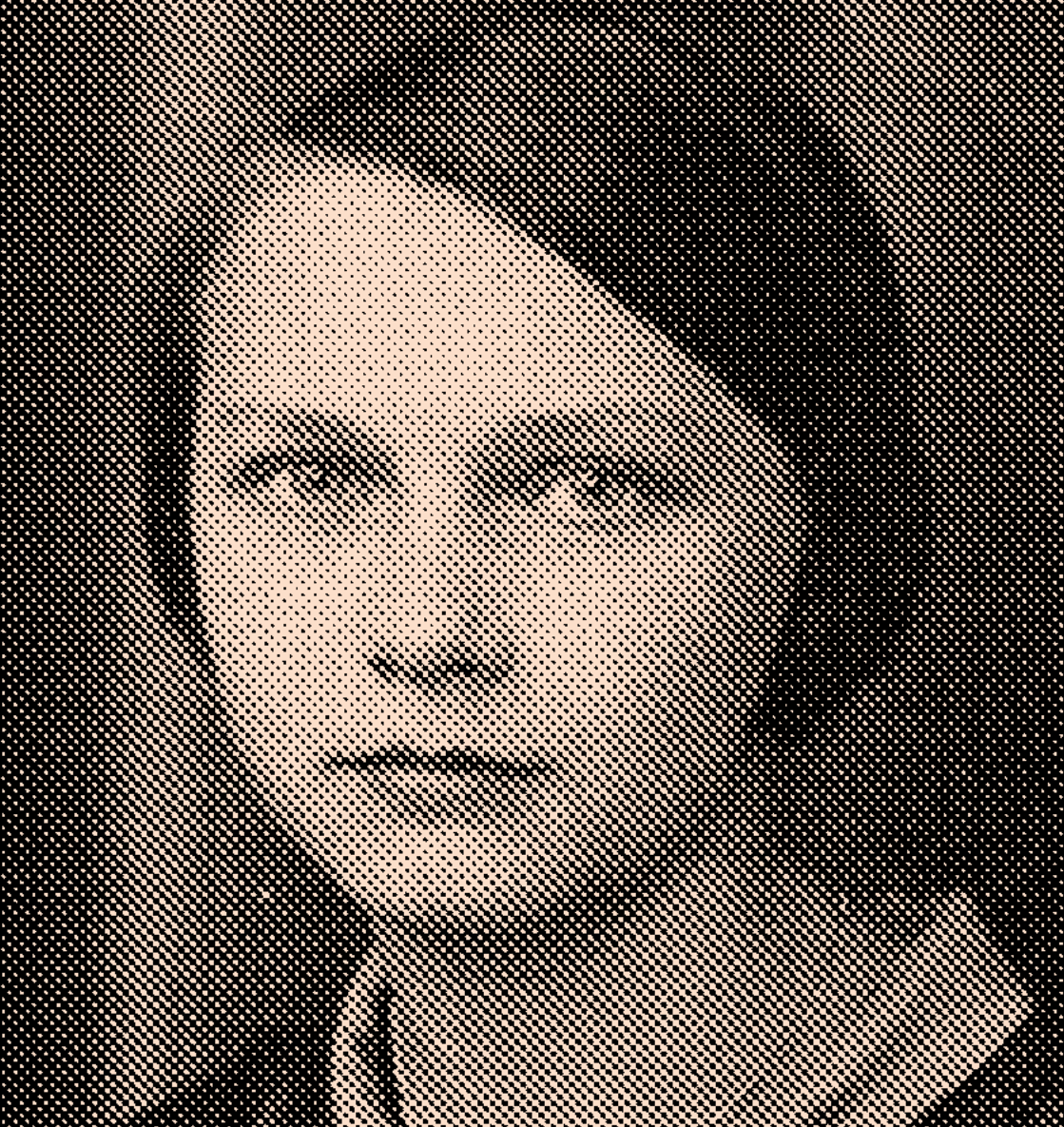


Sonntags morgens in aller Frühe schon hörten wir die Granaten wieder pfeifen und einschlagen. [...] Gegen 10 Uhr ging die Scheune des Besitzers J. Peter Sinner in Brand. 38 Personen mussten 3 Stunden am Bache stehen, die Hände erhoben, damit die Deutschen ihre Toten begraben und Deckung hinter ihnen suchen konnten.

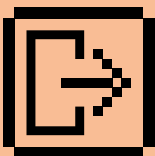
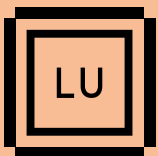
Marcel Ferring, war diary entry, 17 Dec. 1944



School essay by Marcel Ferring's brother Aloyse recounting his experiences during the Battle of the Bulge, 8 February 1947



SUSANNE 'SETTY' GARÇON



38

- 1919:** born in Esch/Alzette
- May 1940:** evacuated to Bourgneuf (F); begins to write down her experiences
- June 1940:** bombing of Bourgneuf
- Aug. 1940:** return to Esch/Alzette; illegal production of badges, including the Luxembourg national flag
- Sept. 1944:** the Garçon family hides deserter Marcel Klein



When German troops invaded Luxembourg in May 1940, some 90,000 Luxembourgers were evacuated to the interior of the country or to France. Most of them fled on foot or on horse-drawn carts, taking along only the most basic necessities

On 10 May 1940, the German Wehrmacht invaded neutral Luxembourg. Due to their proximity to France, Esch/Alzette and other villages in southern Luxembourg were suddenly in the midst of a war zone. The population of Esch were evacuated to France. Setty Garçon arrived in Bourgneuf via Troyes (F), Paris and other towns, and she remained in Bourgneuf until her return to Esch. One of Setty's main worries was her family's well-being. After her return to Esch/Alzette on 27 August 1940, she began working for the wine merchant Schmit-Deloos. During the occupation, Setty Garçon made an illegal pin of the Luxembourg national flag. She was caught wearing it and betrayed. Setty Garçon had to answer for this, but it had no further consequences. On 3 September 1944, the Garçon family hid 22-year-old deserter Marcel Klein for a week. Setty Garçon and Marcel became a couple during the occupation, and they married on 8 December 1944 in Esch/Alzette.

Heute ist Pfingsten und bei uns zu Hause sollte Kirmes sein. Wir aber sind überall verstreut und wissen nicht, wohin gehen. Wir waren heute Morgen in der Messe. Die Leute hier sind sehr nett. Bei den Soldaten bekommen wir Fleisch und kleine Soldatenkuchen zum Essen. Heute Nachmittag sind viele Luxemburger angekommen. Einige Bekannte sind darunter, doch nicht die, welche wir suchen. Wir waren den ganzen Nachmittag auf dem Platz und sind von einem Auto zum anderen gelaufen.

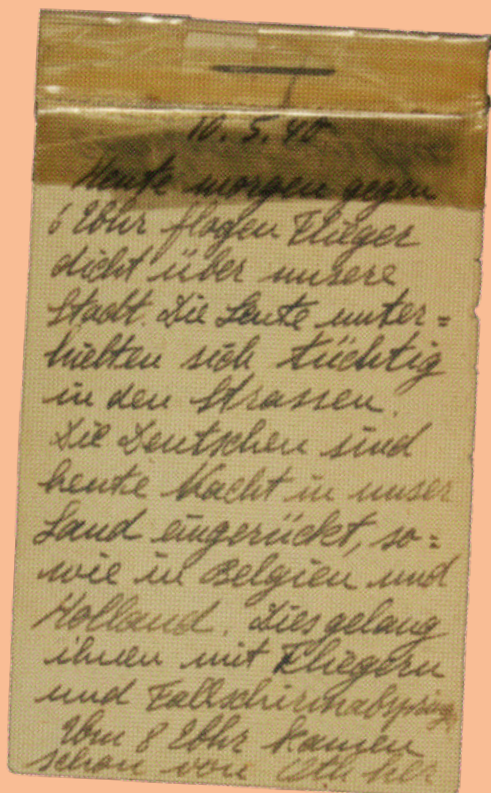
Susanne Garçon, entry evacuation diary, 12 May 1940



