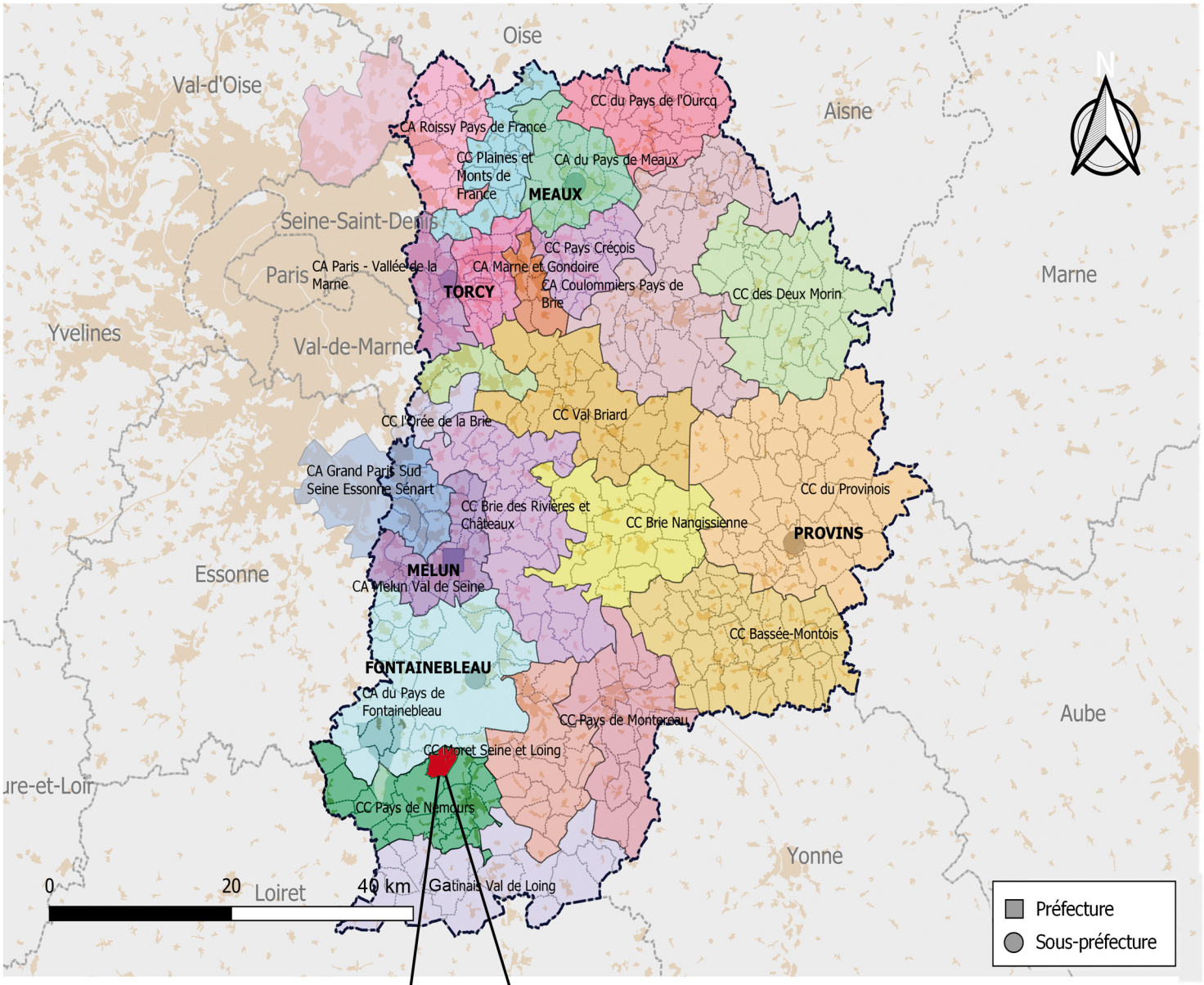
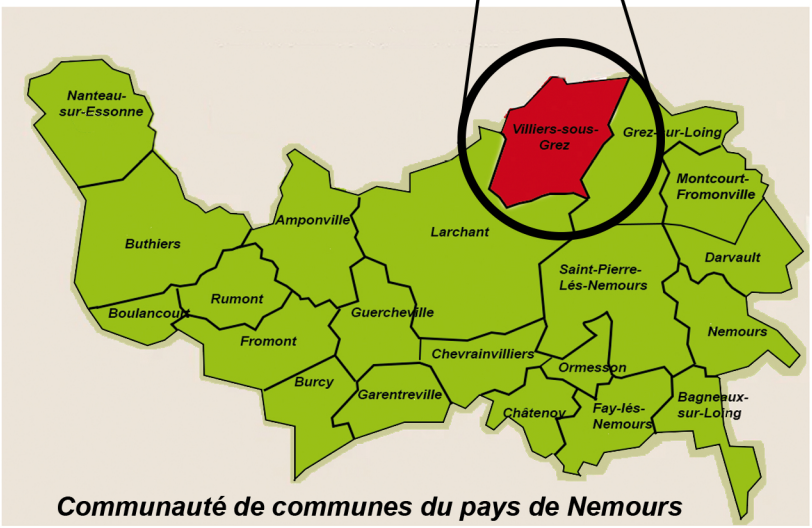
ASSOCIATION HISTOIRE ET PATRIMOINE DE VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ DE 1939 À 1945



CATALOGUE DE L'EXPOSITION DU 8 AU 11 MAI 2025

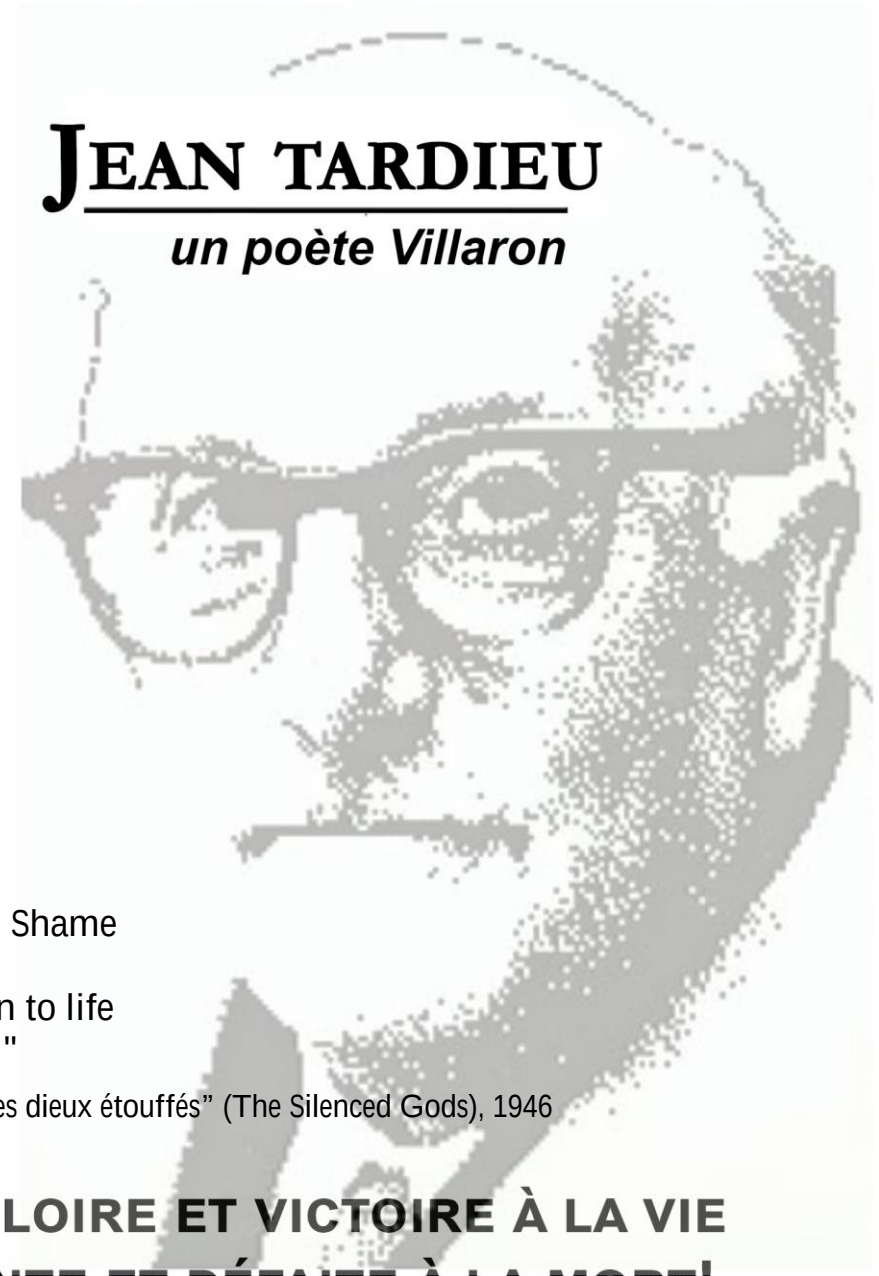




A village in the forest of Fontainebleau, more specifically in the Bois de la Commanderie.
The municipality covers an area of 1,220 hectares and has approximately 770 inhabitants.
It is part of the Pays de Nemours Community of Municipalities and is a member of the joint association for the management of the Gâtinais Français Regional Nature Park (PNRGF).

JEAN TARDIEU

un poète Villaron



"Glory and victory to life Shame
and defeat to death!
Let us rise up,let usreturn to life
Victorious withthe living"

Excerpt from the collection “Les dieux étouffés” (The Silenced Gods), 1946

« GLOIRE ET VICTOIRE À LA VIE
HONTE ET DÉFAITE À LA MORT!
TIRONS, REMONTONS VERS LA VIE
LA FOULE ÉPAISSE DES MORTS
VAINQUEURS AVEC LES VIVANTS »

EXTRAIT TIRÉ DU RECUEIL "LES DIEUX ÉTOUFFÉS " 1946

SUMMARY

The pre-war period

The interwar period 2
A peaceful village 6

The start of the war

Mobilization 12
The Phoney War 19
Prisoners of war 22
The exodus 27

The German occupation

The Germans occupy the village 34
The difficulties of daily life 43
Rationing 48
Community aid to families 53
The school in Villiers during the war 61
The school cooperative – L'Abeille 66
Celebrations during the occupation 68
Fear of bombing 72
Working in Germany: the relief effort and the STO 78

The Resistance

An American hidden in Villiers 82
Gabriel BACHET, a committed member of the Resistance 86
The Villiers resistance group – The French Forces of the Interior 95

From liberation to surrender

Liberation 99
The German collapse 106
The purge 109
From liberation to surrender 115
The repatriates 117

The postwar period

Remembering the victims of war 121
The religious procession of the Virgin of Boulogne 124
Marriages and the baby boom 127
Post-war agricultural life 128
Post-war daily life 130
The human and financial toll of the war in France 132

THE INTERWAR PERIOD

After the 1914-1918 war, known as "the war to end all wars," how did we end up in another war?

The situation in 1919

In 1919: 1.5 million victims in France, millions wounded, 500,000 homes destroyed, the land ravaged... absolute horror! France lost a large part of its male population during the First World War, leaving a shortage of workers in the fields, factories, and cottages.

Villiers lost 21 men between 1914 and 1919. Many other soldiers returned with serious injuries that prevented them from working.



June 28, 1919: Signing of the Treaty of Versailles, which disarms Germany, redraws the map of Europe, and forces Germany to pay war reparations.

After the euphoria of renewed peace, discontent quickly set in. In 1919, prices rose; strikes broke out in industry and even among agricultural workers on large farms.

L'informateur du 10/02/1933

VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

La protestation des agriculteurs. — Un groupe d'abonnés à **L'Informateur** nous adressent une lettre relative à la grande manifestation des cultivateurs qui s'est déroulée à Paris, à la salle Wagram. Nous en publions quelques extraits :

Nous étions 25.000, venus de tous les coins de France, de ces petits paysans qui peinent durement et qui, loin d'être des révolutionnaires, voulaient simplement manifester une volonté farouche de leur droit à la vie. Le geste que nous avons accompli à l'issue de la réunion, en déposant sur la dalle sacrée une gerbe de fleurs, puis en défilant pieusement devant celui qui fut un de nos camarades de combat, le prouve.

.....

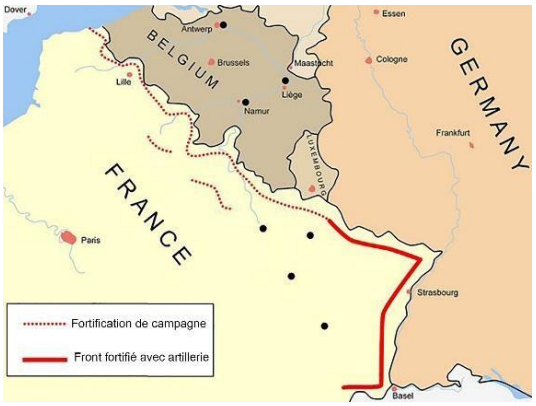
Ces paysans venaient de tous les départements par une température rigoureuse clamer sous la face du Parlement qu'ils en avaient assez de toutes ces vaines promesses et du gâchis actuel dans lequel s'enliseront bientôt toutes les classes de la société.

.....

Suivent les signatures : Lucien Giraud, Marius Lecomte, Charles Rapine, A. Lebec, Raymond Voulle, veuve Henri Fleureau, Bertrand Fleureau, Beauvoir, Gilbert Purseigle, R. Pelletier, Michelet.

Political divisions since 1928

From 1928 onwards, France saw opposition between left-wing political parties, including the Communists, and right-wing political parties such as the Croix-de-Feu and the Jeunesses Patriotes. At the same time, Spain and Italy saw the rise of totalitarian regimes.



On January 4, 1930, members of parliament voted to build the fortified line known as the "Maginot Line," a project conceived by André MAGINOT, Minister of War from 1930 to 1936, at enormous cost to protect Alsace and Lorraine. But there was no protection for northern France.

Radical ministries followed one another without much success in turning the economic situation around. Aristide Briant, the tireless Minister of Foreign Affairs, an advocate for peace with the Americans and Europeans, and tipped to be the next President of the Republic, died on March 7, 1932.

The President of the Republic, Paul Doumer, was assassinated on May 6, 1932.



After the Spanish Civil War, from 1936 to 1939, FRANCO came to power in 1939.



In Italy, MUSSOLINI, who had been in power since 1922, became a dictator in 1924. He was then an ally of France and Great Britain, but changed his position in 1940 by allying himself with Germany.



In 1933, HITLER became Chancellor of the Reich, dissolved the German parliament, abolished the Weimar Constitution, withdrew from the League of Nations, and then became Head of State of Germany on August 2, 1934, ruling the country with an "iron fist."