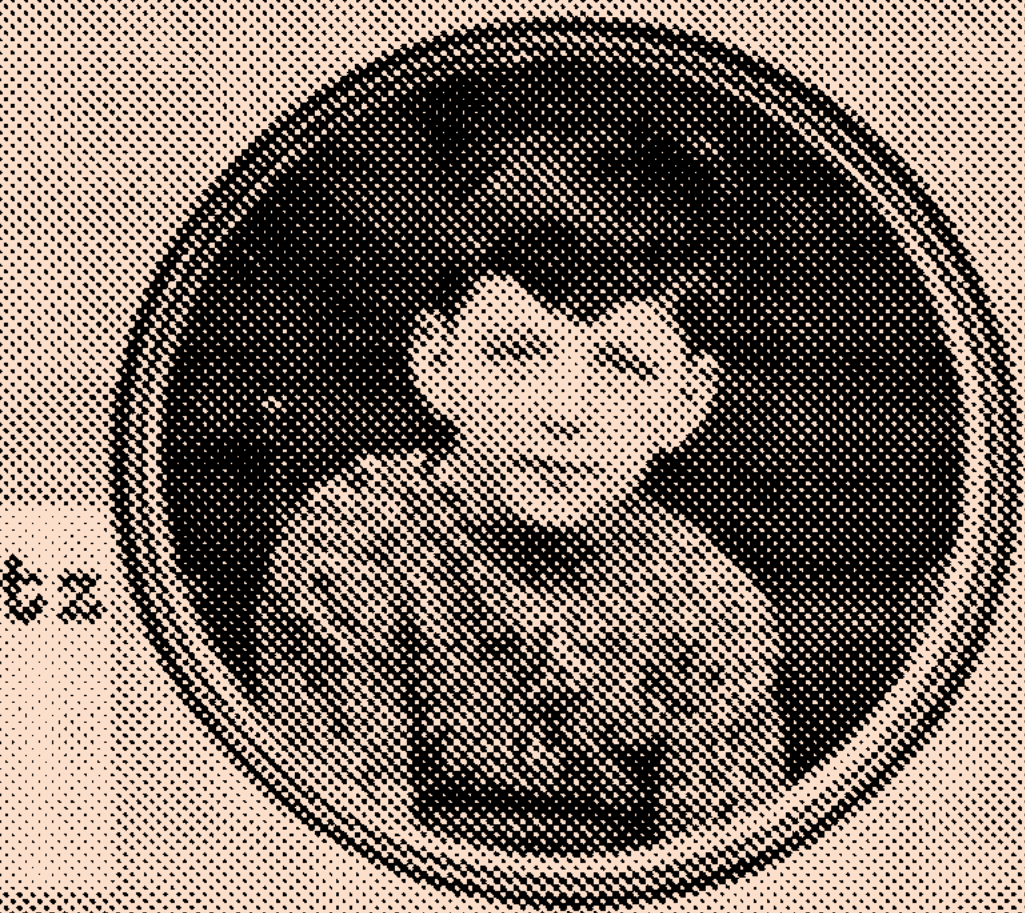


Wir sind in Esch. Welche Freude war das, als wir die Heimatstadt wiedersahen. Niemand war in unserem Hause, es hat nichts vom Kriege mitbekommen. Alles ist noch, wie es war. Doch bei vielen Leuten war es nicht so. Manche Häuser sind zerstört, vielen Leute sind Sachen abhanden gekommen. Esch ist fast noch, wie es war, nur sieht man deutsche Soldaten in den Straßen. Viele Leute sind schon hier, fast alle, glaube ich.

Susanne Garçon, entry evacuation diary, 27 Aug. 1940



Diary kept by Setty Garçon during the evacuation in France, 1940



MARCEL HANDZEL



39



- 1934:** born in Esch/Alzette; his mother Léonie Herz comes from Medernach (L)
- May 1940:** evacuation of the Handzel family to Mâcon (F)
- Aug. 1940:** Marcel and his parents do not return to Luxembourg
- Feb. 1941:** move to Sancé in the department of Saône-et-Loire (F)
- Mar. 1941:** starts school and makes friends with the children next door
- Aug. 1942:** Marcel's father Osias deported to Drancy near Paris and then to Auschwitz
- Dec. 1943:** Osias murdered in Pyskowice (in present-day Poland)
- 1944:** Marcel and his mother Léonie arrested, taken to Drancy assembly camp, deported to Auschwitz and murdered



Marcel Handzel with his mother  
Léonie

On a entendu le bruit des bottes. Ils sont entrés dans la classe et ont embarqué Marcel. L'instituteur – Monsieur Lubin – était blanc comme un linge. Pourtant, cet instituteur, c'était un ancien militaire, très strict. Tous les matins, nous devions assister au lever de drapeau.

Raymond Burtin, contemporary witness account, 2017

On the morning of 11 May 1940, the Handzel family were evacuated to France. They settled in the Mâcon area, together with more than other 25,000 refugees from Luxembourg. After the fall of France, Luxembourg evacuees were returned to their homeland. Marcel Handzel and his parents found new accommodation in Sancé and remained in France. Marcel Handzel went to school there and made new friends, including Raymond Burtin. The Handzels quickly integrated into the village community. As a foreign refugee and a Jew, Marcel Handzel's father was exploited by the Vichy government as a forced labourer. In August 1942 he was transferred to a 'foreigners' labour camp', from where he was deported to the East and murdered in Pyskowice near Gleiwitz on 8 December 1943. On 11 November 1942 the 'Zone Libre' was occupied by the Germans. Marcel Handzel and Léonie Handzel were picked up in Sancé in July 1944 and deported to Auschwitz extermination camp via Drancy. Three weeks before his 10th birthday, Marcel Handzel was gassed in Auschwitz together with his mother on 4 August 1944. With the exception of three persons, almost all of the family's Luxembourg relatives were murdered in the Shoah.

En classe, ça se passait bien pour lui. Il était calme et travailleur. Il parlait bien français.

Raymond Burtin, contemporary witness account, 2017



Marcel Handzel with his friends in Sancé, 1941



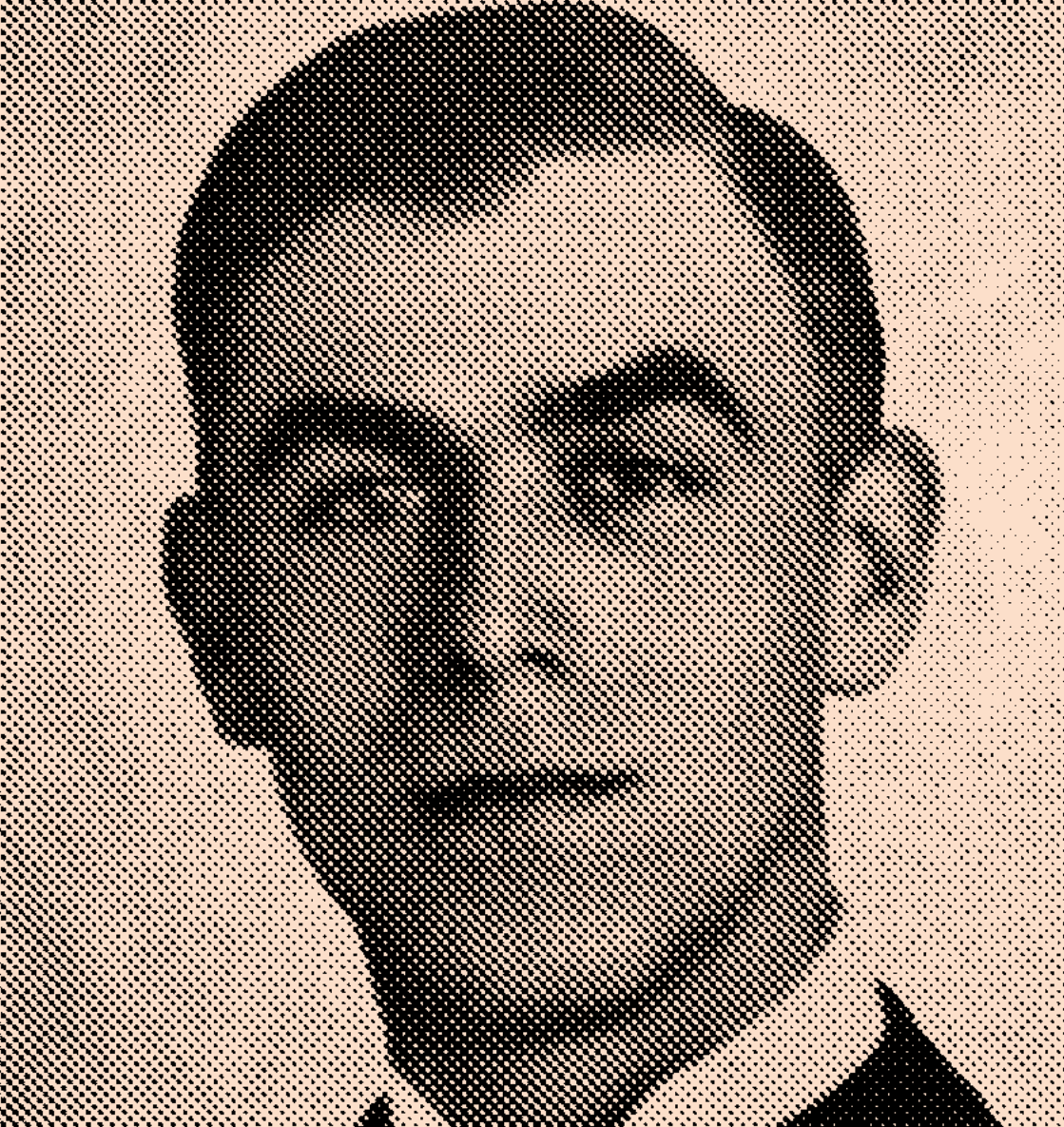


Un garçon gentil qui avait les mêmes jeux que nous. C'était un copain. Pour nous, il était comme les autres.

Raymond Burtin, contemporary witness account, 2017



Marcel Handzel (front row, 3rd from left)  
with his school class in Sancé, 1943



JEAN JOHN



40

- 1908:** born in Bettendorf (L)
- until 1940:** runs a transport company; married to Lisa Reiter, two sons: Pierre and Michel
- 10 May 1940:** first Luxembourg civilian victim of the German invasion



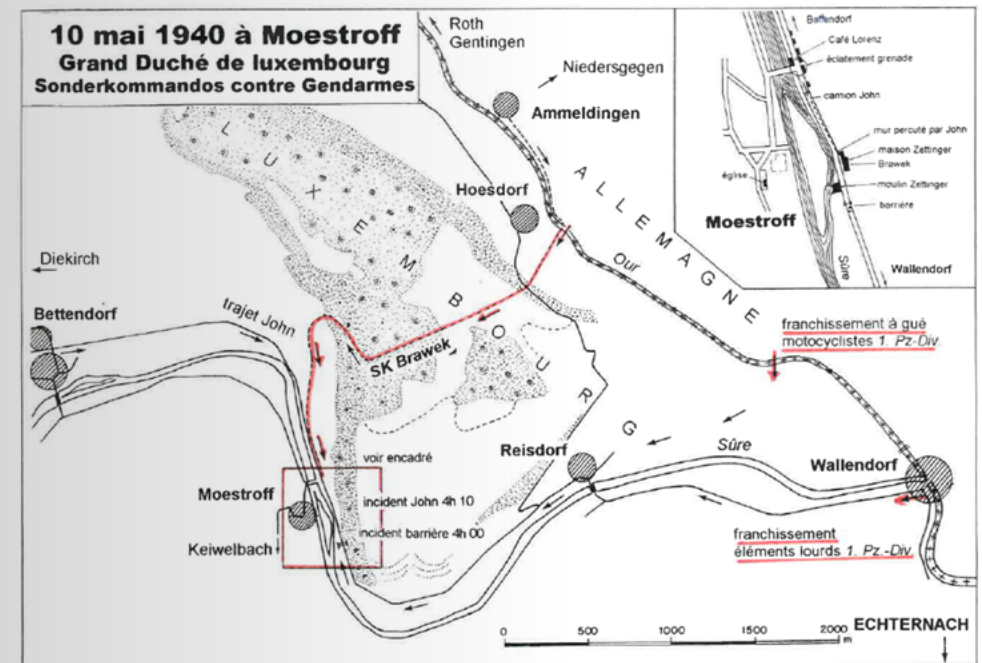
Wedding photo of Jean John and Lisa Reiter



Jean John shortly before the outbreak of war

A guarded roadblock was set up in Moestroff along the river Sauer to delay the German invasion. On 10 May 1940 at around 4 a.m., a German *Sonderkommando* unsuccessfully tried to prevent the definitive closure of the barrier. Several Luxembourg border guards were injured in this attack.