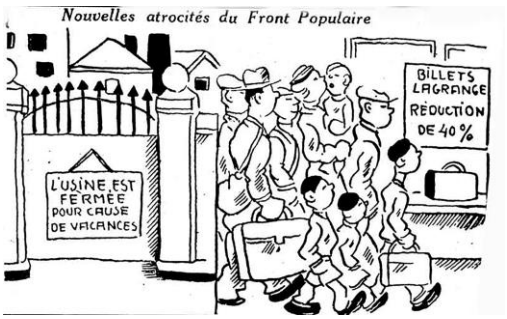
Three important events between the wars:



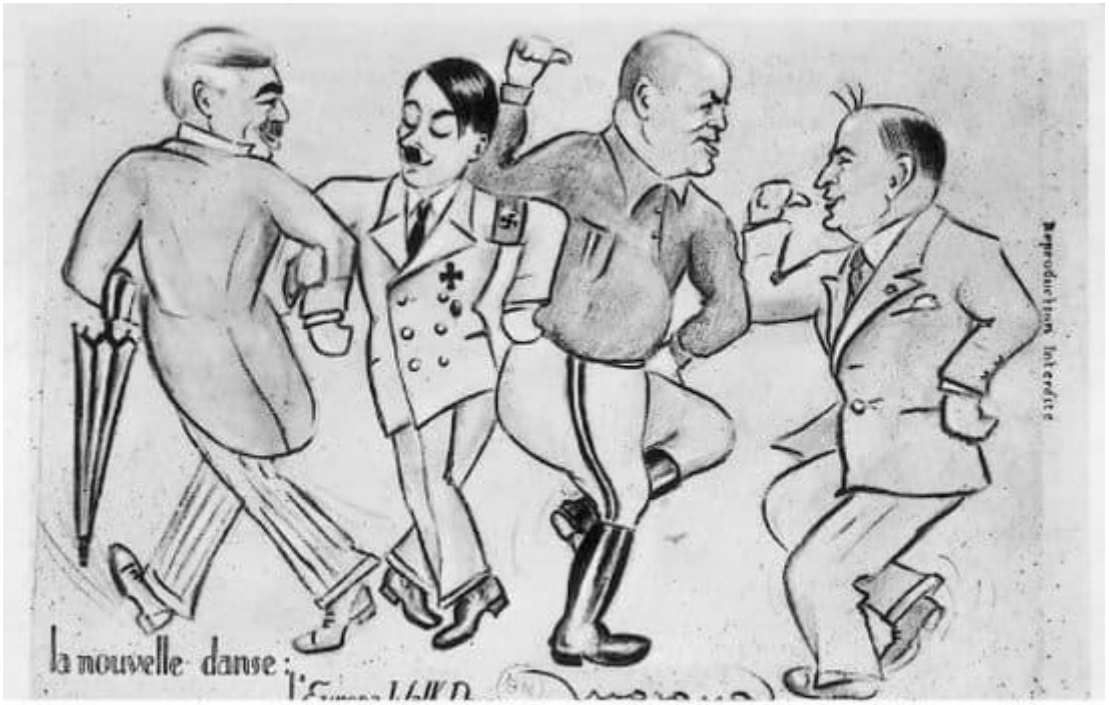
• The economic crisis of 1929. It affected everyone and led to rising unemployment and factory closures, especially from 1931 onwards.

• The Popular Front of 1936. Faced with the difficulties of daily life, many workers went on strike. Léon Blum formed a government and secured a 40-hour working week, two weeks of paid vacation, collective bargaining agreements, recognition of trade union rights, and a 7-15% increase in wages.

• The Munich Agreement in 1938.On March 13, 1938, German troops invaded Austria, with little reaction from other European countries.



On September 29 and 30, MUSSOLINI, HITLER, CHAMBERLAIN, and DALADIER meet in Munich. France and England abandon Czechoslovakia to Nazi Germany. Upon his return to Paris, DALADIER is hailed as the savior of peace.



Dessin de Morana (1938).
Chamberlain (à gauche), Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini et Édouard Daladier (à droite)

However, voices were raised prophesying a future war, because giving in to HITLER over Czechoslovakia would give him carte blanche to invade other European countries.
On March 15, 1939, HITLER decided to send German troops into the whole of Czechoslovakia. HACHA, the Czechoslovakian president, had to give in or risk seeing the capital, Prague, completely burned down by the Germans. France and England protested verbally, but to no avail.

HACHA, the Czechoslovakian president, must give in or face the capital, Prague, being completely burned down by the Germans. France and England protest verbally, but to no avail.

Carte de l'Europe en 1939



During the summer of 1939, through a series of alliances and a non-aggression pact, the situation in Europe deteriorated.

On September 1, 1939, German soldiers broke down the border posts and entered Poland.

War seemed inevitable to the French authorities.

Gérard PASMANT , an 8-year-old boy from Paris, on vacation at his grandmother's house at 8 rue du Buisson, recounts:

"At the beginning of September 1939, the threshing machine had just arrived at our neighbor Lucien COURTELLEMONT's house.For the children, including myself, it was quite an event to see the steam engine driving all this ancient machinery. It was noon on September 3, 1939, and the infernal machine had just stopped for lunch.

One of the farm workers came running up and announced, trembling, in a loud voice:

"Well, that's it, war has been declared!"



German troops cross the Polish border

A VERY QUIET VILLAGE

On the eve of World War II, Villiers-sous-Grez was a village in the Gâtinais region like so many others. According to the 1936 census, it had 466 inhabitants, including 15 foreigners working as laborers, lumberjacks, or quarry workers.

The village's main activity: agriculture

Although France experienced a brief recovery between the Armistice and the economic crisis of the 1930s, the repercussions of the American slump soon made themselves felt in Europe. Agricultural prices collapsed and rural communities were the first to suffer. The crisis amplified peasant discontent, which led to demonstrations such as the one in January 1933 that brought 10,000 farmers to Paris. The crisis amplified discontent among farmers, which led to demonstrations such as the one in January 1933 that brought together 10,000 farmers in Paris.

Informateur de Fontainebleau 25 février 1935



L'INFORMATEUR

LES CULTIVATEURS RÉUNIS A NEMOURS
CLAMENT LA DÉTRESSE DE L'AGRICULTURE

Après les enthousiastes réunions organisées dans le département, la Fédération des Associations agrico- | nous donnez le témoignage le plus complet de votre sympathie et la meilleure preuve de l'intérêt que vous portez à | re aujourd'hui comme inefficace. Les prix mondiaux n'ont plus aucun rapport avec le prix de revient et l'on voit | betteraves que j'adresse nos sincères remerciements à M. le sénateur Dumesnil. | lant répartir l'achat de 3 millions de quintaux entre un million de producteurs, on arrive à cette moyenne ridi-

Excerpt from Lucien LOUAGE's article:

"After the enthusiastic meetings organized in the department, the Federation of Agricultural Associations invited farmers to a final conference on Saturday afternoon.

Is it necessary to emphasize the large crowd of interested parties who, well before the appointed time, were gathering in the hall of the Hôtel de l'Ecu? Successive demonstrations have shown us the same eagerness among the peasantry. The fact is that no one in Brie and Gâtinais can remain indifferent to the desperate situation of agriculture, on the brink of misery and bankruptcy.

This great distress makes the differences that have divided people of the same land until now seem very petty. How important it is to ensure that this or that clique triumphs! A single cry, a single desire emanates from this assembly, whose proceedings are chaired by Mr. Henri OUVRÉ, president of the Fontainebleau Agricultural Society: -- Live!

It is through this appeal, repeated a thousand times, that will shake up leaders and parliamentarians, that will see statesmen, whose good will we do not doubt but who have not realized the extent of the agricultural crisis and its consequences on the general economic slump, address the ills of "one of France's breadbaskets."

Yes, we see in the room, on the stage, the faithful defenders of the farmers, those to whom the representatives of the large confederations bring, on behalf of their thousands of members, a well-deserved tribute. And the words of a BROKER will be the best reward for the patient efforts of Senator DUMESNIL and all the representatives of our cantons, the DAUNAYS, the PAURONS, the FROTS, who come from this Gâtinais region of which they are the defenders. It is not up to them—nor to the deputy presidents, secretaries, agricultural unions, mayors of our rural communities, all present—who have always been concerned with the pressing issues of grain and farm products, to be lectured.

The Federation of Agricultural Associations deserves credit for making its voice heard throughout the department and shaking people out of their indifference.

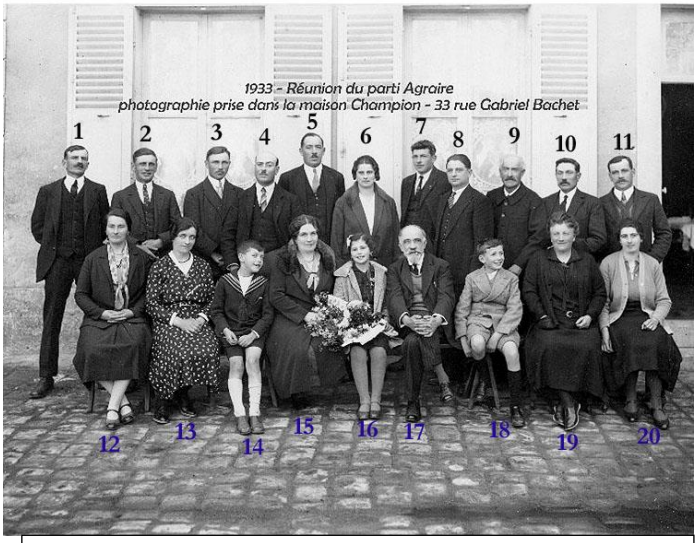
Senators Lugol and Penancier made a point of showing, through their presence in Nemours, the interest they have long taken in our district. What a powerful example!

How delicate Mr. Henri OUVRÉ's task would have been without the calmness of those present! Beneath the triumphant slogan of unity, how many opposing tendencies lie smoldering, ready to throw dissension at the slightest tactical error?
From this point of view, the Nemours meeting was a success that will serve as inspiration for groups in all professional sectors. The thousand farmers from the canton of Nemours—300 of whom were unable to fit into the cramped hall—lent greater weight to the speeches of the federation delegates through their dignity, impartiality, and broad-mindedness.

---o—

Having described the composition and atmosphere of the room, we now turn to the presentations given by the representatives of the associations.
With Mr. GODARD's precise assessment of the milk producers, Mr. COURTIER's rousing enthusiasm for the beet growers, and Mr. LEROY's scathing criticism of the wheat producers, we will have—after a few digressions on secondary cereals, bread, etc.—an accurate, alarming but not hopeless picture of the agricultural situation. Below we publish the full speech by Mr. Henri OUVRÉ, as well as the main points of the speeches by the three speakers. Their texts trace the entire genesis of the crisis. As for their conclusions, they all agree on the same point: Enough of laws, decrees, and orders that are tangled, overlapping, and contradictory; enough intrigue, scheming, and politics; the fate of the country can no longer be decided by pitting one side against another. By practicing unity and silencing bad shepherds and demagogues, farmers are doing more than preserving their heritage—they are saving France as a whole!
...

To take collective action, the inhabitants o Villiers joined forces within the Agrarian Party which was growing in France.
They wanted to emphasize that “the interests of people living in rural areas are linked to those of agriculture.”
On the Villiers estate:
In 1939, 45 farmers and their 71 horses (no tractors) cultivated 132 hectares of wheat, yielding a harvest of 2,609 quintals. In addition, the 10 hectares of vineyards cultivated by the 45 farmers and 22 other heads of families produced 224 hectoliters of wine.
On the rest of the land, in 1930, in addition to wheat and vines, 60 hectares of oats, 10 hectares of fodder beets, 3 hectares of sugar beets, 10 hectares of fodder, 13 hectares of potatoes, and 25 hectares of asparagus were cultivated, for a total of 121 hectares.
The 750 hectares of woodland provided firewood and timber for the village inhabitants.



1 : Gilbert PURSEIGLE – 2 : Charles RAPINE – 3 : VINCENT de Butteau – 4 : René DUPRÉ – 5 : Léon LEMOINE (Ury) – 6 : Mme Leon LEMOINE – 7 : Fernand CHAMPION – 8 : JACQUET (chauffeur) – 9 : Henri BAUDET – 10 : Marius LECOMTE – 11 : Raymond PELLETIER – 12 : Renée RAPINE – 13 : Odette CHAMPION – 14 : Raymond CHAMPION – 15 : Mme FLEURANT – 16 : Jacqueline PELLETIER – 17 : Gabriel FLEURANT AGRICOLA (fondateur du parti agraire) – 18 Raymond PURSEIGLE – 19 Alice LEBEC – 20 : Marcelle PELLETIER.

Farm animals

In 1930, there were 71 horses, 1 mule, 3 donkeys, 1 bull, 64 cows, 15 heifers (young cows that had not yet calved), 42 sheep, 16 lambs, 16 pigs, and 1 goat.
This does not include the chicken coops and rabbit hutches found in almost every house.

Horses are also used by craftsmen and merchants.

Jules TESTARD, who runs the sand quarry, has a horse named Bijou to pull the sand wagons on the quarry's small railway. His little Fiat truck is used for deliveries to Bourron station.

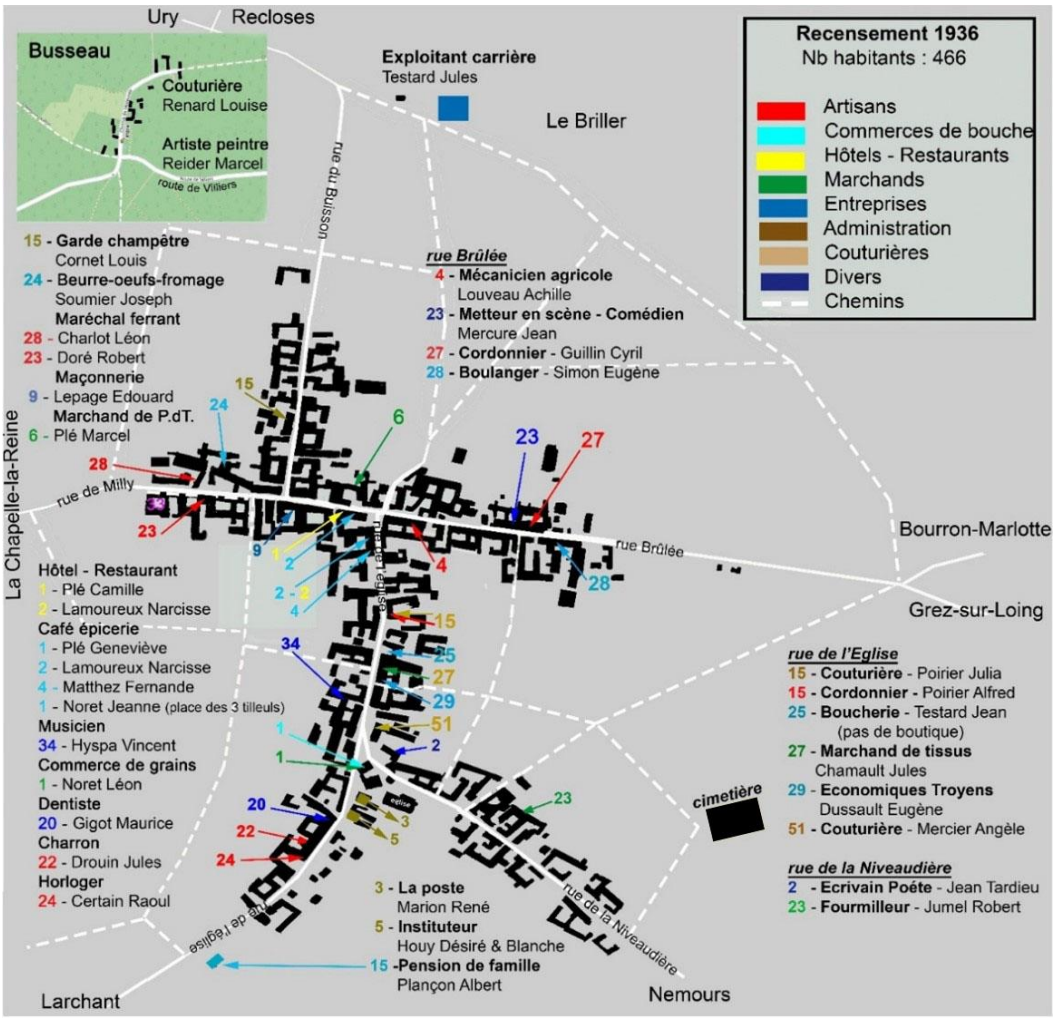
Edouard LEPAGE, a masonry contractor, uses a horse-drawn cart pulled by Bijou to transport heavy and bulky building materials, in addition to a handcart pulled by two men.