A short time later, as Jean John was driving to the barrier in his truck, he was fatally wounded by shots from a German submachine gun. In 2010 a memorial was erected in Moestroff to commemorate the first Luxembourger to die in the Second World War.







Wir fuhren weiter, als wir bemerkten, dass das Telefonnetz ganz durchschnitten war. Ich riet John, doch wieder heimzufahren, er aber wehrte stürmisch und sagte: „Es ist unsere Pflicht als Luxemburger dieses den zuständigen Posten bei der Moestroffer Mühle zu melden.“ Und anstatt unsern Weg über die Moestroffer Brücke einzuschlagen, fuhr John nach der Mühle, aber schon auf halbem Wege von der Brücke zur Mühle krachte es furchterlich. John hielt sofort, da erst merkten wir, dass Preußen, natürlich alles in Zivil mit gelbem Armband, uns eine Handgranate unter dem Wagen durchgeschossen hatten. Ein Preuße riss sogleich die Türe vom Wagen auf und sagte, der Wagen sei beschlagnahmt, „Fahren Sie ihn sofort zur Mühle“, und setzte sich bei uns ins Auto. Noch nicht ganz vor der Mühle angekommen, feuerte ein anderer Preuße mit einer Schnellfeuerpistole 18 Schuss auf uns, wobei John am Steuer getroffen wurde und auf der Stelle tot war.

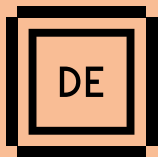
Louis Ernzen, testimony of Jean John's passenger, 2 Oct. 1946

Inauguration of the memorial in honour of Jean John in the presence of his two sons Michel and Pierre, Moestroff, 2010





KARL JUDA



41

- 1910:** born in Bitburg (D)
- 1936:** flees with his family to Luxembourg
- Jan. 1941:** internment near Wittlich (D) and forced labour in the Reich motorway construction
- Sept. 1941:** escape to Düsseldorf (D)
- Dec. 1941:** return to Luxembourg
- 1942:** illegal flight to Switzerland, subsequent arrest and deportation; hidden by several friends after his return to Luxembourg
- Sept. 1944:** after liberation, work as auxiliary policeman of the UNIO'N resistance organization
- Dec. 1944:** fights alongside US troops during Battle of the Bulge

■ ■ Sie hatten meine liebe Mutter mitgeschleppt, weil sie mich nicht finden konnten. Kann ich je im Leben wieder froh sein? [...] Muss ich nicht immer daran denken, dass diese Hunde meine Mutter vielleicht umgebracht haben [...] und dass sie um mich zu schützen und um mich nicht zu verraten, all dies erleiden musste. Ich habe gut durchgehalten und mein Leben gerettet, aber um welchen Preis! Teurer konnte niemand bezahlen; denn was gilt das eigene Leben als eine Mutter?

Karl Juda, letter to Richard Meyer, 6 Mar. 1946

House of the Jodocy family, where Karl Juda lived in hiding for 2½ years



In 1936, the Juda family was forced to sell their family business in Germany for less than its value and emigrate to Luxembourg. They settled in Walferdange, later in Weiler and Befort. Karl Juda had trained as a farmer.

In 1941 Karl Juda was assigned to forced labour for the construction of the Reich motorway and interned at Greimerath labour camp near Wittlich. He escaped in September 1941 and spent several months working undetected for a German baker. In December 1941 he returned to Luxembourg. He was wanted by the Gestapo. In October he had been meant to report for deportation to the Litzmannstadt ghetto with his mother Klara. His mother did not comply with the order, and Karl decided to flee to Switzerland. He travelled to the Swiss border undiscovered and swam across the Rhine.

Once in Switzerland, Karl Juda worked as a lifeguard. However, he was discovered and deported to Nazi Germany as an illegal immigrant. He managed to return to Luxembourg, travelling mainly at night and hiding during the day.

In Luxembourg he was first hidden in a hotel by a friend. Later he returned to Befort, but his mother was already gone. She had been deported to Theresienstadt ghetto in July 1942 and murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1943. In Befort Karl Juda was hidden for over two years by the Jodocy-Godefroit family. After the liberation of Luxembourg in September 1944, the 34-year-old worked as an auxiliary policeman and helped arrest collaborators.

■ ■ D'Jodocys ware gutt kathoulesch Leit. An ech soen: wann all d'Mënschen esou wiere wéi si! Bei hinnen hat nëmmen de Mënsch eppes ze soen. Keng Nationalitéit, keng Relioun, keng Hautfaarf.

Karl Juda, contemporary witness interview, 3 May 1976



The Jodocy-Godefroit couple





**Fir mech war et eng Diskriminéierung,  
well jiddwer Friemen, deen dech op der  
Strooss gesinn huet, dee konnt dech  
beleidegen. Ech war deemools jonk an  
ech weess net, ob dat esou einfach  
ewech gaange wier.**

Karl Juda, contemporary witness interview, 3 May 1976



Before the introduction of the  
yellow 'Jewish star' in October  
1941, Jews in Luxembourg had to  
wear a yellow armband with the  
Star of David



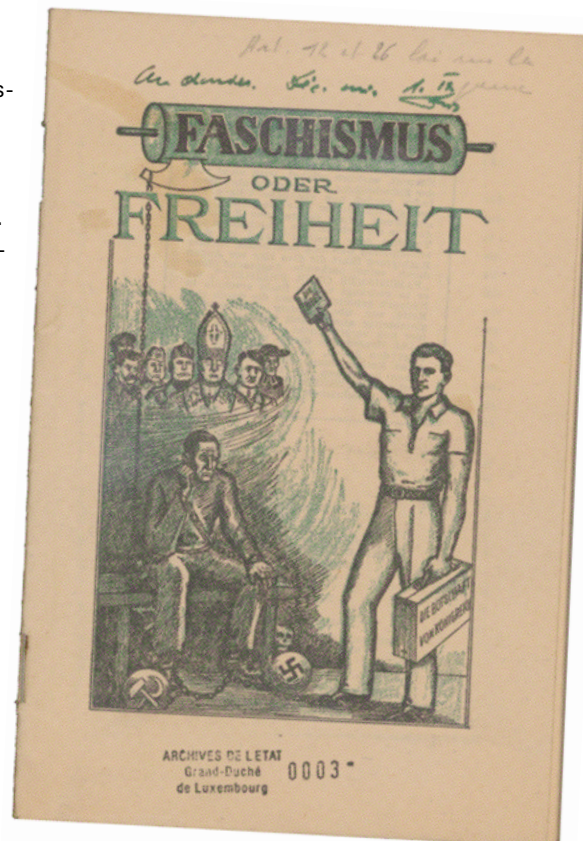
CATHERINE KINNEN-SCHMIT



42

- 1910:** born in Michelau (L)
- 1937:** becomes a member of Luxembourg's Jehovah's Witnesses
- Aug. 1940:** arrest and first interrogations of Catherine Kinnen and her husband Nicolas by the Gestapo in Esch/Alzette
- Sept. 1940:** transfer to Trier police prison (D)
- Nov. 1940:** signs a 'declaration of commitment' that she will no longer be an active Jehovah's Witness; release from prison
- until 1941:** remains under obligation to report to the police

Pamphlet of Jehovah's Witnesses in Luxembourg opposing Hitler and other Fascist governments, like the ones Catherine Kinnen distributed. Fascism or Freedom, Switzerland 1939



Catherine Kinnen and her husband became members of the Jehovah's Witnesses community in 1937. In Schiffange they distributed religious reading material and organized Bible evenings at their home. At one of these meetings she was baptized. Jehovah's Witnesses were persecuted under the German occupation. On 30 October 1940 the religious community was officially dissolved and its members arrested by the Gestapo. Catherine Kinnen was imprisoned in Esch/Alzette and probably interrogated by the Gestapo at Villa Seligmann, where she was subjected to threats such as transfer to a concentration camp. Because she refused to give up her faith, she was transferred to Trier prison on 7 September 1940. There, after repeated interrogations and probably torture by Gestapo men, she signed a 'declaration of commitment' that she would no longer be active as a Jehovah's Witness. She was released from custody on 23 November 1940.

■ ■ Nachdem ich nun eingehend belehrt und gewarnt wurde, bestehe ich auch weiterhin auf meine Anhängerschaft als IBV-Mitglied und Zeugin Jehovas und bin nicht bereit, trotz der zu erwartenden hohen Strafen und staatspolizeilichen Maßnahmen davon abzulassen. Ich bin bereit und gewillt, ohne Rücksicht auf mein Kind, alle mir daraus entstehenden nachteiligen Folgen sowie etwaige Überführung in ein KZ-Lager auf mich zu nehmen.