Place des trois tilleuls

Léon NORET, a grain and asparagus merchant, also uses two horse-drawn carts for his deliveries to Bourron station.
The baker **Eugène SIMON** has a cart pulled by Bichette, which he uses to make his rounds selling bread in the village.

The appearance of the village and the names of the streets



The village was much smaller than it is today. This is easy to see when walking through the streets. The old houses can be recognized by their small tiled roofs, high walls with few openings, and large, wide gates that allowed carts full of hay or bales of grain to pass through to the top of the guards.

In 1939, the current Rue René LEFEBVRE was called "Rue Brûlée" in memory of a fire that almost completely destroyed one side of the street in 1785.

Rue Gabriel BACHET was then called "Rue de Milly." The current Rue de Nemours was called "Rue de la Niveaudière." What is now Rue de Larchant, which was sparsely built up at the time, was part of "Rue de l'Eglise." In summary, the following streets have not changed their names: Rue du Buisson and Rue de l'Eglise.

The village was almost self-sufficient.

Shops and merchants in the village according to the 1936 census

The addresses listed below are given with the current street numbers and names in the village.

Food shops:

Coffee shop and grocery store	PLÉ Geneviève	1 rue Gabriel BACHET
Coffee shop and grocery store	MATTHEZ Fernande et Blanche	4 rue de l'Eglise
Coffee shop and grocery store	NORET Jeanne	1 rue de Larchant
Coffee shop, wine merchant	MOUILLÉ Louis	2 rue de l'Eglise
Restaurant owner: "Villa des bois"	PLANÇON Albert	15 rue de Larchant
Grocery store: *Les Economiques Troyens*	DUSSAULT Eugène	29 rue de l'Eglise
Bakery	SIMON Eugène	28 rue René LEFEBVRE
Butter, eggs, and cheese	SOUMIER Joseph	24 rue Gabriel BACHET
Butcher shop (no street-front store)	TESTARD Jean	25 rue de l'Eglise



Le Café Matthez 3 rue de l'Eglise



Les Economiques Troyens 29 rue de l'Eglise

Merchants:

Fabric merchant	CHAMAULT Jules	27 rue de l'Eglise
Market merchant	BOUGLÉ Henri	rue René LEFEBVRE
Potato merchant	PLÉ Marcel	6 rue Gabriel BACHET
Grain merchant	NORET Léon	1 rue de Larchant
Ant merchant	JUMEL Robert	23 rue de Nemours

Companies		
Masonry	LEPAGE Edouard	9 rue Gabriel BACHET
Quarry: operator	TESTARD Jules	29 le Briller
Craftsmen		
Watchmaker	CERTAIN Raoul	24 rue de Larchant
Wheelwright	DROUIN Jules	22 rue de Larchant
Shoemaker	GUILLIN Cyrille	26 rue René LEFEBVRE
Shoemaker	POIRIER Alfred	15 rue de l'Eglise
Agricultural mechanic	LOUVEAU Achille	4 rue René LEFEBVRE
Farrier	DORÉ Robert	23 rue Gabriel BACHET
Farrier	CHARLOT Léon	28 rue Gabriel BACHET
Administration		
Postman	MARION René	3 rue de Larchant
Teachers	HOUY Désiré et Blanche :	5 rue de Larchant
Rural police officer	CORNET Julien	15 rue du Buisson
Dressmakers		
Dressmaker	POIRIER Julia	15 rue de l'Eglise
Dressmaker	MERCIER Angèle	51 rue de l'Eglise
Dressmakers	RENARD Louise	6 rue de l'Abreuvoir à Busseau
Various		
Dentist	GIGOT Maurice	20 rue de Larchant
Musician	HYSPA Vincent	34 rue de l'Eglise
Painter	RIEDER Marcel	rue de l'Abreuvoir à Busseau

Houses and gardens

Almost all houses had a vegetable garden with a few fruit trees behind them. Electricity arrived in homes in 1928; running water in 1932.
A public telephone was installed in the village in 1907, but it was only used by shopkeepers and craftsmen. There were just eight subscribers in 1938.
For hygiene, toilets were located on the manure heap or in a shed at the bottom of the garden. Bathrooms were very rare: people washed themselves with water from a basin or, on special occasions, in a tub.

At dawn, the numerous roosters crowed from farm to farm. The dogs, present in almost every house, also got excited from time to time. Morning and evening, the streets echoed with the sound of horseshoes on cobblestones. The middle of the streets was decorated with horse manure, because in the morning, when leaving the stable, the horses relieved themselves before work. The village was perfumed by the piles of manure found in every farmyard. It was the countryside of the time, with its noises, smells, and many manual laborers!

A very festive village
You only have to look at the newspaper advertisements to see that entertainment is still very much on the agenda, with the aim of maintaining cohesion among the residents of Villiers.



VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

Fête patronale. — Dimanche 12 septembre, fête patronale. Grand bal de jour et de nuit sous la tente H. Galland. Lundi 13 septembre, continuation de la fête. Tirs, manèges, confiseries, etc.

Religious life is also part of the community's calendar. The parish is served by a priest from Larchant. The girls' club is run by Miss SOSSON.
Most families go to church for baptisms, weddings, and funerals. However, over time, fewer and fewer parishioners are attending Sunday mass.



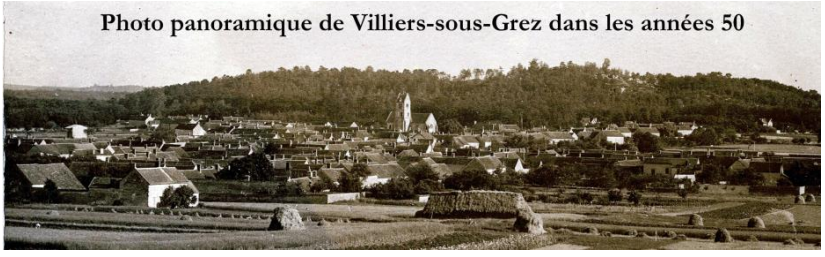
The patronage group for the period 1937-1938 consists of : 1 Alice BEZARD – 2 Rolande FLEUREAU – 3 Jacqueline PELLETIER – 4 Gisèle BEAUVAIS – 5 Huguette LEBEC – 6 X – 7 Joséphine CAMPIGOTTO – 8 Jeanine PLÉ – 9 Jacqueline CHARPENTIER – 10 Mariette HUGUET – 11 Paulette LOISEAU – 12 Yolande PLÉ – 13 Ginette PATRON – 14 Maria CAMPIGOTTO – 15 X – 16 Gisèle POIRIER.

Green buses



The company "Les Cars Verts," based in Nemours, provides daily service between Paris and Nemours.

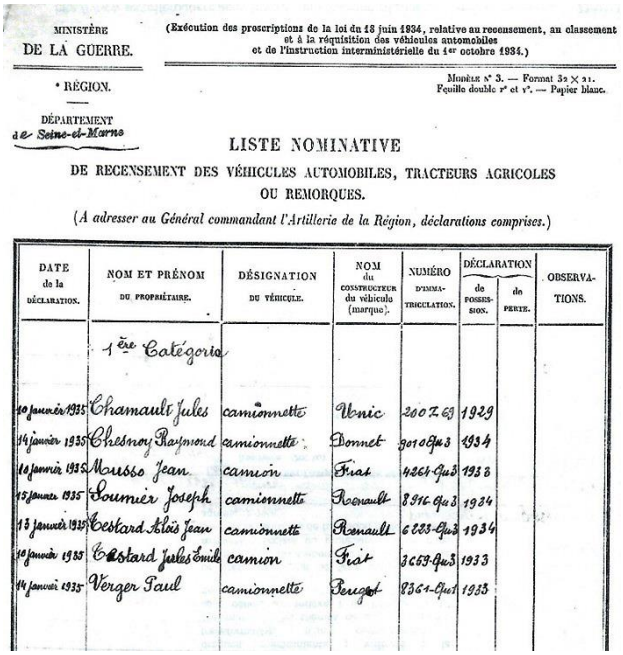
The bus departs from Bastille, stops at Place d'Italie, then continues on to Nemours, making a stop in Villiers-sous-Grez. In the evening, it makes the reverse journey.



MOBILIZATION

Special measures

For a long time, horses, horse-drawn vehicles, and automobiles were regularly counted.



MINISTÈRE DE LA GUERRE.

(Exécution des prescriptions de la loi du 18 juin 1934, relative au recensement, au classement et à la réquisition des véhicules automobiles et de l'instruction interministérielle du 1er octobre 1934.)

* RÉGION.

Modèle N° 3. — Format 32 × 21. Feuille double r° et v°. — Papier blanc.

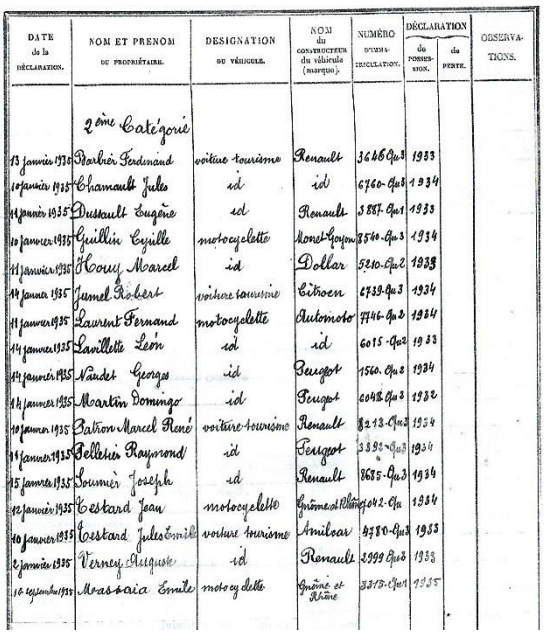
DÉPARTEMENT de Seine-et-Marne

LISTE NOMINATIVE

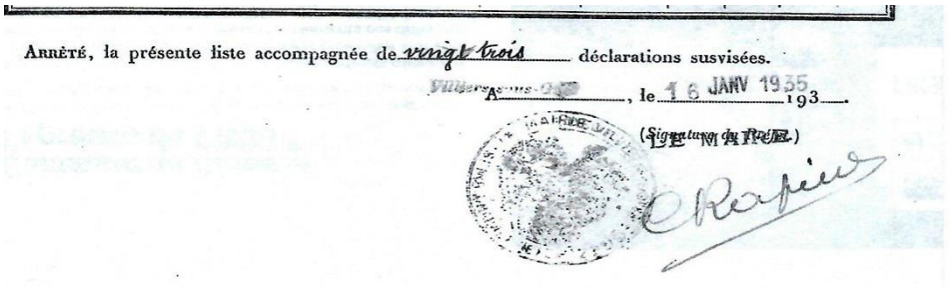
DE RECENSEMENT DES VÉHICULES AUTOMOBILES, TRACTEURS AGRICOLES OU REMORQUES.

(*A adresser au Général commandant l'Artillerie de la Région, déclarations comprises.*)

DATE de la DÉCLARATION.	NOM ET PRÉNOM DU PROPRIÉTAIRE.	DÉSIGNATION DU VÉHICULE.	NOM du CONSTRUCTEUR du véhicule (marque).	NUMÉRO D'IMMATRICULATION.	DÉCLARATION de POSSESSION.	DÉCLARATION de PERTE.	OBSERVATIONS.
	1ère Catégorie						
10 janvier 1935	Chamault Jules	camionnette	Unic	200 Z 69	1929		
14 janvier 1935	Chesnoy Raymond	camionnette	Donnet	3010 Qu 3	1934		
10 janvier 1935	Mousso Jean	camion	Fiat	4261 Qu 3	1938		
15 janvier 1935	Soumier Joseph	camionnette	Renault	8916 Qu 3	1934		
13 janvier 1935	Testard Alais Jean	camionnette	Renault	6283 Qu 3	1934		
10 janvier 1935	Testard Jules Emile	camion	Fiat	3659 Qu 3	1933		
14 janvier 1935	Verger Paul	camionnette	Peugeot	8361 Qu 1	1933		



DATE de la DÉCLARATION.	NOM ET PRENOM DU PROPRIÉTAIRE.	DESIGNATION DU VÉHICULE.	NOM du CONSTRUCTEUR du véhicule (marque).	NUMÉRO D'IMMATRICULATION.	DÉCLARATION de POSSESSION.	DÉCLARATION de PERTE.	OBSERVATIONS.
	2ème Catégorie						
13 janvier 1935	Barbier Ferdinand	voiture tourisme	Renault	3646 Qu 3	1933		
10 janvier 1935	Chamault Jules	id	id	6760 Qu 3	1934		
14 janvier 1935	Dusault Eugène	id	Renault	3887 Qu 1	1933		
10 janvier 1935	Guillin Cyille	motocyclette	Monet-Goyon	3560 Qu 3	1934		
11 janvier 1935	Hoey Marcel	id	Dollar	5210 Qu 2	1933		
14 janvier 1935	Jamet Robert	voiture tourisme	Citroen	6739 Qu 3	1934		
11 janvier 1935	Laurent Fernand	motocyclette	Automoto	7746 Qu 2	1934		
14 janvier 1935	Lavillette Léon	id	id	6015 Qu 2	1933		
14 janvier 1935	Naudet Georges	id	Peugeot	7560 Qu 2	1934		
14 janvier 1935	Moratin Domingo	id	Peugeot	6042 Qu 3	1932		
10 janvier 1935	Batton Marcel René	voiture tourisme	Renault	8213 Qu 3	1934		
11 janvier 1935	Bellebon Raymond	id	Peugeot	3892 Qu 3	1934		
15 janvier 1935	Soumier Joseph	id	Renault	8685 Qu 3	1934		
12 janvier 1935	Testard Jean	motocyclette	Gnome et Rhône	6042 Qu	1934		
10 janvier 1935	Testard Jules Emile	voiture tourisme	Amilcar	4780 Qu 3	1933		
2 janvier 1935	Verney Auguste	id	Renault	5999 Qu 3	1933		
16 septembre 1932	Mastaia Emile	motocyclette	Gnome et Rhône	3375 Qu 1	1935		



ARRÊTÉ, la présente liste accompagnée de vingt trois déclarations susvisées.