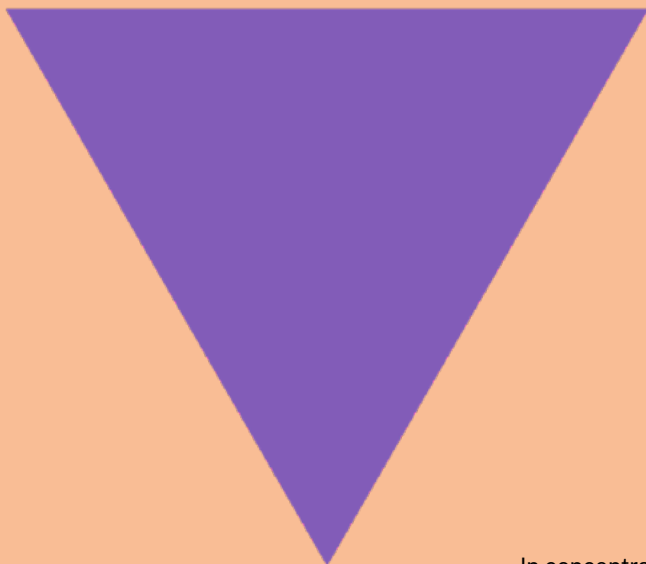
Catherine Kinnen-Schmit, forced statement after interrogation, 3 Sept. 1940





**Ich versichere hiermit, dass ich mich nie wieder für die Internationale Bibelforschervereinigung betätigen werde. Personen, die für die Irrlehre der Bibelforscher werbend an mich herantreten oder in anderer Weise ihre Einstellung als Bibelforscher bekunden, werde ich unverzüglich zur Anzeige bringen. Ich will künftig die Gesetze des Staates achten und mich voll und ganz in der Volksgemeinschaft eingliedern.**

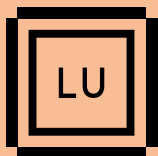
Catherine Kinnen-Schmit, forced 'declaration of commitment',  
12 Nov. 1940



In concentration camps, members of the Jehovah's Witnesses were marked with a 'purple triangle'. Catherine Kinnen was released in 1940, so she was not sent to a concentration camp



JACQUES LEURS



43

- 1910:** Gborn in the Belgian colony of Congo, son of a Luxembourger and a Congolese woman
- 1912:** comes to Luxembourg to live with his grandparents
- 1929:** works as railwayman in France, then in Luxembourg
- 1942:** registration of 'negroes' and 'negro half-breeds' under the Nuremberg Race Laws
- 1941-1942** loses his job as railway employee; harassment by the Nazis as 'negro half-breed'

Es können nur Angehörige arischer Abstammung in den deutschen Staatsdienst aufgenommen werden. Der Obengenannte ist Mischling, seine Mutter ist eine Eingeborene des Belg. Kongo. Ich bitte deshalb, L(eurs) aus dem Dienst der Deutschen Reichsbahn zu entlassen und mich hiervon in Kenntnis zu setzen.

Letter from the NSDAP district leader, 4 Apr. 1941

Registration of 'negroes' and 'negro half-breeds', 14 Oct. 1942

Polizeidirektor  
Der Polizeipräsident in Luxemburg

Zeitung — Druckschrift  
Ministerialblatt d. R. u. De. MdL.

Nummer 417 Datum 14. Okt. 1942

Eingangstempel  
Der Polizei-Direktor in Luxemburg  
Eing.: 15. OKT. 1942  
Abt.: Anl.

Ausschnitt:  
Abschnitt 2  
(Von nur einmaliger Bedeutung)

Polizeiverwaltung

Allgemeine Angaben der Polizei  
Erfassung der Neger  
RdErl. d. RF/MinChd/Pol. im RMdL v. 10. 10. 1942  
— O-VuR R III 6859/42

(1) Die Ortspol.-Behörden stellen die in ihrem Bereich wohnenden oder sich aufhaltenden Neger, Negerinnen und Negermischlinge fest und teilen das Ergebnis dem Reichssicherheitshauptamt, Amt V, in Berlin C2, Werderscher Markt 5, bis 1. 11. 1942 unmittelbar mit. Dabei sind folgende Angaben zu machen:

1. Vor- und Zuname,
2. Geburtstag und -ort,
3. frühere und jetzige Staatsangehörigkeit,
4. Beruf,
5. Wohnort, Straße und Hausnummer,
6. verheiratet mit,
7. Name, Vorname, Geburtstag und -ort der Ehefrau und der Kinder.

(2) Fehlanzeige ist nicht erforderlich.  
An alle Ortspol.-Behörden. — MBHIV, 8. 1977

The son of a Congolese woman and a Luxembourger, Jacques Leurs was one of Luxembourg's first black citizens. He grew up with his grandparents in Dommeldange. In 1929 he began working as a railwayman in France, but he returned to Luxembourg in 1930. In 1938 he married Léonie Reinert, a Luxembourger.

The Nazis viewed people like Jacques Leurs as 'inferior'. His marriage to Léonie, a white 'Aryan' Luxembourger, was considered 'racial disgrace' in their eyes. Jacques Leurs lost his job on 1 July 1941 and, together with his wife, was forcibly transferred to work in the Dommeldange steelworks. In September 1942 the couple was forced to vacate their rented flat in Luxembourg City. Between then and September 1944 Léonie was summoned several times to the German 'civil administration' with the aim of forcing her to divorce. She was even threatened with the forced castration of her husband.

The couple had to spend many years living in fear and uncertainty.

Nous avons préparé deux valises de 30 kg chacune. Nous les laissons ouvertes, dans notre chambre à coucher. Chaque matin, nous nous attendions à être arrêtés et emmenés quelque part.

Léonie Reinert, contemporary witness interview (Schwaarze Mann, Un Noir parmi nous), 2017

Im Stadtkreis Luxemburg leben zur Zeit zwei Negermischlinge 1. Gr. Beide sind in Belgisch-Kongo geboren und stammen von luxemburgischen Vätern und Kongonegerinnen. Die Personalien sind:  
a) Leurs, Karl Jakob, geb. am 31.1.10 zu Ilambi, wohnhaft Luxemburg, Beggenstrasse 23a, verheiratet seit 11.8.38 mit der luxemburgischen Staatsangehörigen Léonie Reinert, geb. am 25.5.17 zu Luxemburg. Kinder sind aus der Ehe bisher nicht hervorgegangen. L. wird mit luxemburgischer Staatsangehöriger geführt und ist von Beruf Schlosser.

There were still two 'negro half-breeds' living in Luxembourg City in 1942, including Jacques Leurs, 17 Oct. 1942





**Je vous informe qu'en temps voulu, si vous persistez à refuser le divorce de votre mari, nous annulerons votre mariage sans votre consentement. Nous serons alors dans l'obligation d'émasculer votre mari. Vous ne devez pas avoir d'enfants.**

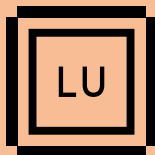
Léonie Reinert, contemporary witness interview, recalling a statement by Dr Unger (*Schwaarze Mann, Un Noir parmi nous*), 2017



Leonie Reinert and Jacques Leurs shortly before their wedding, ca. 1938



MARGUERITE LINDEN



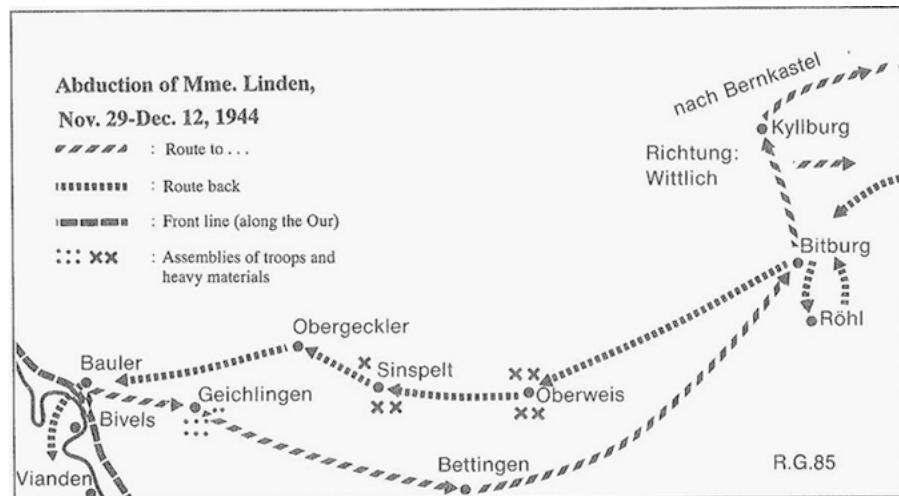
44

**Nov. 1944:** deported from Bivels (L) to Germany

**Nov. -** witnesses German preparations for the Battle of

**Dec. 1944:** the Bulge

**Dec. 1944:** successful escape to Luxembourg; reports her observations to the Americans



After her abduction, Marguerite Linden was taken to Germany and returned to Luxembourg via detours

Although Luxembourg was liberated by the Americans in September 1944, in the months that followed there was still a kind of 'no man's land' along the German-Luxembourg border. This was also the case in the Our valley, where in Bivels, north of Vianden, Marguerite Linden and three other civilians were abducted by a German patrol in the night of 28-29 November 1944. On 12 December 1944 she managed to escape and get back to Luxembourg. She reported to the Americans in Diekirch that during her abduction she had observed disturbing troop concentrations in the Eifel region. Her report was not taken seriously. In the early morning of 16 December 1944, the German offensive in the Ardennes, the Battle of the Bulge, broke out.