A Villiers-sous-Grez, le 16 JANV 1935 193.

(Signature du Maire.)

In anticipation of a future war and in order to respond to threats from Germany, on September 3, 1938, France called up 100,000 men from the reserve classes and specialists from the Maginot Line.
Shortly before the declaration of war, in Melun, vacant housing was identified so that Parisians could be accommodated there in case some fled their city.
In Villiers, the letters C.O.A.A. “Centred'Organisation d'Artillerie Automobile” or “Center for the Organization of Motorized Artillery” are painted in red on the doors of available houses and premises, along with the number of soldiers or horses that can be accommodated there.

In early August 1939, reservists were called up for military service. Factories working for National Defense and their personnel were requisitioned.
On August 24, the requisition order was published and posted in every municipality in Seine-et-Marne. It concerned military requisitions.
On August 25, 1939, recently discharged soldiers were called back into service. 500,000 reservists from the classes of 1917, 1918, and 1919 were requisitioned, including non-commissioned officers and reserve officers.

Fearing a gas attack, the French government began distributing gas masks to the civilian population on August 30.





Modèle N° 1 MÉTROPOLE

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

ORDRE
DE
MOBILISATION GÉNÉRALE

Par décret du Président de la République, la mobilisation des armées de terre, de mer et de l'air est ordonnée, ainsi que la réquisition des animaux, voitures, moyens d'attelage, aéronefs, véhicules automobiles, navires, embarcations, engins de manutention et de tous les moyens nécessaires pour suppléer à l'insuffisance des moyens ordinaires d'approvisionnement de ces armées.

LE PREMIER JOUR DE LA MOBILISATION GÉNÉRALE EST LE samedi deux septembre 1939

Tout Français soumis aux obligations militaires doit, sous peine d'être puni avec toute la rigueur des lois, obéir aux prescriptions de son **FASCICULE DE MOBILISATION.**

Sont visés par le présent ordre **TOUS LES HOMMES** non présents sous les Drapeaux et appartenant aux **ARMÉES DE TERRE, DE MER ET DE L'AIR,** y compris les **INSCRITS MARITIMES,** les hommes appartenant aux **TROUPES COLONIALES** et les hommes du **SERVICE AUXILIAIRE.**

Les Autorités civiles et militaires sont responsables de l'exécution du présent décret.

Le Ministre de la Guerre. *Le Ministre de la Marine.* *Le Ministre de l'Air.*

On August 31, posters announcing "General Mobilization Order" appeared in all municipalities. The first day of mobilization was set for September 2 at midnight.
"All able-bodied men between the ages of 20 and 48 (men born between 1891 and 1919) are mobilized."
However, men with three or more children and farmers were not mobilized.
Five million Frenchmen were mobilized, representing a quarter of the male population. Transportation for moving soldiers was requisitioned. Soldiers lacked clothing and equipment.
On September 1, 1939, German troops invaded Poland. England immediately demanded that the Germans withdraw from the country. Germany refused.

General mobilization

September 2, 1939, marks the beginning of general mobilization. The government advised Parisians to leave the capital. Within ten days, the infantry mobilization centers in Coulommiers and Fontainebleau welcomed numerous reservists from regional regiments. The country's defense was slow and difficult to organize. 500,000 men were quickly sent home because they were needed for the war industry.

In factories vital to the war effort, the working week increases from 40 to 75 hours. Older workers who recently left their jobs are called back to the factory because of a shortage of labor.

On September 3, 1939, France and England declared war on Germany.
The news spread that same day via radio, and the next day via newspapers.



La France et la Grande-Bretagne s'engagent à respecter les populations civiles... L'ALLEMAGNE LES BOMBARDE

SIXIÈME ET DERNIÈRE

Paris-soir

LUNDI 4 SEPTEMBRE 1939 — 37, rue du Louvre PARIS (1er) — 6e DERNIÈRE — 50 cent.

DEPUIS ONZE HEURES CE MATIN

L'Angleterre est en guerre avec l'Allemagne

LA FRANCE SERA EN GUERRE A 17 HEURES

Article du 04/09/1939

The men of Villiers affected by general mobilization.

Around 65 men were mobilized in September 1939. Older men aged between 40 and 48 were mobilized later, in June 1940, or assigned to passive defense duties.
Already performing their military service and on the front line in eastern France are the soldiers born in 1938, including, for Villiers: CAMPIGOTTO Fortuné, DUVIGOUREUX Jean, and GUERIN Lucien (absent).

Conseil de révision du 15 octobre 1938

CONSEIL DE RÉVISION

CANTON DE LA CHAPELLE-LA-REINE

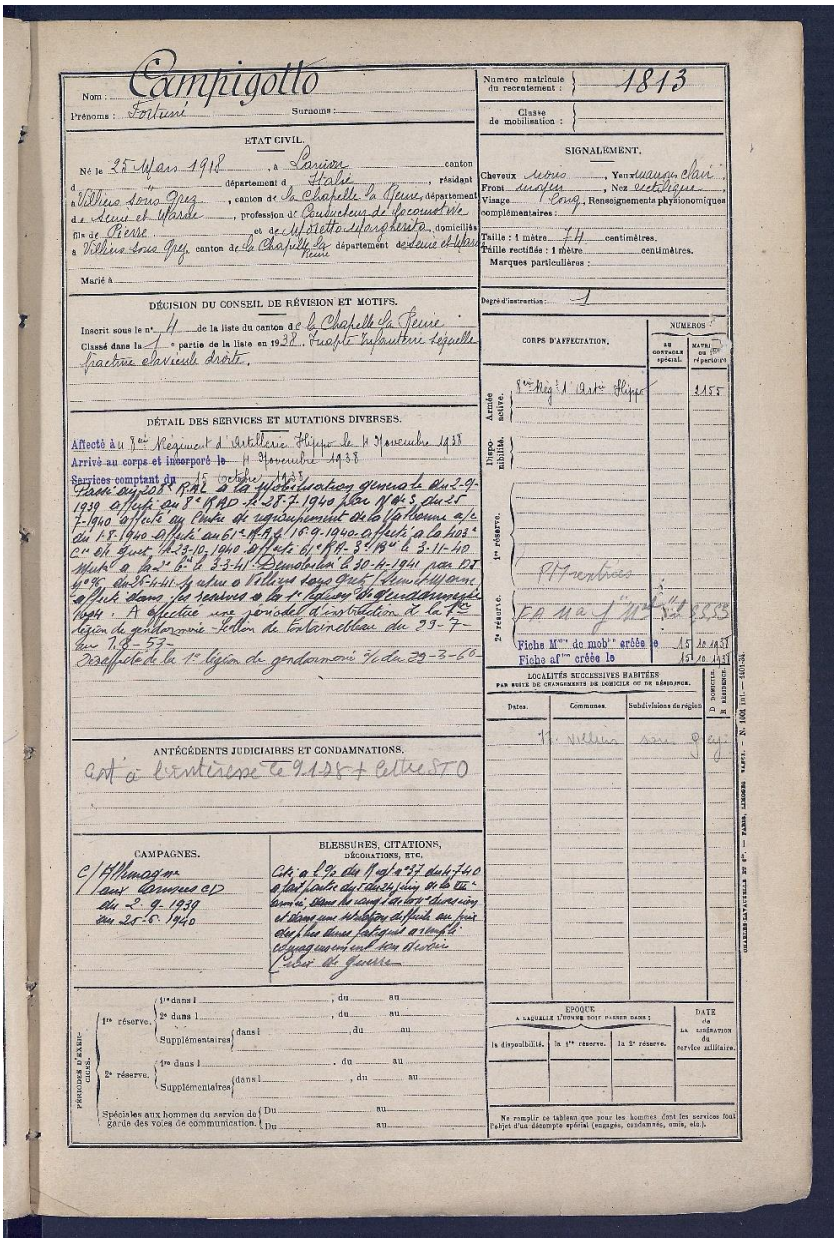
Recloses : Charles Boisseau, b.; André Guyon, eng. vol; Georges Herklet, b. abs.

Ury : René Dayez, rév. Cher.

Villiers-sous-Grez : Fortuné Campigotto, b.; Jean Duvigoureux, clôture; Lucien Guénin, b. abs.



CAMPIGOTTO Fortuné in soldier's uniform in 1938



Campigotto

Nom : Campigotto — Prénoms : Fortuné — Surnoms :

Numéro matricule du recrutement : 1813 — Classe de mobilisation :

ETAT CIVIL.

Né le 25 Mars 1918, à Corvées, canton d'Auneau (Eure-et-Loir), département d'Eure-et-Loir, résidant à Villiers-sous-Grez, canton de La Chapelle-la-Reine, département de Seine-et-Marne, profession de Couvreur-zingueur, fils de Pierre et de Moretto Seraphina, domicilié à Villiers-sous-Grez, canton de La Chapelle-la-Reine, département de Seine-et-Marne.

Marié à

SIGNALEMENT.

Cheveux Noirs, Yeux Marron Clair, Front Moyen, Nez Retroussé, Visage Ovale, Renseignements physionomiques complémentaires :

Taille : 1 mètre 64 centimètres. Taille rectifiée : 1 mètre centimètres. Marques particulières :

Degré d'instruction : 1

DÉCISION DU CONSEIL DE RÉVISION ET MOTIFS.

Inscrit sous le n° 11 de la liste du canton de La Chapelle-la-Reine. Classé dans la 1re partie de la liste en 1938. Soutien de famille. Fracture du cubitus droit.

CORPS D'AFFECTATION. — NUMEROS (AU CONTROLE spécial / MATRICULE du 1er corps)

Armée active : 8e Rég. d'Artle Hippo — 1455

Disponibilité.

1re réserve.

2e réserve. — Fe ma j 178 — 5333

Fiche Mle de mob. créée le 15 10 1938

Fiche alle créée le 15 10 1938

DÉTAIL DES SERVICES ET MUTATIONS DIVERSES.

Affecté au 8e Régiment d'Artillerie Hippo le 14 novembre 1938

Arrivé au corps et incorporé le 14 novembre 1938

Services comptant du 15 octobre 1938

Passé au 208 RAL à la mobilisation générale du 2-9-1939. Affecté au 8e RAD le 25-7-1940 par Note n° 5 du 25-7-1940 "affecté au Centre de regroupement de la Corbonne a/c du 1-8-1940. Affecté au 61e RAA le 16-9-1940. Affecté à la 108e CA 6e Armée le 23-10-1940. Affecté au 61e RAA le 3-11-40. Muté à la 2e C 6e A le 3-3-41. Démobilisé à 30-4-1941 par DT 4e M. du 24-4-41. Y admis à Villiers sous Grez (Seine-et-Marne) affecté dans ses services à la 1re légion de gendarmerie mobile. A effectué une période d'instruction de la 1re légion de gendarmerie mobile de Fontainebleau du 29-7-au 18-8-57. Affecté à la 1re légion de gendarmerie Mobile du 29-3-60.

ANTÉCÉDENTS JUDICIAIRES ET CONDAMNATIONS.

Condamné à Montargis le 9-1-58 + Cassation

CAMPAGNES. — C/Allemagne aux armées du 2-9-1939 au 25-6-1940

BLESSURES, CITATIONS, DÉCORATIONS, ETC. — Cité à l'O. de la 8e A. n° 237 du 6-7-40 à l'ordre de la 8e A. Croix de guerre avec étoile de bronze

PÉRIODES D'EXERCICES FAITES — 1re réserve : 1re dans l' ; 2e dans l' ; Supplémentaires dans l' — 2e réserve : 1re dans l' ; Supplémentaires dans l' — Spéciales aux hommes du service de garde des voies de communication

LOCALITÉS SUCCESSIVES HABITÉES PAR SUITE DE CHANGEMENTS DE DOMICILE OU DE RÉSIDENCE. — Dates. — Communes. — Subdivisions de région. — D. domicile R. résidence

ÉPOQUE A LAQUELLE L'HOMME DOIT PASSER DANS : la disponibilité. — la 1re réserve. — la 2e réserve. — DATE de la libération du service militaire.

Ne remplir ce tableau que pour les hommes (soit les services font l'objet d'un décompte spécial (engagés, condamnés, unis, etc.).

LA CHAPELLE-LA-REINE

Conseil de révision

CANTON DE LA CHAPELLE-LA-REINE

Ajournés classe 1937

Buthiers. — Henri Poussot, b.

Ajournés classe 1938

Recloses. — Emile Knaps, eng. vol.

Tousson. — Marcel Dupré, b.; Léandre Vigneron, b.; Robert Bartier, serv. aux.

Ury. — Jean Auroux, b.; Julien Billot, b.; Romain Douchet, b.; René Riom, b.

Villiers-sous-Grez. — Raymond Fauvet, b.; Romain Loiseau, b.

LA CHAPELLE-LA-REINE

LES CONSCRITS

Ury. — Auroux Jean, Billot Julien, Douchet Romain, Rian René.

Le Vaudoué. — Thely Robert, Rousseau André, Syvain Jacques, Cervo Emile.

Villiers-sous-Grez. — Fauvet Raymond, Fleureau Robert, Loiseau Camille, Loiseau Romain.

Revision Council of April 4, 1939. Conscripts from the classes of 1939-1940 are mobilized for two years.



It is not known on what occasion this photo was taken in 1938.
However, the names of the people in it could suggest that it was taken when certain conscripts were called up on that date. From right to left, we can recognize:
Gisèle BEAUVAIS, Raymond FAUVET, Romain LOISEAU, Fortuné CAMPIGOTTO, Robert FLEUREAU, Bertolo CAMPIGOTTO,
Angelo CAMPIGOTTO, Huguette LEBEC.