■ Auf der deutschen Seite ging es aufwärts nach Bauler, wo wir in einem Maschinengewehrbunker etwas Armeebrot und eine Tasse heißen Tee bekamen. Unsere Fragen, was mit uns werden sollte, blieben unbeantwortet. In der Abenddämmerung begleiteten uns Wachposten zu Fuß nach Geichlingen. Hier warteten Pferdewagen auf uns und brachten uns nach Bettlingen. Hier sah ich zum ersten Mal eine große Menge an Soldaten und Militärlastwagen.

Wir wurden drei Tage lang in einem improvisierten Lager einquartiert und regelmäßig über die Aktivitäten der Amerikaner ausgefragt, besonders durch sehr junge Soldaten. Die Deutschen benahmen sich anständig und respektvoll; jeder wollte wissen, welche Art Mensch der „Ami“ war. Wir wurden nach Bitburg und anschließend mit dem Zug nach Kyllburg verbracht.

Roland Gaul, quoting Marguerite Linden (*Schicksale zwischen Sauer und Our*), 1987



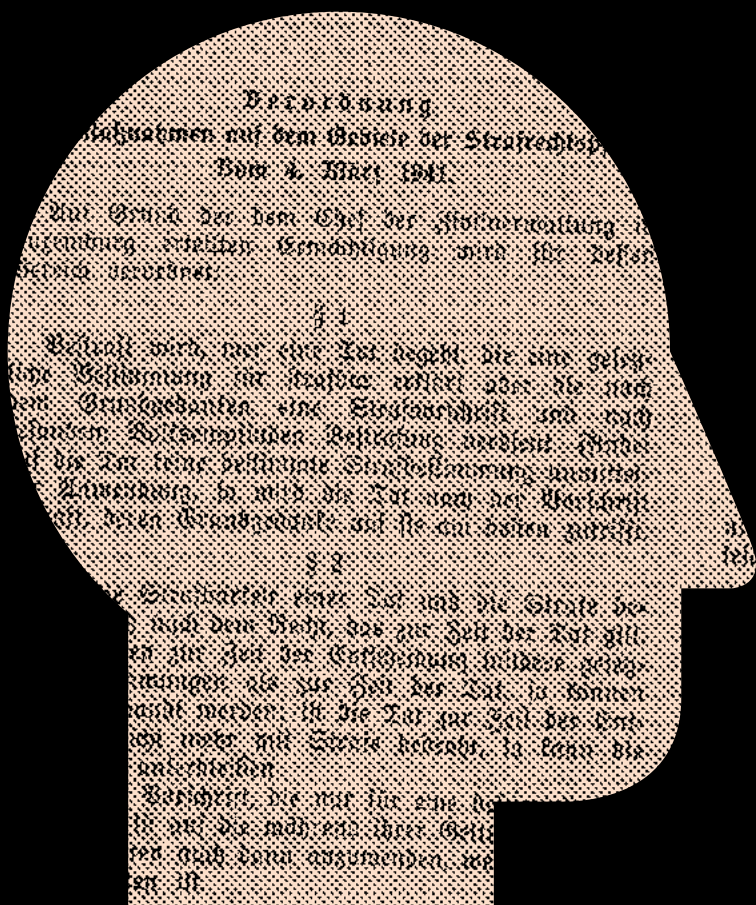


Wir trauten unseren Augen nicht, als wir durch den düsteren Gestapoagenten Klöcker vernommen wurden, welcher vor der Septemberbefreiung von Diekirch aus Angst und Schrecken verbreitet hatte. Wie viele Amerikaner befinden sich in Biwels? Wo liegen ihre befestigten Stellungen? Haben die Amerikaner schweres Kriegsgerät im Raum Vianden? Welche Beziehungen unterhalten die Amerikaner mit der Zivilbevölkerung? [...] und Dutzende weitere Fragen regneten auf uns während des Verhörs herab.

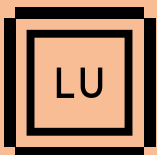
Roland Gaul, quoting Marguerite Linden (*Schicksale zwischen Sauer und Our*), 1987



Sketch of German troops crossing the border river Our, artist: Horst Helmus, December 1944



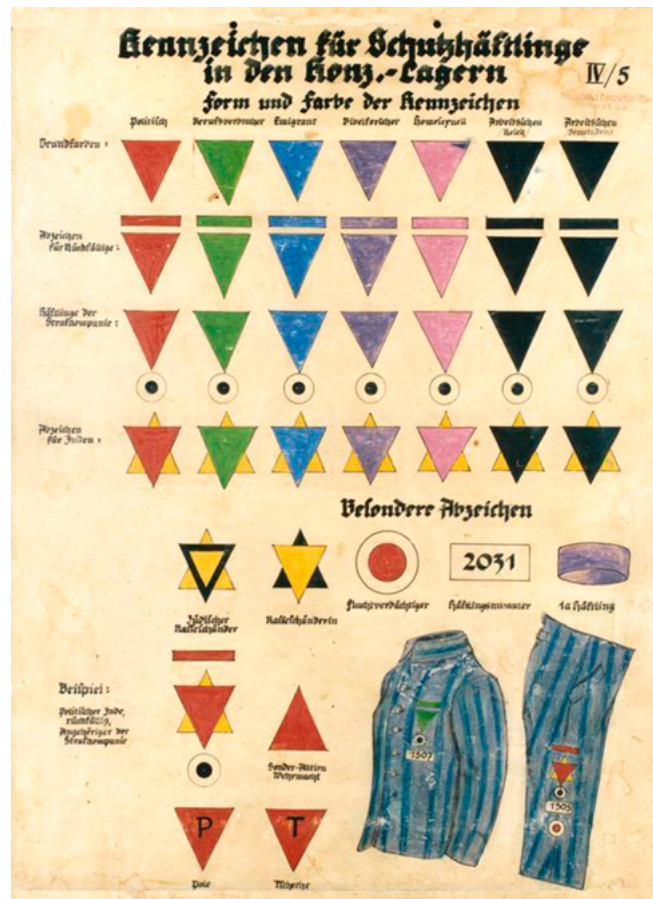
JEAN M.



45

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>1918:</b>           | born in Esch/Alzette  |
| <b>1942:</b>           | arrested for homosexual acts in Luxembourg;<br>sentenced to 10 months in prison and<br>transferred to Wittlich Penitentiary (D) |
| <b>1943:</b>           | sent to Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp (F), where<br>he has to do hard labour in a quarry                               |
| <b>1943-<br/>1945:</b> | prisoner in Ravensbrück concentration camp (D);<br>liberated by the Red Army  |

John M. was arrested in Luxembourg in September 1942 because of his sexual orientation. Sexual intercourse between homosexuals had been forbidden since 1941. In October 1942 he was sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment in Trier. He was sent to Wittlich prison, where he remained until July 1943. M. was then sent to Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp in Alsace (F), where he was registered as a homosexual and had to wear the pink triangle as a special mark. He was assigned to the camp's penal unit for work in the quarry and was severely maltreated. He survived and was later deported to the Wolgast labour camp in Karlshagen, a subcamp of Ravensbrück concentration camp. On 1 May 1945 he was to be transferred to Rostock but on the way there he was liberated by the Red Army. In fear of further discrimination after his liberation, he made false statements in Luxembourg after the war, claiming that he had been arrested for desertion and for assisting in border crossings.



■ ■ Dort (im KZ Natzweiler) war die schlimmste Behandlung. Dort waren die Misshandlungen sehr schlimm. Es wurden jeden Tag Menschen erschossen, erhängt usw. 30-40 Häftlinge gingen täglich an den elektrischen Draht, weil sie das Leben nicht mehr ertragen konnten. Ich musste sehr schwer im Steinbruch arbeiten. Jean M., statement, 2 July 1945