NOMS	Prénom	Âge
AMIOT	Henri	40
BACHET	Gabriel	34
BOUGLÉ	Henri	38
BOUGLÉ	Robert	36
BOUREILLE	Marcel	26
BOUDT	Maurice	24
CERTAIN	Edouard	25
CHAMAUX	Fernand	24
CHAMAUX	Roger	44
CHAMPION	Fernand	44
CHARPENTIER	Armand	35
CHESNOY	Raymond	36
COCQUET	Hector	41
COMBE	Jules	42
COMBE	Raoul	33
COMBE	Théodule	26
COMBE	Victor	24
COSSON	Edmond	45
DORE	Robert	33
DUSSAULT	Eugène	42
DUVIGOUREUX	Lucien	45
ESNULT	Roger	42
FAUVET	Raymond	20
FLEUREAU	André	26
FLEUREAU	Marcel	31
FLEUREAU	Fernand	26
FLEUREAU	Robert	20
FOUCAULT	Henri	44
FRÉGE	Paul	34
GAUCHER	Emile	37
GAUCHER	Robert	41
GUILLORY	Marcel	38
HOUY	Marcel	25
HUGUET	Edmond	38
HUGUET	Paul	26
HUREAU	Jean	30
HUREAU	Maurice	32
LAURENT	Fernand	28
LEFEBVRE	René	28
LEPAGE	André	27
LOISEAU	Camille	20
LOISEAU	Romain	30
LOUVEAU	Achille	48
LHUILLIER	Marcel	30
MARION	René	44
MENIN	Robert	39
MEUNIER	Paul	45
MICHAUX	Raymond	30
MILANDRE	René	31
NAUDET	Georges	28
NORET	Roger	44
PAMPIN	Marc	35
PATRON	Marcel	36
PELLETIER	Gabriel	38
PELLETIER	Raymond	42
PLE	Camille	40
PLÉ	Henri	30
POIRIER	Roger	34
PURSEIGLE	Gilbert	45
RAPINE	Charles	41
REBOUT	Alfred	19
RENARD	Georges	31
SOUMIER	Jean	38
SOUMIER	Louis	44
SURGET	Léon	44
TESTARD	Jean	44
TESTARD	Roger	25
TOUZALIN	Roger	46
VIRATEL	Henri	44
VOCELLE	Denis	35
WOUTERS	Georges	44

On the left, the list of the 72 Villarons who have been mobilized



The class of 1940, which the French government had mobilized, did not join the army. Signed on June 22, 1940, the armistice agreement ordered general demobilization and abolished national service.
The following did not go to war:
LOISEAU Georges, born on September 27, 1920, in Gien, mason,
REBOUT Alfred, born on August 25, 1920, in Paris's 18th arrondissement, mechanic at AUBRY Georges,
CHAMPIN René, born on February 24, 1920, farmer,
HUGUET Jean, born August 26, 1920, farmer,
CAMPIGOTTO Angelo, born October 1, 1920 in Italy, mason,
CAMPIGOTTO Bertolo, born September 22, 1915 in Italy, excavator.

The class of 1940

A true rite of passage into adulthood, military service remains a mandatory and eagerly anticipated experience for young people in rural areas.



From left to right:
André MORTIER, Bertolo CAMPIGOTTO (conscrit), Maurice BOUDT, Marcel LOISEAU, Angelo CAMPIGOTTO (conscrit), Jean HUGUET (conscrit), Georges LOISEAU

The volunteers

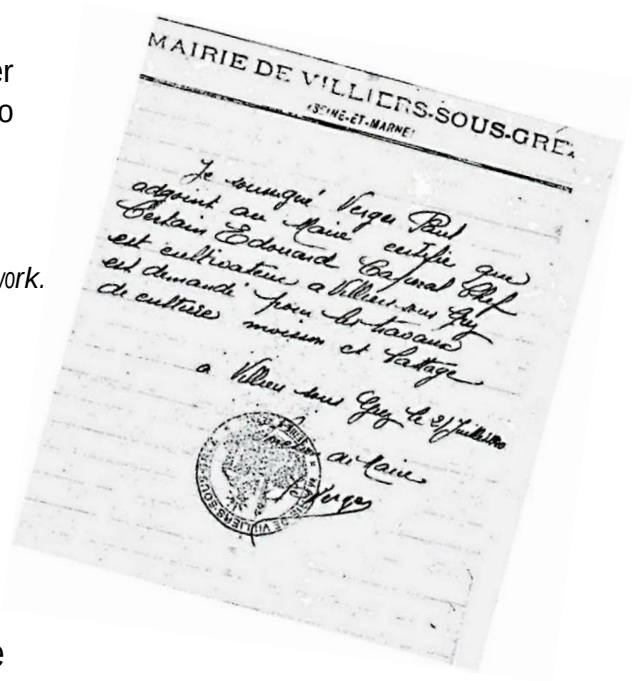
JUMELLouis, born on May 6, 1920, a farmer, had just married BEAUVAIS Gisèle on December 23, 1939, in Villiers, and JALEMBON Laurent, born on December 19, 1920.

Mayor Charles RAPINE, aged 41 in 1939, was called up and then demobilized.
He attended the municipal council meeting on August 13, 1939, but was absent from subsequent meetings until July 1940. We can assume that he returned quickly to Villiers due to his age and his status as a farmer.

Paul VERGER replaced the absent mayor of the commune in this role.

Special case of certain farmers

Upon certification by the mayor (or his or her substitute), agricultural workers may return home to operate farms and agricultural activities.

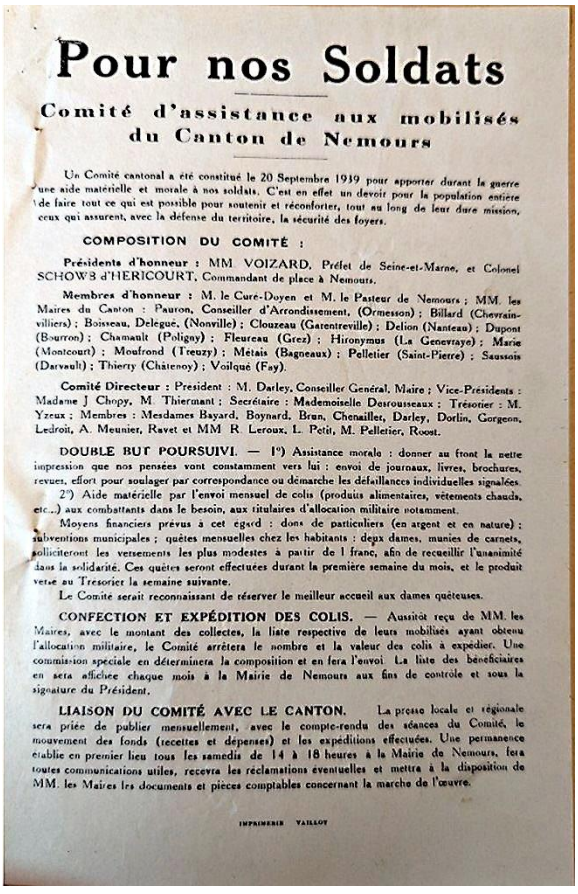

MAIRIE DE VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ
(SEINE-ET-MARNE)

Je soussigné Verger Paul adjoint au Maire certifie que Certain Edouard Raymond Adolphe est cultivateur à Villiers-sous-Grez et demande pour lui-même et salariés de culture moisson et battage

à Villiers sous Grez le 2 Juillet 1940

Here, certificate issued to Edouard CERTAIN for agricultural work.

The Mobilization Assistance Committee


Pour nos Soldats

Comité d'assistance aux mobilisés du Canton de Nemours

Un Comité cantonal a été constitué le 20 Septembre 1939 pour apporter durant la guerre une aide matérielle et morale à nos soldats. C'est en effet un devoir pour la population entière de faire tout ce qui est possible pour soutenir et réconforter, tout au long de leur dure mission, ceux qui assurent, avec la défense du territoire, la sécurité des foyers.

COMPOSITION DU COMITÉ :

Présidents d'honneur : MM. VOIZARD, Préfet de Seine-et-Marne, et Colonel SCHOWB d'HERICOURT, Commandant de place à Nemours.

Membres d'honneur : M. le Curé-Doyen et M. le Pasteur de Nemours ; MM. les Maires du Canton : Pauron, Conseiller d'Arrondissement, (Ormesson) ; Billard (Chevrainvilliers) ; Boisseau, Delegué, (Nonville) ; Clouzeau (Garentreville) ; Delion (Nanteau) ; Dupont (Bourron) ; Chamault (Poligny) ; Fleureau (Grez) ; Hironymus (La Genevraye) ; Marie (Montcourt) ; Moufrond (Treuzy) ; Metais (Bagneaux) ; Pelletier (Saint-Pierre) ; Saussois (Darvault) ; Thierry (Chatenoy) ; Voilqué (Fay).

Comité Directeur : President : M. Darley, Conseiller Général, Maire ; Vice-Présidents : Madame J. Chopy, M. Thiermant ; Secrétaire : Mademoiselle Desrousseaux ; Trésorier : M. Yzeux ; Membres : Mesdames Bayard, Boynard, Brun, Chenaillet, Darley, Dorlin, Gorgeon, Ledroit, A. Meunier, Ravet et MM R. Leroux, L. Petit, M. Pelletier, Roost.

DOUBLE BUT POURSUIVI. — 1°) Assistance morale : donner au front la nette impression que nos pensées vont constamment vers lui : envoi de journaux, livres, brochures, revues, effort pour soulager par correspondance ou démarche les défaillances individuelles signalées.

2°) Aide matérielle par l'envoi mensuel de colis (produits alimentaires, vêtements chauds, etc..) aux combattants dans le besoin, aux titulaires d'allocation militaire notamment.

Moyens financiers prévus à cet égard : dons de particuliers (en argent et en nature) ; subventions municipales ; quêtes mensuelles chez les habitants : deux dames, munies de carnets, solliciteront les versements les plus modestes à partir de 1 franc, afin de recueillir l'unanimité dans la solidarité. Ces quêtes seront effectuées durant la première semaine du mois, et le produit versé au Tresorier la semaine suivante.

Le Comité serait reconnaissant de réserver le meilleur accueil aux dames quêteuses.

CONFECTION ET EXPÉDITION DES COLIS. — Aussitôt reçu de MM. les Maires, avec le montant des collectes, la liste respective de leurs mobilisés ayant obtenu l'allocation militaire, le Comité arrêtera le nombre et la valeur des colis à expédier. Une commission speciale en déterminera la composition et en fera l'envoi. La liste des bénéficiaires en sera affichée chaque mois à la Mairie de Nemours aux fins de contrôle et sous la signature du Président.

LIAISON DU COMITÉ AVEC LE CANTON. La presse locale et régionale sera priée de publier mensuellement, avec le compte-rendu des séances du Comité, le mouvement des fonds (recettes et dépenses) et les expéditions effectuées. Une permanence établie en premier lieu tous les samedis de 14 à 18 heures à la Mairie de Nemours, fera toutes communications utiles, recevra les réclamations éventuelles et mettra à la disposition de MM. les Maires les documents et pièces comptables concernant la marche de l'œuvre.

IMPRIMERIE VAILLOT

A committee to assist those called up for military service is set up in each canton. The committee has two objectives: - moral support
- material assistance through the sending of a monthly parcel.
The financial resources come from donations and collections taken up on the first week of each month.

L'Informateur de Seine et Marne 1 décembre 1939


Comité d'aide aux mobilisés

Cinquième liste de souscriptions

VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

MM., Mmes, Mlles : Naudet, 5 fr. ; Beauvais, 5 ; Tardieu, 5 ; Tardieu Jean, 9 ; Vié, 10 ; d'Angely, 2 ; Boureil, 5 ; Juffet, 2 ; Loiseau Emile, 10 ; Jumel, 5 ; Hutte, 1 ; Rapine, 5 ; Chameaux, 5 ; Verger Paul, 5 ; Verger Casimir, 10 ; Fleureau Henri, 10 ; Lavillette, 10 ; Chailloux, 2 ; Loiseau, 10 ; Surget, 2 ; Surget Léon, 3 ; Chamault Jules, 20 ; Michon, 5 ; Louis, 2 ; Aubry, Villaret, Vallée, 20 ; anonyme, 1 ; Mercier Fernande, 2 ; Marion, 10 ; Foucault, 2 ; Combes Théo., 4 ; Fassy, 2 ; Delage, 3 ; Certain, 1 ; Lanery, 5 ; veuve Mercier, 5 ; Gauchet, 5 ; veuve Pampin, 10 ; Prot, 3 ; Pelletier Emile, 5 ; anonyme, 5 ; Lanscioni, 5 ; Robert, 3 ; Patron Prudent, 10 ; Cosson, 5 ; Bourdin, 3 ; veuve Hyspa, 5 ; Desrozziers, 2 ; Déchot, 10 ; Cornet, 10 ; Pussard. 5 ; Pussard fils, 10 ; Charpentier, 5 ; Courtellemont A., 5 ; veuve Lebec E., 10 ; Lebec A., 20 ; Matthez, 5 ; Malesa, 10 ; Pelletier G., 10 ; Bessières, 5 ; Marguet, 3 ; Naudet, 4 ; Lamoureux, 10 ; Cosson, 2 ; Mizio, 4 ; Louveau, 5 ; des Hameaux, 5 ; Faverial, 5 ; Robert, 5 ; Violon, 5 ; Lerouvilloy, 2 ; Simon, 5 ; Champion, 2 ; Campigotto, 10 ; Prosper, 5 ; Talbot, 5 ; Aubry Henri, 10 ; Noret, 1 ; Jeannerault, 10 ; Hureau, 2 ; Barbier, 5 ; Delcroix, 2 ; Templier, 1 ; Fraix, 10 ; Ebel, 20 ; Deriemo, 3 ; Courtellemont, 1 ; Cornet, 2 ; Vocelle, 5 ; Béranger, 5 ; Prost, 5 ; Ménin, 5 ; Combes J., 15 ; Plé Camille, 10 ; Plé Marcel, 50 ; Cornier, 10 ; Lepage, 4 ; M. Debard, 2 ; Bachet Gabriel, 2 ; Patron Marcel, 10 ; Ménin Léonce, 10 ; Ménin Marcel, 5 ; Dové, 10 ; Plé Léa, 5 ; Soumier Louis, 5 ; Simon Louise, 5 ; Pelletier Raymond, 20 ; Pampin Arthur, 20 ; Soumier, 20 ; Hureau Louise, 2 ; Aubry Emile, 10 ; Viratel Désiré, 20 ; Courtellemont, 10 ; Passement, 2 ; Pelletier A., 10 ; Paterson, 2 ; Viratel H., 10 ; Rousseau, 20 ; Purseigle, 10 ; Leclaire Eusèbe, 20 ; Pelletier Rol., 20 ; Plé Léon, 5 ; Pelletier Lucien, 25 ; Martin, 10 ; Lecomte Marius, 20 ; Houy, 20 ; Allavoine, 4 ; Plé Lucien, 20 ; Combe Raoul, 5 ; Huguet Edm., 10 ; Poirier, 10 ; Lefebvre, 20 ; Meurier, 10.

Total pour Villiers-sous-Grez : 1.031 francs.

The committee assisting those mobilized in the canton of Nemours has as its honorary presidents the prefect of Seine-et-Marne and the military commander of Nemours. The committee is composed of the mayor of Nemours, assisted by other individuals. We can assume that the same assistance committee must have existed in the canton of La Chapelle-la-Reine.

The miserable French army

Soldier Robert FLEUREAU recorded his experiences during the war and recounts them as follows:
"In February 1940, I left for Périgueux to join a regiment of Algerian riflemen in order to specialize in the use of the 81 mortar, a special weapon for the infantry. I was assigned as a gunner, which meant I had to carry the bipod, but I no longer had a rifle, so I was given a revolver. I got the holster, but I never saw the gun!"

Fortuné CAMPIGOTTO also spoke of "his rifle, for which he had two cartridges that had to remain wrapped in cellophane."



Bipod for 60 mm mortar



Les résultats de la campagne d'échange de cuivre contre du vin en Seine-et-Marne

La campagne d'échange de cuivre contre du vin, qui s'est déroulée du 3 au 22 novembre en Seine-et-Marne, a rencontré dans notre département le même succès qu'il y a deux mois à Paris et dans la Seine. Elle a permis de réunir en trois semaines, pour Seine-et-Marne et Seine-et-Oise réunis, un total de 162 tonnes de métal ; 810.000 litres de vin ont été distribués en échange.

Cette formule originale de collecte subit donc heureusement, pour la seconde fois, l'épreuve de l'expérience.

Devant être étendue du 15 au 31 décembre au reste du pays, nul doute qu'à cette époque particulièrement favorable elle ne rencontre autant de succès dans les autres départements.



The war effort

A large-scale metal collection campaign was immediately organized by the Department of Defense for the manufacture of war materials.
The French people got rid of their scrap metal and copper in exchange for a liter of wine provided by the government.

THE STRANGE WAR

Agricultural life slows down

The horses requisitioned in the village are taken to Melun at Pré Chamblain, where chaos ensues when the stallions spot a mare in heat that has just arrived on the field! The mare and her owner are ordered to return home quickly, which suits the owner just fine.
In Villiers, a mainly agricultural village, the departure of young men to the front and the requisitioning of plow horses by the army led to a reduction in harvests, whether of cereals, fodder, beets, or potatoes. Harvesting was carried out with great difficulty by women, children, elderly men, and the few horses available.

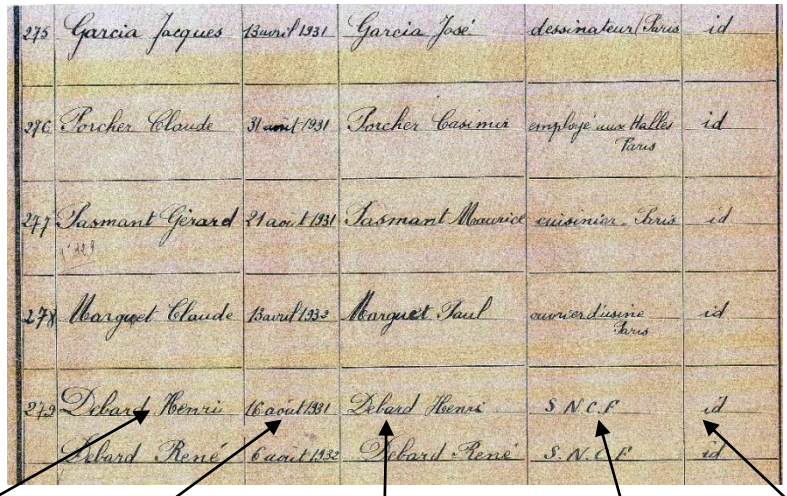


In 1944, the CREUZET family's combine harvester in La Chapelle was pulled by two oxen and a horse.

Young Parisians are sent to safety in the countryside

In the city, daily life quickly becomes very difficult, supplies are running low, and Parisians fear German bombing of the capital, so they turn to family members living in the countryside to take in their children. By September 1939, school enrollment in the canton's villages suddenly swells. Thus,

on October 1, 1939, in Villiers, the schoolteacher enrolled 36 additional children, all from Paris, in the register.



275	Garcia Jacques	13 avril 1931	Garcia José	dessinateur Paris	id
276	Porcher Claude	31 août 1931	Porcher Casimir	employé aux Halles Paris	id
277	Tasmant Gérard	21 août 1931	Tasmant Maurice	cuisinier Paris	id
278	Marguet Claude	8 avril 1932	Marguet Paul	ouvrier usine Paris	id
279	Debard Henri	16 août 1931	Debard Henri	S N C F	id
	Debard René	6 août 1932	Debard René	S N C F	id

Student's name - Date of birth -Parents' names- Parents' occupations - 4/04/1940

The French army camp at Villiers



Some time after the declaration of war, French soldiers and their horses moved into the premises previously marked with red paint. The adjutant stayed at LAMOUREUX, the Saint Etienne café restaurant at 2 rue de l'Eglise. The soldiers rose and went to bed to the sound of the bugle. At lunchtime and in the evening, again to the sound of the bugle, they went to fill their mess tins at the mobile canteen set up at 3 Rue Gabriel Bachet. In the barn at the back, large cast-iron cauldrons, usually used to cook potatoes for the pigs, had been installed. The meat was hung up in the neighboring building. It was the only military canteen in the village.

All access points to the village are guarded continuously by sentries, even at night. In the evening, the PASMANT children enjoy bringing the sentries a few potatoes to put in the embers of the fire they build to keep warm.

It is in a barn in very poor condition (on the site of the current bus stop near the bakery) that Léontine LAVILLETTE, a potato seller, stores her potatoes. This barn serves as a prison for French soldiers stationed in Villiers. It was not a very effective prison, because although there were windows.

Precautions taken by residents

Veterans of World War I knew what idle soldiers were capable of doing to keep themselves occupied. So stocks of brandy and fine wines were quickly hidden away, usually buried in cellars and gardens.

The enterprising soldiers

On her way to work in her parents' asparagus field, Rolande Fleureau, a 19-year-old girl, is stopped by a French soldier who asks her out on a date for that evening. Rolande refuses. Her father, seeing her talking to the soldier for too long for his liking, approaches them, and the French soldier asks Rolande's father for his papers. An officer passing by checked them, and the conversation ended there!

The French army left the village overnight and left all the mobile canteen equipment behind.

In 1939-1940, there was no fighting in our region.

The passage of refugees from the north

From the beginning of May 1940, the civilian population of Belgium fled from the German invaders and crossed France. Some refugee families passed through Villiers, first Belgians and then inhabitants of northern France. They stopped to get supplies, sleep in a room or, more often than not, in a barn, and leave the next day or two days later.

The residents of Villiers feel sorry for these unfortunate people, forced to abandon their homes and set off on the road to an unknown destination, unaware that their fate will be the same a few weeks later.

Refugees stayed for a few days in the grain loft above the gate and horse stable at Henri AMIOT's farm at 28 Rue René LEFEBVRE. Belgian refugees were welcomed at Raymond PELLETIER's farm at 32 Rue Bachet. And no doubt many other refugees found shelter in other houses in the village.

Restrictions

The first products to be rationed were gasoline, coffee, and bread. Bread was made with wheat flour, rye flour, and bran. Bakeries were closed three days a week, and sugar was replaced by saccharin.

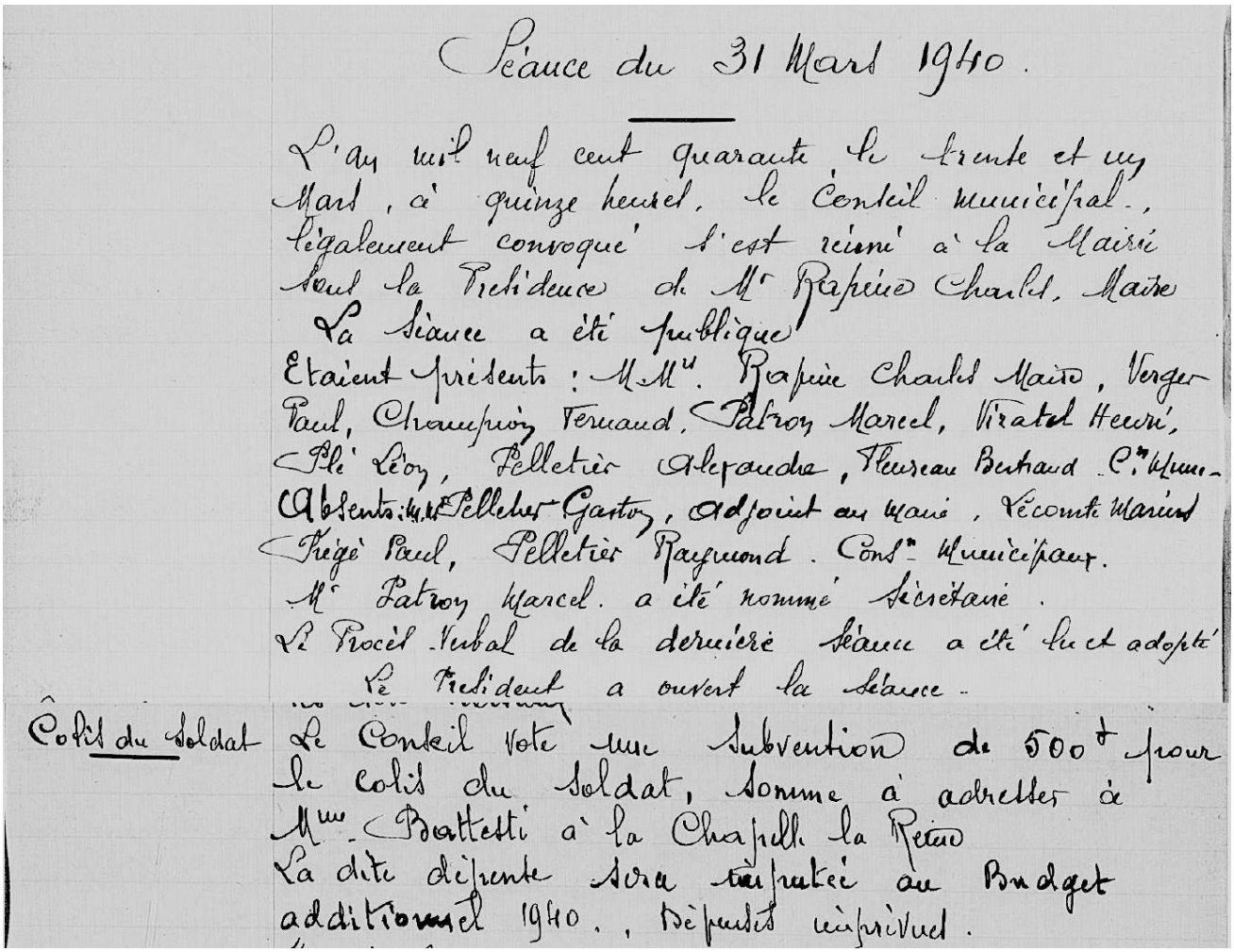
Ration cards were issued from April 1, 1940, with six different rationing levels, from babies to manual laborers. Later, there were eight rationing levels. Coal was also rationed.

Packages for soldiers

On March 31, 1940, the municipality of Villiers voted to allocate a subsidy of 500 francs for sending packages to its soldiers.

Victims of war

In France, between May 10 and June 22, 1940, 100,000 French soldiers died, fortunately none from Villaron.



Séance du 31 Mars 1940.

L'an mil neuf cent quarante le trente et un Mars, à quinze heures, le Conseil municipal, légalement convoqué s'est réuni à la Mairie sous la Présidence de Mr Rapine Charles, Maire
La séance a été publique
Etaient présents : MM. Rapine Charles Maire, Verger Paul, Champion Fernand, Patron Marcel, Viratel Henri, Plé Léon, Pelletier Alexandre, Fleureau Bertrand Cons. Mun.
Absents : MM. Pelletier Gaston, adjoint au maire, Vicomte Marcel Teige Paul, Pelletier Raymond. Cons. Municipaux.
Mr Patron Marcel a été nommé Secrétaire.
Le Procès Verbal de la dernière séance a été lu et adopté
Le Président a ouvert la séance.

Colis du Soldat — Le Conseil vote une subvention de 500f pour le colis du Soldat, somme à adresser à Mme Bartletti à la Chapelle la Reine
La dite dépense sera imputée au Budget additionnel 1940., dépenses imprévues.



PRISONERS OF WAR

Prisoner camps

Entire regiments were taken prisoner by the Germans. The French government counted 1,850,000 prisoners with an average age of 30, including 80,000 black and North African soldiers. The Germans counted 1,900,000 French prisoners, including 26,000 officers and six generals. Historians estimate the number of prisoners of war at 1,650,000, nearly half of whom were married and a quarter of whom were fathers.

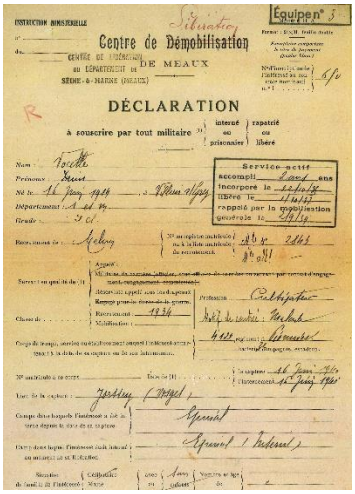
In June 1940, all prisoners, both enlisted men and officers, were held together in whatever facilities were available: barracks, movie theaters, schools, churches, and fenced-off fields near the place of capture. They were kept in France in Fronstalags (prisoner-of-war camps in France). The 75,000 Alsatians and Lorrainians were sent home to what had become German territory. The men also became Germans against their will. Around 200,000 men were released on the spot (the wounded, the sick, farmers, civil servants). The other 1,500,000 were sent to German camps: 56 stalags for ordinary soldiers and 14 oflags for officers.

The release of some prisoners in France



The Germans, realizing that French agriculture lacked the manpower to be highly productive, i.e., to feed the "occupiers" well and feed the "occupied" a little less, sent the imprisoned farmers back to work their land. They were prisoners on parole and had to go regularly to have their cards stamped at the Kommandantur office in the neighboring town. Thus,

René MILANDRE was taken prisoner near Vezoul, then brought to the Fronstalag in Melun and finally released on parole to his farm in Villiers.


Centre de Démobilisation

DE MEAUX

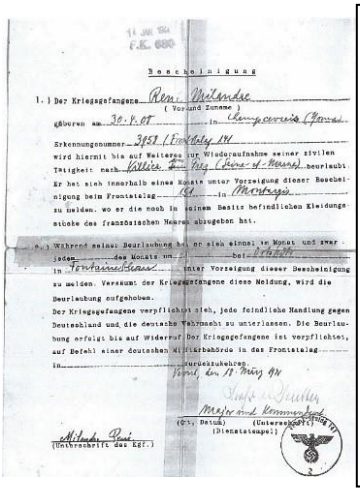
DÉCLARATION

à souscrire par tout militaire

Similarly, Denis VOCELLE was sent to the Epinal camp, then to the Fronstalag camp in Melun, and finally released on parole to his farm in Villiers.