## Markings of prisoners in the concentration camps



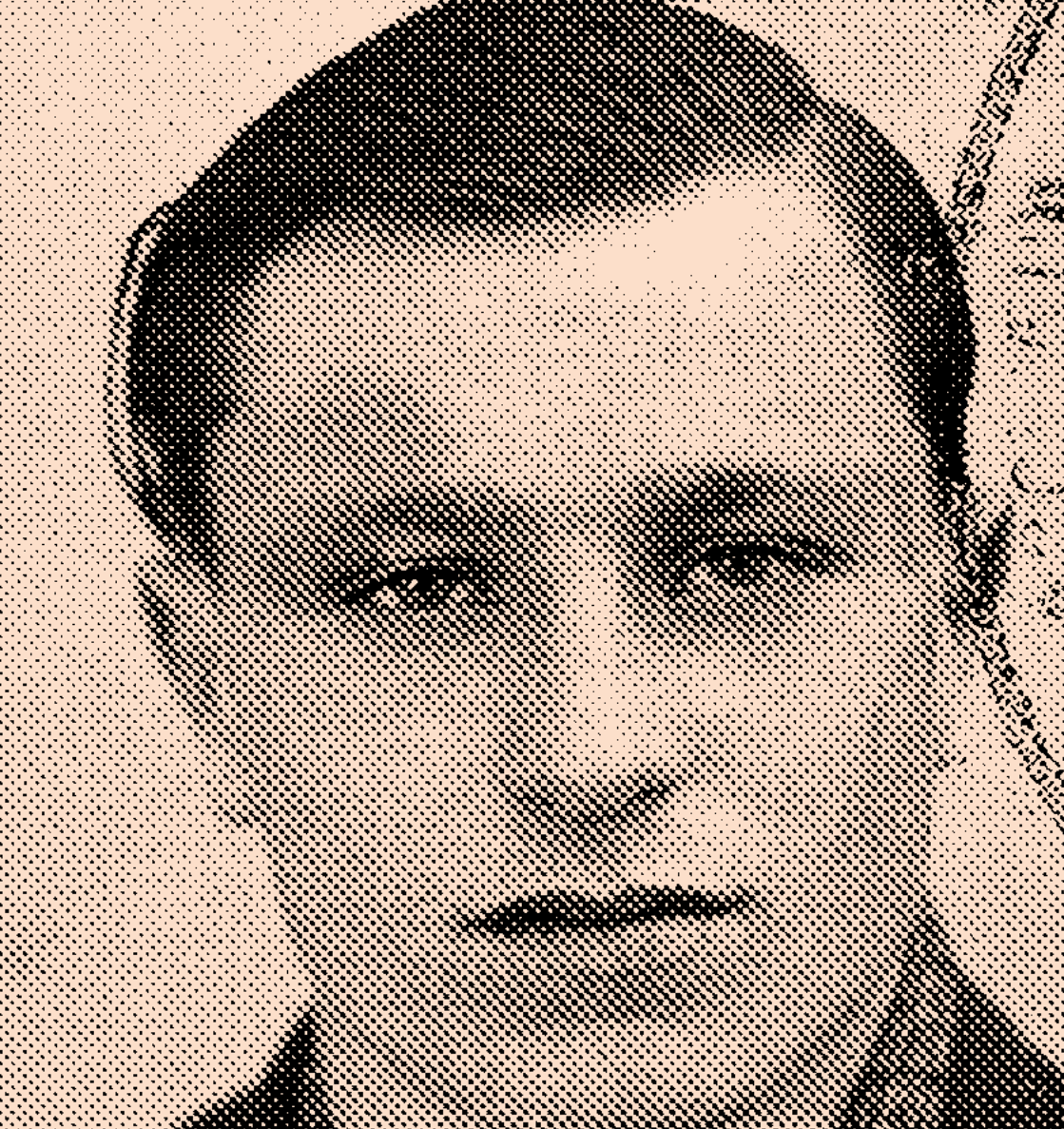


**Wenn ich aber zu den Verhören zur Gestapo kam, wurde ich geschlagen, ausgezogen und abgespritzt usw., ich wurde auf alle mögliche Art und Weise gequält und schikaniert.**

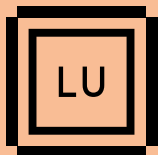
Jean M., statement, 2 July 1945




In concentration camps, homosexual prisoners were marked with a pink triangle. M. also had to wear this badge



VICTOR MONNERTZ



- 1927:** born in Steinfort (L)
- 1933:** moves to Greiveldange (L)
- 1942:** forced service on the farm of Jean Haas, a farmer in Flaxweiler (L)
- 1943:** forced entry into the Hitler Youth (HJ)
- Feb. 1944:** helps hide a deserter in the Monnertz family home
- Sept. 1944:** evacuation of the family to Steinfort, where they remain until liberation

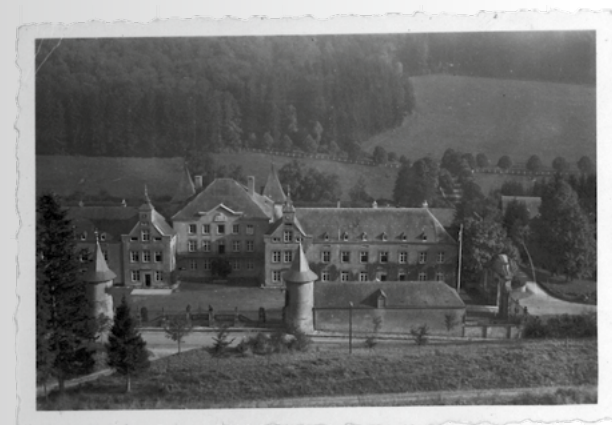
 Mir hate Lëtzebuenger Preisen ënnert eis, déi haten [...] ee Jong an dee war Chef vun der Hitlerjugend. A fir dass se eis mat Rou loos-sen, sinn ech alt mat e puer aner Jongen aus Greiweldeng an d'HJ gaangen. Mir sinn dunn nach e puermol op Gouschteng gefuer. Do war den HJ-Sall. Do gouf dann eng Ried gehalen an Übunge gemaach. Dono bass de dann erëm heemgefuer.

Victor Monnertz, contemporary witness interview, 3 Nov. 2017




Hitler Youth armband

Victor Monnertz was an eyewitness to Nazi atrocities such as Russian forced labourers being executed by German guards during the extension of the railway line on the Moselle. The head of the local Hitler Youth group put pressure on the teenager to join the organization. In 1943 he joined the HJ and attended a few meetings. At the end of the year he had to go to Ansemburg for pre-military training. In February 1944 he helped deserter Adrien Oswald to hide in the Monnertz family barn. In mid-September, the family and Oswald fled to the liberated neighbouring village of Canach. From there they were evacuated to Steinfort, where the young man held several jobs, including in the kitchen of the American soldiers, where he was able to get additional food for his family.



In preparation for the Reich Labour Service and the Wehrmacht, young Luxembourgers were given military training at the Hitler Youth's 'military training camp' in Ansemburg Castle, 1942

 Do (zu Ansemburg) war den Drill, de „Vorarbeitsdienst“ (hu mir dat genannt). Jo, do si mir deemools ausgebilt ginn. Do hu mir da misste krauchen, a mir hu gemaach, wéi wa Krich gewiescht wier. (Mir sinn) eropgeklommen bis uewe bei d'Kapell (bis) d'lelebéi futti waren. Duerch d'Baach, wou do gelaf ass, hu mer misste krauchen, mir ware mëscht naass, mir hate keen dréche Gezei, dat ass esou um Kierper gedréchent. Mir hunn hannenaus (vum Schloss) an den Zelter geschlof.

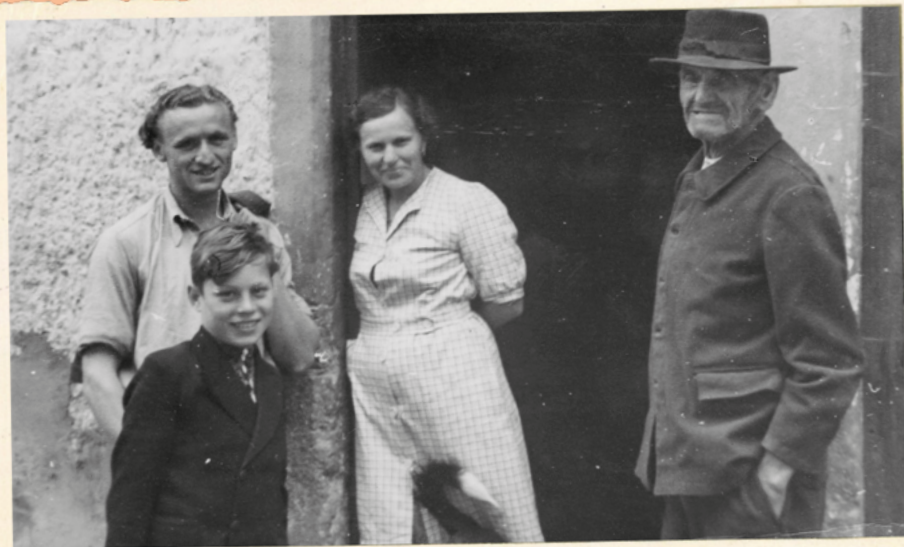
Victor Monnertz, contemporary witness interview, 27 Nov. 2017





Déi meescht Leit op den Dierfer haten een Deserteur verstoppt [...] an dann hues de missen oppasse, wat s du gesot hues fréier an de Wiertschaften. Do waren dann déi Lëtzebuerger Preisen [...] déi hunn alt gemengt, d'Preise géingen de Krich wannen (an) da kriteren se eng gutt Platz. Du hues also misste ganz genee oppasse, wat s de gesot hues. Du konns net soen: Hei, mir hunn och een do um Späicher sëtzen.

Victor Monnertz, contemporary witness interview, 27 Nov. 2017



After the liberation, Victor Monnertz photographed his family with the Luxembourgish deserter Adrien Oswald, Steinfurt, 1944

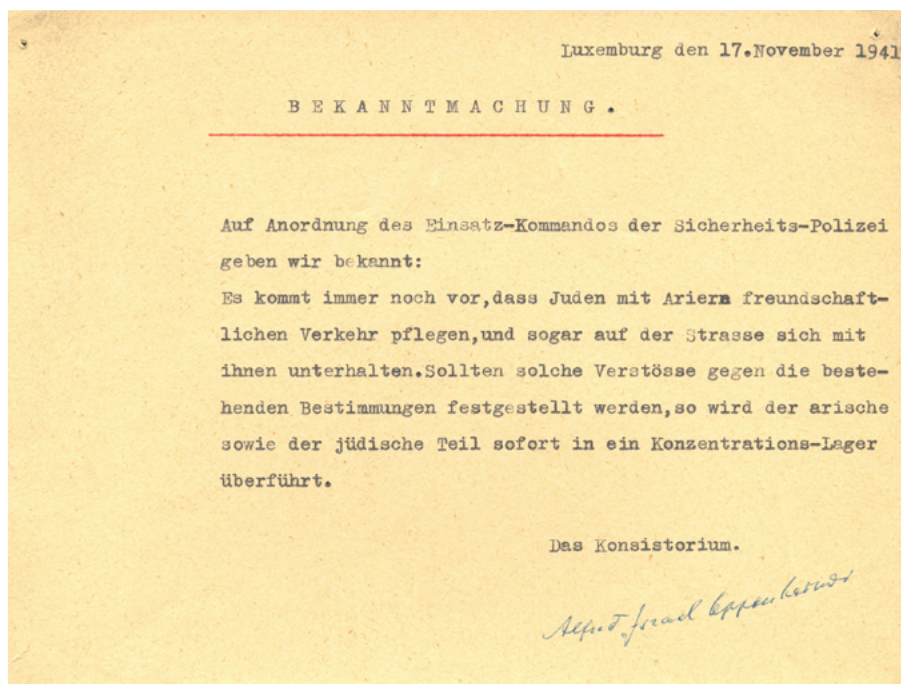


ALFRED OPPENHEIMER



47

- 1901:** born in Metz (F)
- From 1925:** emigrates to Luxembourg
- 1941:** forced to head the Jewish Consistory
- 1942:** the Jewish Consistory is renamed 'Council of Elders', and Alfred Oppenheimer becomes *Judenältester*
- 1943:** deported to Theresienstadt ghetto (CS) with his family
- 1944:** deported from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp with his son René
- 1945:** 'death march' to Blechhammer camp (D)
- 1961:** appears as witness in the trial against Adolf Eichmann in Israel