At the beginning of the occupation, all the mayor of the village had to do was fill out a form stating that Mr. X was a farmer and present the document to the camp commander for the man to be sent home on parole. Thus, 135 prisoners from Meaux managed to escape with the same false document stating that they were farmers; only their names had to be written on the form, which was used several times!

But very quickly, the Kommandantur declared that it would be the one to request the release of prisoners, and then it became very difficult to be a prisoner on parole.


Bescheinigung

1.) Der Kriegsgefangene Rene Milandre

geboren am 30.9.08 in Champcevrais (Yonne)

Erkennungsnummer 3953 (Fronstalag 144)

wird hiermit bis auf Weiteres zur Wiederaufnahme seiner zivilen Tätigkeit nach Villiers sur Orge (Seine et Marne) beurlaubt.

Er hat sich innerhalb eines Monats unter Vorzeigung dieser Bescheinigung beim Frontstalag 160 in Montargis zu melden, wo er die noch in seinem Besitz befindlichen Kleidungsstücke des französischen Heeres abzugeben hat.

2.) Während seiner Beurlaubung hat er sich einmal im Monat und zwar jeden des Monats um bei Gendarmerie in Fontainebleau unter Vorzeigung dieser Bescheinigung zu melden. Versäumt der Kriegsgefangene diese Meldung, wird die Beurlaubung aufgehoben.

Der Kriegsgefangene verpflichtet sich, jede feindliche Handlung gegen Deutschland und die deutsche Wehrmacht zu unterlassen. Die Beurlaubung erfolgt bis auf Widerruf. Der Kriegsgefangene ist verpflichtet, auf Befehl einer deutschen Militärbehörde in das Frontstalag zurückzukehren.

Paris, den 17 März 44

Stalag [illegible]

Major und Kommandant

(Unterschrift des Kgf.)

Raymond CHAMPION recounts: "Dad, who spoke German that he had learned during World War I when he was a prisoner in Germany, went to the Kommandantur at the town hall in La Chapelle and talked with the Germans from the La Chapelle office. These were men who had fought alongside him during World War I in Neuville-Saint-Vaast in the Pas-de-Calais.

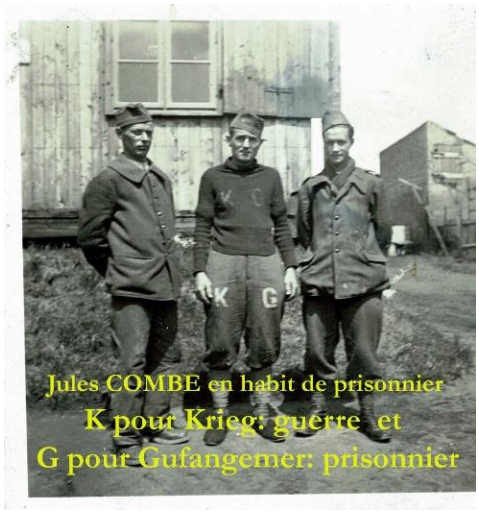
Fernand secured the release of the French prisoners who were then in La Chapelle. Mrs. PREVOST, the town hall secretary whose husband was also a prisoner in Germany, was amazed and said, 'I hope my husband will be just as lucky.

Unfortunately, her husband was not so lucky. He did not return home until 1945.

Testimony of Rolande Fleureau: "Rolande took the train from Bourron to deliver a letter from her parents to the Kommandantur in Melun, asking for their son Robert, who was being held prisoner by the Germans, to be released so that he could return home and help with the farm work.
Their request was denied. But perhaps this was fortunate, as the Fleureau family could have been accused of collaborating with the enemy."

Prisoners first in France, then transferred to Germany

Several Villarons were prisoners at the Melun Frontstalag, such as Roger POIRIER and Jean SOUMIER; they were then sent to a Stalag in Germany. Other Villarons were first held in a Fronstalag in France and then sent to a Stalag in Germany. These included Jules COMBE at the Metz Fronstalag



No. 112, Gabriel PELLETIER at the Fronstalag in Le Mans, André GRAPPERON at the Fronstalag in Péronne.
All three were then sent to a stalag in Germany.
The following were sent directly to prisoner-of-war camps in Germany: Fernand CHAMAUX, Marce lFLEUREAU, Robert FLEUREAU, and Pierre TOUZALIN.
In France, there were stalags in Strasbourg, Metz, Mulhouse, Troyes, Saumur, Saint-Lo, and many others.
Seine-et-Marne had 14,963 prisoners. In July 1940, French prisoners were held in camps in Melun, Meaux, and Montereau. During the winter of 1940-41, the last prisoners who were still in Seine-et-Marne were transferred to Germany.

Living conditions for prisoners of war in the camps

At the Meaux camp, prisoners were in a state of utter destitution. In July 1940, the Red Cross came every other day to distribute a meager but essential ration of bread to the prisoners. It also reported that they urgently needed pasta, dried vegetables, and above all insecticides, as head lice and body lice were rampant.

The prison camps cover several hectares and are surrounded by two three-meter-high barbed wire fences. Watchtowers with searchlights are placed at regular intervals. The entire area is monitored by armed guards accompanied by fierce dogs. The men are housed in wooden barracks, with 200 men per barrack. Food is insufficient, as are heating and clothing, not to mention the overcrowding. Parcels are welcome.
In Germany, the situation is dire for prisoners held in Stalag II-B (Faleingbostel), a camp described as a disciplinary camp, where the men are also subjected to physical abuse.

Rolande FLEUREAU recounts: "My brother Robert FLEUREAU and Emile ROHEE were in the same regiment. They were taken prisoner at the same time. They walked together, supporting each other. In his prison camp, Emile was tied to a post and had to walk around it so that he was always in the sun. Emile deliberately broke his leg in Germany so that he could be repatriated. When he returned to France, he climbed onto the back of a priest to get off the train. He then had surgery on his leg at Val-de-Grâce."

Once back in France, Robert and Emile quickly reunited, and Emile married Robert's sister.



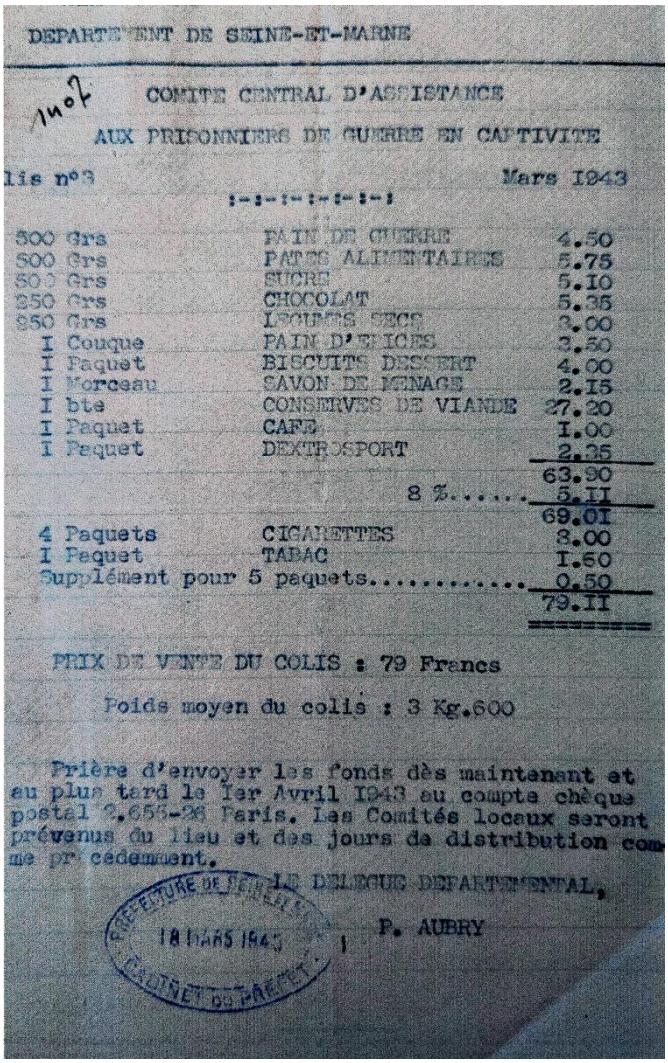
Stalag IB en Pologne

Government aid for prisoners

Aid for prisoners was organized very quickly. The French government created a central committee to assist prisoners of war. In addition, the Secours National created the Maison du Prisonnier de Seine-et-Marne to send food parcels.

Prisoners are allowed to receive one 5 kg parcel by rail every two months plus one 1 kg parcel per month. The following items are permitted in parcels: sugar, chocolate, dates and dried figs, smoked pork belly, dry sausage, mortadella, canned vegetables, dried fruit, salted butter in tins, sweetened condensed milk, canned fruit, sardines in oil, and 450 grams of tobacco per month.

Many items that could be used to escape are prohibited in parcels, as are newspapers, civilian clothing, perishable goods, and glass containers holding liquids.



DEPARTEMENT DE SEINE-ET-MARNE

1402 COMITE CENTRAL D'ASSISTANCE

AUX PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE EN CAPTIVITE

lis n°3 Mars 1943

500 Grs	PAIN DE GUERRE	4.50
500 Grs	PATES ALIMENTAIRES	5.75
500 Grs	SUCRE	5.10
250 Grs	CHOCOLAT	5.35
250 Grs	LEGUMES SECS	3.00
I Couque	PAIN D'EPICES	3.50
I Paquet	BISCUITS DESSERT	4.00
I Morceau	SAVON DE MENAGE	2.15
I bte	CONSERVES DE VIANDE	27.20
I Paquet	CAFE	I.00
I Paquet	DEXTROSPORT	2.35
		63.90
	8 %.....	5.II
		69.0I
4 Paquets	CIGARETTES	8.00
I Paquet	TABAC	I.60
Supplément pour 5 paquets.....		0.50
		79.II

PRIX DE VENTE DU COLIS : 79 Francs

Poids moyen du colis : 3 Kg.600

Prière d'envoyer les fonds dès maintenant et au plus tard le 1er Avril 1943 au compte chèque postal 2.655-26 Paris. Les Comités locaux seront prévenus du lieu et des jours de distribution comme précédemment.

LE DELEGUE DEPARTEMENTAL,

P. AUBRY

PREFECTURE DE SEINE-ET-MARNE 18 MARS 1943 CABINET DU PREFET

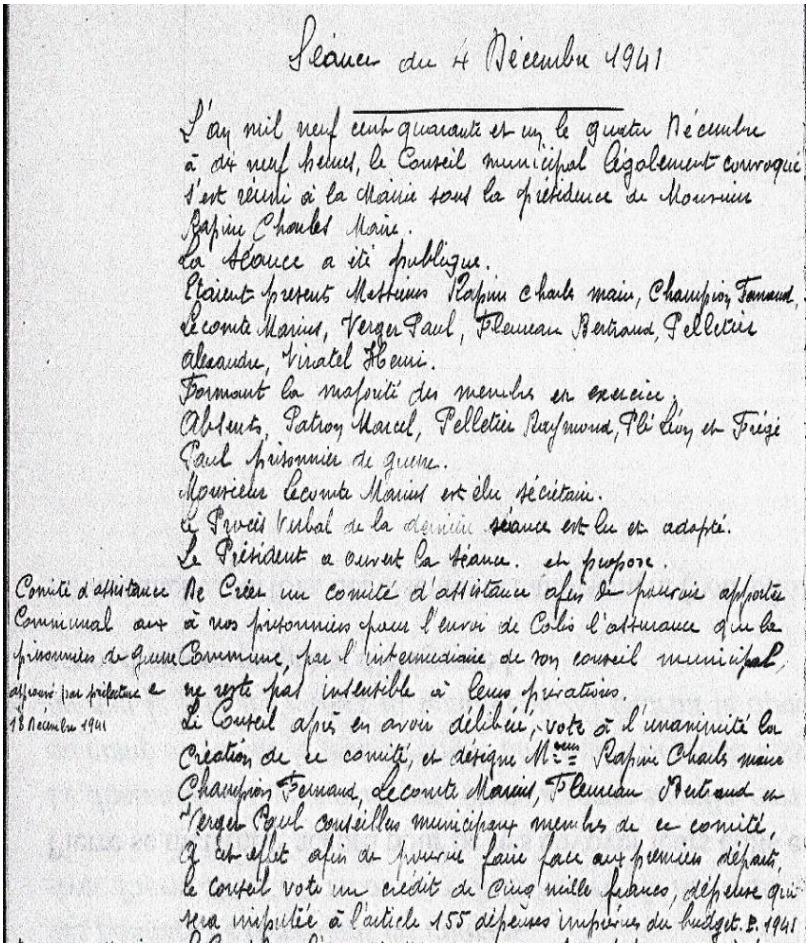
Sending warm clothing

Sweaters, scarves, and visible woolen garments must be khaki in color. These woolen clothing items were greatly appreciated by prisoners during the winter, when cold weather and snow were abundant.

Monitoring the morality of prisoners' wives.

On August 17, 1943, the director of the Seine-et-Marne Prisoners' Home wrote to the prefect to report that a man living in Nemours, already sentenced by the Fontainebleau court to three months in prison for cohabiting with the wife of a prisoner, mother of two children, continues to live with this woman in Grez-sur-Loing, without working, that is to say, living off the prisoner's wife. The director requests the removal of "this sad character."

Assistance from the municipality of Villiers



Séance du 4 Décembre 1941

L'an mil neuf cent quarante et un le quatre Décembre à dix heures, le Conseil municipal légalement convoqué s'est réuni à la Mairie sous la présidence de Monsieur Rapine Charles Maire.
La séance a été publique.
Etaient présent Messieurs Rapine Charle maire, Champion Fernand, Lecomte Marius, Verger Paul, Fleureau Bertrand, Pelletier Alexandre, Viratel Henri.
Formant la majorité des membres en exercice,
Absents, Patron Marcel, Pelletier Raymond, Pleclay en Frigé Paul prisonnier de guerre.
Monsieur Lecomte Marius est élu secrétaire.
Le Procès Verbal de la dernière séance est lu et adopté.
Le Président a ouvert la séance et propose.

Comité d'assistance Communal aux prisonniers de guerre
approuvé par préfecture le 18 Décembre 1941

De Créer un comité d'assistance afin de pourvoir apporter à nos prisonniers pour l'envoi de Colis d'assurance d'une Commune, par l'intermédiaire de son conseil municipal, ne reste pas inutile à leurs privations.
Le Conseil après en avoir délibéré, vote à l'unanimité la Création de ce comité, et désigne Mrs Rapine Charle maire Champion Fernand, Lecomte Marius, Fleureau Bertrand et Verger Paul conseillers municipaux membres de ce comité, à cet effet afin de pourvoir faire face aux premiers départs, le Conseil vote un crédit de Cinq mille francs, dépense qui sera inscrite à l'article 155 dépenses imprévues du budget. E. 1941

Decisions of the municipal council: On November 3, 1940, organization on Sunday, November 10, of a "day" for sending a package to prisoners, and vote for a subsidy of 600 francs.
On December 4, 1941, creation of a local committee to assist prisoners. This committee was made up of Charles Rapine, mayor, Fernand Champion, Marius Lecomte, Bertrand Fleureau, and Paul Verger. A credit of 5,000 francs was voted for the first parcels to be sent to prisoners.
On January 9, 1942, a collection for prisoners raised 2,380 francs, which was paid to the local assistance committee.