Alfred Oppenheimer's job was to pass on Gestapo orders, such as the ban on relations between 'Jews and Aryans' to the Jewish community; announcement of 17 Nov. 1941

As head of the Jewish Consistory, Alfred Oppenheimer was forced by the Gestapo to help organize the deportations. Through negotiations he was able to delay the deportation of individual Jews or to announce transports 14 days in advance, so that some managed to go into hiding before they were deported. Every week Oppenheimer had to go to the Gestapo in Luxembourg City to receive orders. He was beaten and maltreated by the Germans for disobeying the orders. On 17 June 1943 he was deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto, where his wife Aline died of exhaustion. In October 1944 he was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp. There Oppenheimer posed as a mechanic and had to do forced labour. His son René arrived at the camp a few days later and was immediately gassed. In 1945 the camp was evacuated and Alfred Oppenheimer was sent to Blechhammer concentration camp, an Auschwitz subcamp. When he was liberated by the Red Army, he weighed only 39 kg.

Es war wie im Mittelalter. Sie haben uns unsere Würde genommen. Wir durften niemanden auf der Straße grüßen, und unsere Kinder durften nicht mehr mit den anderen Kindern spielen. Meinem Sohn René blieb damals als einziger Spielgefährte sein kleiner Hund Fifi, den er sehr liebte. Dann kam eine neue Verordnung vom Gauleiter, in der es hieß, wir dürften auch keine Haustiere mehr halten.

René Clesse, quoting Alfred Oppenheimer, *Nature is more merciful than man* (*Ons Stad* 36), 1991



After the war, Oppenheimer testified as a witness at the trial of Adolf Eichmann. War criminal Eichmann was responsible for organizing the genocide of the Jews, Jerusalem 1961



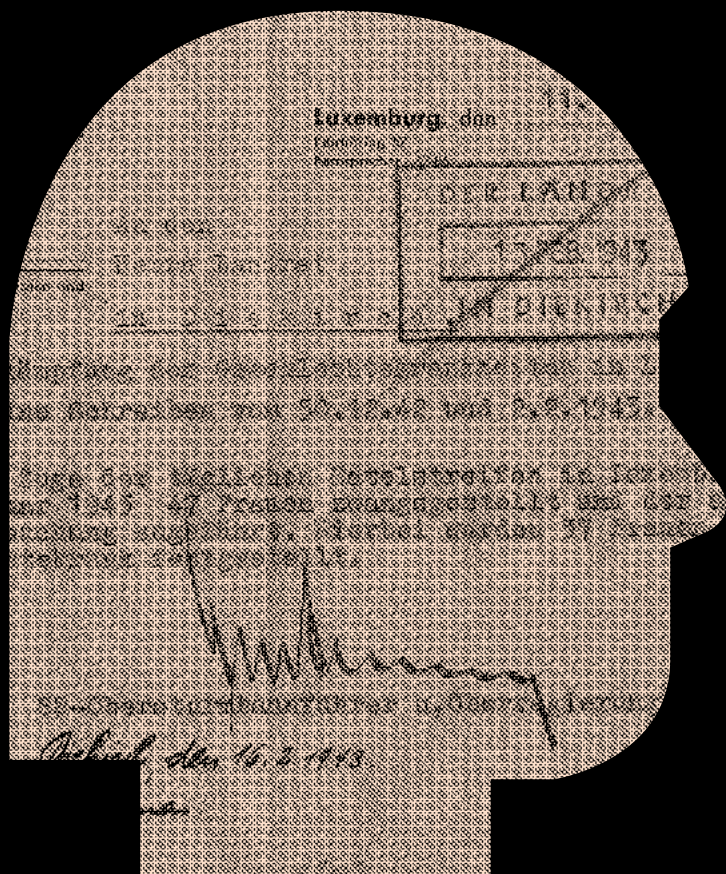


Im Bett neben mir summt eine ganz leise: Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht und die Melodie ging über in verhaltenes Weinen. Bilder tauchten im Gedächtnis auf: Frieden, eine gemütliche Wohnung, eine warme Frauenstimme, Kinderlachen. Gab es das wirklich einmal? Alles ist hoffnungslos, alles. Meine Frau in Theresienstadt umgekommen, mein Junge in Auschwitz vergast ... ich weinte mich, wie die anderen Kameraden, in den Schlaf.

Alfred Oppenheimer, contemporary witness account, *Die letzten Tage im Kazett Auschwitz Nebenlager Gleiwitz 3 (Rappel 1-3)*, 1985

René Oppenheimer and his mother Aline





CATHERINE O.



48

- 1919:** born in Bettemburg (L)
- 1941:** taken into 'protective custody' because of a venereal disease and hospitalized for examination
- Mar. 1942:** renewed 'protective custody' with detention in Trier prison (D); reasons: prostitution, danger to 'public health' and lack of permanent residence
- Apr. 1942:** deportation to Ravensbrück women's concentration camp (D)
- Nov. 1943:** sent back to her parents in Dudelange (L)

A short time after the occupation of Luxembourg, the Nazis began to fight prostitution and persecute women who prostituted themselves or were suspected of prostitution. Women were arrested and taken to hospital where they were forcibly examined for venereal diseases.

In November 1941, Catherine O. was also taken into so-called protective custody and admitted to a hospital. After a short period out of detention, she was arrested again in March 1942 for 'prostitution' and other 'offences' and imprisoned in Trier. One month later she was deported to Ravensbrück women's concentration camp. There she was registered as a political prisoner and not, as usual in such cases, as 'asocial'. Her parents then applied for her release, but their request was refused because of 'bad behaviour'.

It was not until November 1943 that she was released on parole. Back with her parents in Dudelange, she had to report to the criminal investigation department twice a week and was not allowed to leave the village without permission. She remained under observation by the criminal police until the end of the Nazi regime.

So							Mo							Di							Mi							Do							Fr							Sa							Son.							Jan.							Febr.							März							April							Mai							Juni							Juli							Aug.							Sept.							Okt.							Nov.							Dez.						
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Staatsangehörigkeit: <b>Luxemburg</b>																																																																																																																																											
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<b>Hat sich als Prostituierte dauernd der polizeilichen Kontrolle entzogen und bildete eine Gefahr für die Volksgesundheit.</b>																																																																																																																																											

Catherine O.'s Gestapo index card



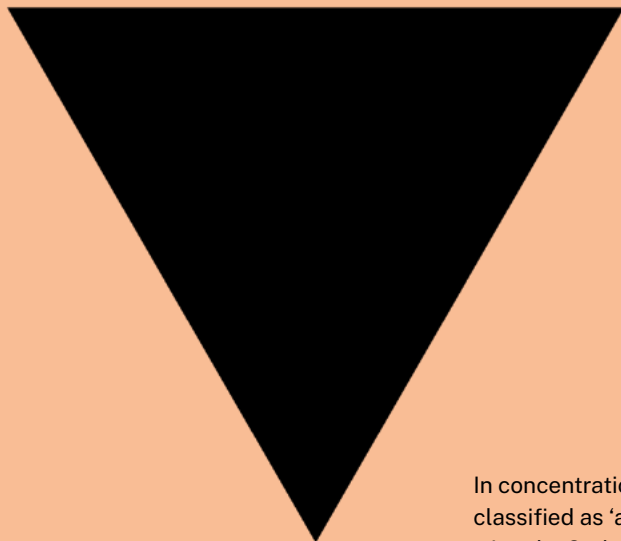
View of Ravensbrück women's concentration camp with female inmates, watched by their guards, performing forced labour in front of the commandant's office and administration building, Ravensbrück, 1940





Und da kam schon am zweiten Tag die Stubenälteste und hat uns gesagt: „Sie können es aber noch besser haben als hier. Da gibt es ein Lager, da kommen Sie hin, wenn Sie wollen. Sie brauchen da nicht zu arbeiten, bekommen schöne Kleider. Sie bekommen gut zu essen. Und da bleiben Sie dann vielleicht sechs Monate. Und nachher kommen Sie wieder zurück. Oder Sie kommen frei.“ “Wir haben zuerst gar nicht verstanden, was die damit wollte. Nachher haben wir erfahren, das war für [...] das Bordell. [...] Hat sich aber keine gemeldet.”

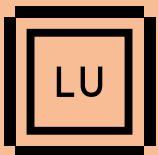
Germaine Paulus-Schaack, contemporary witness interview, 2007



In concentration camps, prostitutes were classified as ‘asocial’ and marked with a black triangle. Catherine O. was by coincidence spared this marking and made to wear the red triangle of ‘political prisoners’



MARGUERITE 'GRITTY' SCHNEIDER



49



- 1921:** born in Luxembourg City
- 1940:** openly shows anti-German sentiments
- 1942:** sends rations to Luxembourgers deported to Hinzert concentration camp (D)
- 1944:** resettled to Trebnitz (D) with her mother; later on lived in Hirschberg (D)
- 1945:** returns to Luxembourg



Gritty and her mother,  
Trebnitz, 1944

Barracks like the ones  
where Gritty Schneider  
and her mother had to live  
during their resettlement  
in Trebnitz, 1944



During the occupation, Gritty Schneider attracted negative attention from the Nazi authorities by refusing to decorate her parents' grocery shop with a swastika flag or with a portrait of Adolf Hitler. In August 1942 general conscription into the Wehrmacht was introduced in Luxembourg. Gritty's brother Josy was called up, but hid with a farmer's family. In retaliation for his disappearance, Gritty and her mother were resettled to Trebnitz in February 1944. There she volunteered to look after children but was soon dismissed because she taught the children forbidden Luxembourgish songs. Although resettled Luxembourgers were constantly watched, they were allowed to keep in touch with the outside world by letter and to engage in cultural activities outside the camp. Violations to the rules were punished with arrest or a ban on correspondence. In July 1944 Gritty Schneider and her mother came to Hirschberg (D), where Gritty got an office job at a petrol station. They returned to Luxembourg in June 1945.

Am Lager hu mir missten d'Bréiwer oppen ofginn  
an déi Bréiwer, déi mir kritt hunn, déi waren och all  
op an da stoung „zensiert“ drop.

Marguerite Schneider, contemporary witness interview, 2009



From Gritty Schneider's  
personal photo album:  
uprooted and separated  
from friends and rela-  
tives, the deportees try  
to stay in touch through  
letters. Their correspon-  
dence is monitored and  
censored if necessary,  
Trebnitz, 1944



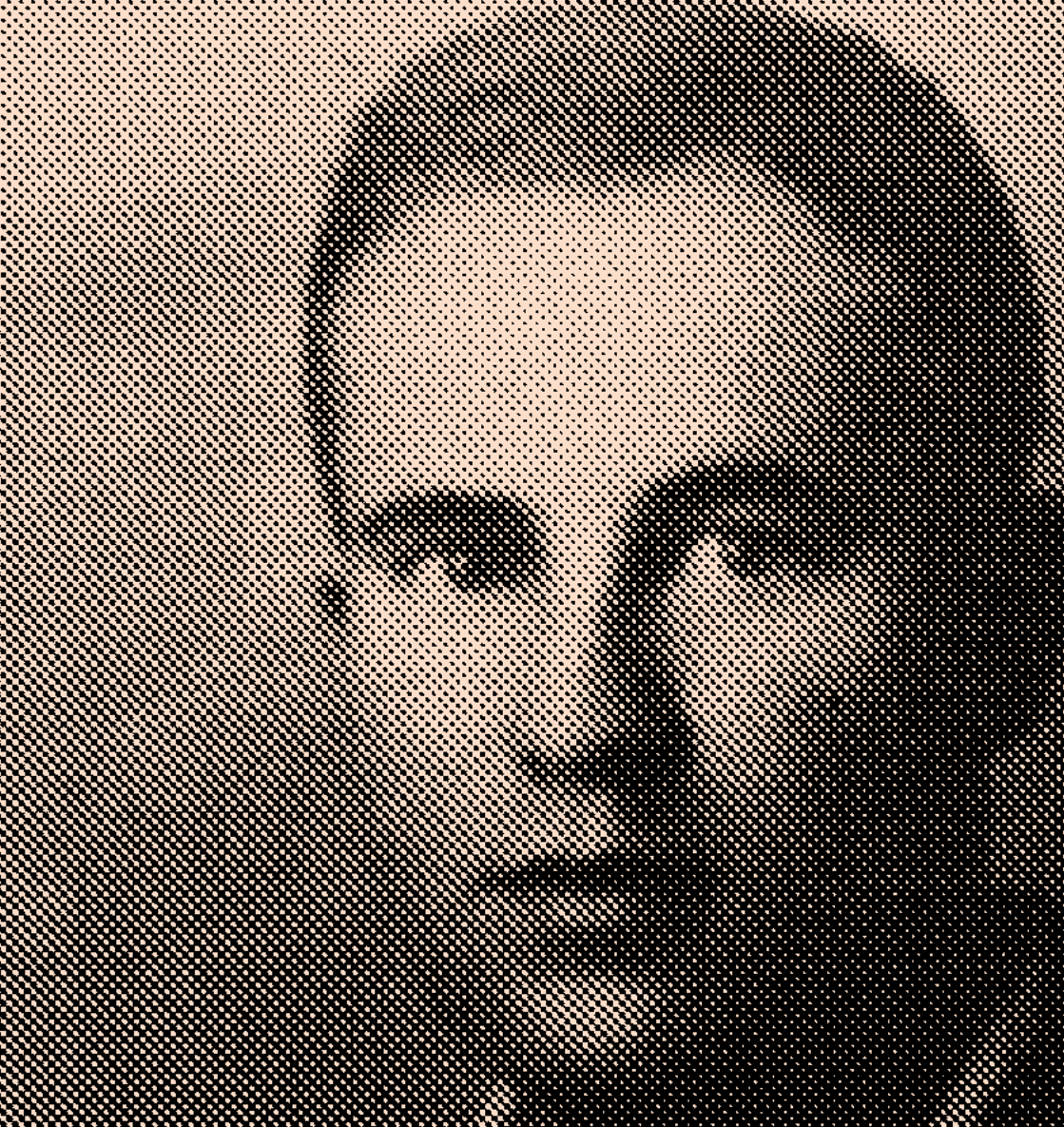


Eigentlech hu mer keng lëtzebuergesch Lidder dierfte sangen, mä ech hunn et awer gemaach. Si hunn eng Kéier d'Uelzecht gesongen, d'Meedercher all zesumme vun engem Grupp am Lager. Du war de Lagerführer net do, wou se gesongen hunn.

Marguerite Schneider, contemporary witness account, 2009



Gritty Schneider with Luxembourgish children  
in the Trebnitz resettlement camp, 1944



JOSEPH 'JOSY' SCHLANG



50



- 1924:** born in Rodange (L)
- May 1940:** evacuated to France; after the French defeat, the Schlang family returns to Esch/Alzette
- Dec. 1940:** because he is a Jew, Josy Schlang is no longer allowed to work
- 1941:** forced labour in the quarries at Nennig (D)
- Aug. 1941:** arrested by the Gestapo
- Oct. 1941:** deported to Litzmannstadt ghetto (PL)
- 1942-** forced labour in various concentration camps,  
**1945:** including Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Monowitz
- Jan. 1945:** death march to Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria, then to Gusen, a Mauthausen subcamp
- May 1945:** liberation by the Americans in Grieskirchen, return to Luxembourg as the only survivor of his family

■ ■ Du si mer erëm an sou Waggone agepiercht ginn, a Véiwaggonen si mer agepiercht ginn, et ass schrecklech gewiescht. Dat si Ween, do kommen 50-60 Leit eran; si hunn eis zu 70-80-90 doranner geheit, [...] De Waggon ass stoebliwwen op enger Ramp; an du si schonn d'Dieren opgerappt ginn. Du stoungen elauter Zaldoten do, elauter vun der SS, [...] si hunn an d'Luucht geschoss, si hunn an d'Leit geschoss. Hënn sinn do gesprongen, Blutthënn, [...] déi ware gedriilt op de Moan (= Mann)

Joseph Schlang, contemporary witness interview (*D'Pupille de la Nation erënneren sech*), 2003

Josy Schlang completed a hairdressing apprenticeship at the Esch trade school. He lost his job in late 1940 as a result of the Nazis' policy towards Jews. In May 1941 the Schlang family was forced to move to Luxembourg City. Schlang and his father Tobias Schlang were deported to the quarries of Nennig for forced labour. Schlang was arrested by the Gestapo in August 1941 for wearing patriotic symbols. For a fortnight, he had to report to Gestapo headquarters in Villa Pauly after work. There he was interrogated and often maltreated. On 16 October 1941 the Schlang family was deported to Litzmannstadt ghetto. Josy Schlang volunteered for work and was separated from his family, who were then deported to Majdanek extermination camp and killed. Josy was sent to various labour camps. In 1943 he was deported to Auschwitz, where he had to work in several sub-camps, including Monowitz and Sosnowitz. In the January 1945 death marches he was forced to march to Mauthausen in Austria and then to Gusen. In May 1945 he was liberated by the Americans. He weighed only 40 kg.

■ ■ Meng Eltere wore fir mech net méi do, si waren dout. Wéi se doutgemaach goufen, weess ech net, angeblech mat Gas, zu Auschwitz, oder bei Auschwitz; mäi Papp, meng Mamm a meng Schwëster

Joseph Schlang, contemporary witness interview (*D'Pupille de la Nation erënneren sech*), 2003

Josy Schlang after his liberation, weighing only 40 kg, 1945



The Schlang family, 1940



An op eemol si mer et da gewuer ginn:  
 Déi lénks koumen erëm an een anert  
 Lager, mee leider sinn déi alleguer ver-  
 gaast ginn [...] Riets, dat woren déi, déi  
 Chance haten, déi Chance hat ech, déi  
 konnte bleiwen, dei sinn an e System  
 agefouert ginn.

Joseph Schlang, contemporary witness interview (D’Pupille de la Nation  
 erënnere sech), 2003

Konzentrationslager Auschwitz		Art der Haft:	Gef. Nr.:
Name und Vorname: <u>Schlang Josef</u>		<u>sch. Jude</u>	<u>141556</u>
geb.: <u>5.6.1924</u>	zu: <u>Rordingen, k. Luxemburg</u>		(3413)
Wohnort:	<u>Luxemburg, Petrus Ring 8</u>		
Beruf:	<u>Freier</u>	Rel.: <u>un.</u>	
Staatsangehörigkeit:	<u>Luxemburg</u>	Stand: <u>led.</u>	
Name der Eltern:	<u>Theodor u. Anna, geb. Elzer</u>	Rasse: <u>jüd.</u>	
Wohnort:	<u>Hitzmannsdorf, Kommer 149, Hartberg</u>		
Name der Ehefrau:	<u>/</u>	Rasse:	

In Auschwitz, only the Jewish prisoners  
 who were used for forced labour were  
 registered. The other deportees were  
 murdered. Auschwitz-Birkenau, 1942