On July 15, 1942, a subsidy of 1,000 francs was voted for the Abeille school cooperative to organize concerts, the proceeds of which would be donated to the local committee for the assistance of prisoners of war to send parcels to prisoners.

On February 16, 1944, a subsidy of 10,000 francs was voted to the prisoner assistance committee for sending parcels.

Aid from the Red Cross

The International Red Cross in Geneva sent parcels and mail to prisoners. On October 10, 1944, Yvonne COMBE wrote a short letter to her husband Jules at Stalag XII F.

"Healthy family. We eagerly await news. Love."



MESSAGE A TRANSMETTRE — Nouvelles d'ordre familial exclusivement.
Ecrire lisiblement et sur les lignes.
NACHRICHT ZU ÜBERMITTELN — Ausschliesslich Familiennachrichten.
Bitte deutlich und auf der Linie schreiben.

Famille bonne santé. Atten-
dons impatiemment nouvelle
Tendresse.

Stalag XII F
Nr. 12

Lieu
Datum 10-10-1944
Signature
Unterschrift Y. Combe

Franc de port.
Portofrei.

Prisoners were allowed to write to their families, but their letters were, of course, subject to German censorship, which opened the letters, made anything deemed unsuitable illegible, and resealed the envelopes with tape.

Fundraising for prisoners

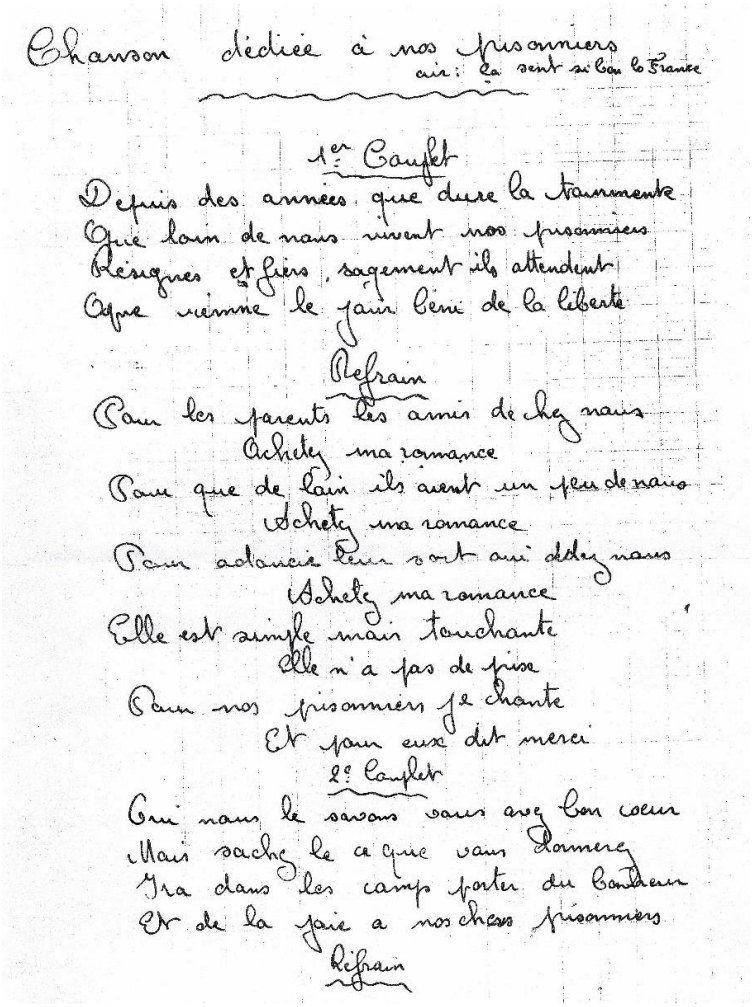
On January 9, 1942, the Fontainebleau newspaper L'Informateur published a list of donors from the village to a collection organized for the benefit of prisoners. The collection raised 2,380 francs.
On February 29, 1944, the collection for prisoners raised 7,340 francs, and in March 1944, 2,800 francs were raised to send parcels.

To occupy, entertain, and cheer up prisoners.

In prisoner-of-war camps, shows are organized by prisoner theater actors. Some French theater troupes travel to German camps to entertain prisoners.
Imprisoned teachers continued their work and managed to organize primary school exams in their stalag in conjunction with the Melun school district, as did Pierre PREVOST, the teacher from
La Chapelle-la-Reine.
Handymen collected pieces of wood and metal and used the few materials at their disposal to make trinkets.

Always remember those who are there against their will

To ensure we don't forget the prisoners, a song is improvised to the tune of a well-known song from the period.



Chanson dédiée à nos prisonniers
air : Ça sent si bon la France

1er Couplet
Depuis des années que dure la tourmente
Que loin de nous vivent nos prisonniers
Peines et joies, sagement ils attendent
Que revienne le jour béni de la liberté

Refrain
Dans les foyers les amis de chez nous
Achetez ma romance
Dans que de loin ils aient un peu de nous
Achetez ma romance
Dans adversité leur sort est aussi dédié nous
Achetez ma romance
Elle est simple mais touchante
Elle n'a pas de prise
Dans nos prisonniers je chante
Et pour eux dit merci

2e Couplet
Qui nous le savons vous avez bon cœur
Mais sachez le ce que vous donnerez
Ira dans les camps porter du bonheur
Et de la joie à nos chers prisonniers

Refrain

THE EXODUS

Evacuation orders and counter-orders

On May 29, the prefect of Seine-et-Marne addressed the mayors and reminded them that roads and communication routes must be reserved for the needs of the army (the roads were already congested with refugees from Belgium, the north, and the Ardennes). Any withdrawal of the civilian population from Seine-et-Marne was prohibited, mayors were not to assist any of their constituents in leaving, and they were required to report anyone who had evacuated without orders.

On June 8, the Battle of the Somme was lost. On June 10, a new German attack took place on the Aisne, heading south and directly threatening Paris. An order to evacuate the Parisian population to protect them from the risks of combat was given verbally: "DON'T WAIT, LEAVE!"

On June 11, the great departure takes place, with mandatory signposted routes to cross Paris. Then on to Fontainebleau, Nemours, Beaumont-du-Gâtinais, arriving in Gien and crossing the Loire.

On June 14, the French government retreats to Bordeaux. The city of Paris is declared an "open city."

The general evacuation order is given, and public services also leave: the post office, tax office, police, gendarmerie, and schools. All schools in the canton close between June 13 and 15, 1940. Houses must not be locked so that they can accommodate refugees passing through.

The Villarons and the exodus

They did not leave in the exodus:
-Because they had to continue looking after the farm and the animals while their husbands were at war: HUGUET Jeanne, LEFEBVRE Madeleine, who was pregnant with Nadine, MILANDRE Denise, and certainly other families in the same situation.

-Because the grandmother did not want to leave: Rolande FLEUREAU and her parents prepared the horse-drawn carriage to leave, but her grandmother Julie PLÉ did not want them to go, so in the end the whole family stayed in Villiers.

-Because Fortuné CAMPIGOTTO, whose regiment was passing through La Chapelle-la-Reine and who had obtained special permission to make a detour to Villiers, warned his family that the roads were very congested and bombed, and that they should stay in the village and take refuge in the cellar in case of bombing.

-Because they were afraid of adventure and looting: Henri AMIOT and his wife Réjane had filled three horse-drawn carriages to the brim during the day and were ready to leave the next morning. At the moment of departure, Henri no longer wanted to leave. "We're going to walk into the lion's den, they'll take everything we have," he said. It was June 15, 1940, the day before the Germans arrived in the village. The AMIOT family would not have had time to get very far!

Most of the elderly people had stayed in the village, saying to themselves, "We'll see what happens. At our age, we don't have much to fear anymore..."

They left in exodus

Jacqueline PELLETIER **recounts**: "We had seen refugees from Belgium and northern France passing by with wheelbarrows, baby carriages, bicycles, and horse-drawn carts. Then it was our turn. In Villiers, many people had fled, and only the elderly remained in the village."

by train

Henri DEBARD was a railway worker, and his entire family (both parents, a grandmother, and five children)took the train to Nevers to visit one of Henri DEBARD's brothers. During the journey, the train was bombedand the passengers got off the train and lay down near the tracks. The grandmother,who remained on the train, miraculously escaped death. But in Nevers, Henri's brother was unable to accommodate such a large family inhishome.

by car

The CHARPENTIER/SIMONIN family wants to return to Allier, where Henri and Marthe are from.Marthe,
who is pregnant, does not want to leave, saying, "They'll catch up with us," but the men decide to leave.ArmandCHARPENTIER goes ahead on his bicycle to scout the route. Henri SIMONIN drives the car belonging toMrs. REBOUT, a traveling haberdasher from Villiers. The car is packed with Henri, Marthe,and their fourchildren, Jacques, Jacqueline, Marguerite, and Yvonne.
The road is bombed by planes, everyone lies down in the ditches and nearby fields. Once the alert is over,thefamily resumes their journey, but Marthe begins to experience labor pains. In the first village they come to, Montereau in the Loiret, 8 km southeast of Lorris on the road to Gien, Marthe gives birth to Claude in a barn onJune 22, 1940. Armand is reunited with his family and the newborn baby!
The Charpentier family corresponds with this family from Montereau for a long time afterward.

Testimony from Yvonne CHARPENTIER: "The whole family moved into an open farmhouse that had been abandoned by its inhabitants. Jacques (14) and Jacqueline (13) fed the animals, milked the cows, sold eggs and milk to passersby, and put all the money in a clay pot. When the farm owners returned from their exile, they found their house had not been looted, the animals had been cared for, and the money from the sale of milk and eggs was still there.
Meanwhile, Dad had cycled to Gien, but the bridge over the Loire had been blown up. Dad retraced his route and whistled loudly as he passed through each village. Dad had a very distinctive whistle that his older children knew well. Suddenly, Jacques and Jacqueline heard and recognized their father's whistle."

The PASMANT family takes advantage of a cousin's Citroën car from Paris, which has five people in it and is passing through Villiers. Nine-year-old Gérard, his mother, uncle follow on their bicycles, but Gérard quickly tires. Gérard gets into the car and his tied to the bumper.

Gérard recounts: "The first night was spent in a ditch near Puiseaux, the second night in Lorris in an abandoned house. On the road that was supposed to take us to Sully-sur-Loire, we had to run and hide in the woods to avoid being strafed by planes. We had to change our route: the bridge at Sully had been bombed, as had the one at Gien, and the cables of the suspension bridge at Chatillon had been cut, causing the deck to collapse into the river. As we traveled up the Loire, hoping to find a crossing, we discovered that all the bridges were unusable.



Wewent as far asPouilly-sur-Loire, where wefound shelter in the cellar of anabandoned house,and it was inPouillythat I sawGerman soldiers for the first time."

Then it was back to Villiers, where the house was occupied by German soldiers who broke down the doors and made themselves at home, making beds on the floor with sheets and blankets. The soldiers left stealing linen, cooking equipment, a bicycle, etc. VERNEY Auguste and his family left in their Renault car.

by car on horseback


exode à Nemours

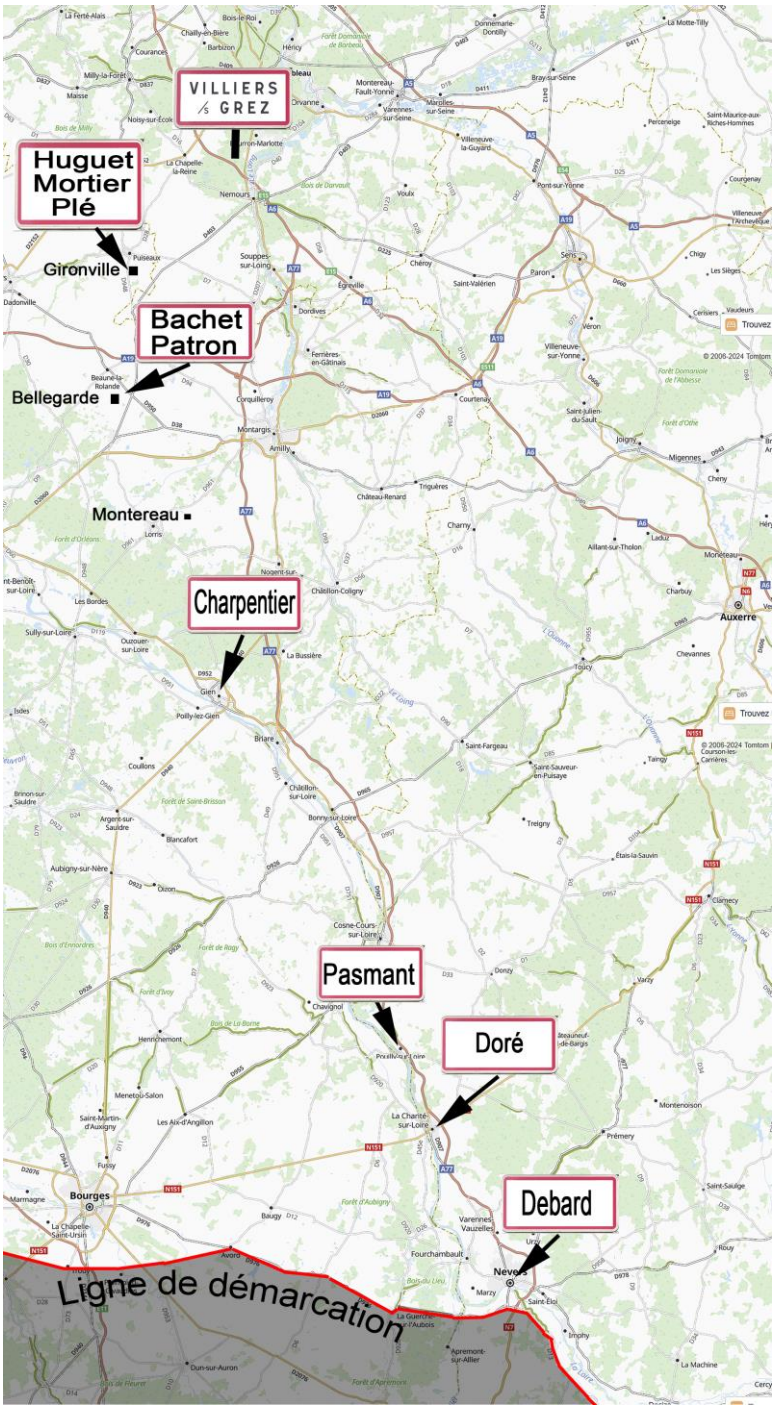
VOCELLE Lucette (whose husband was in the war) and her parents left for Montargis and returned to Villiers.

PELLETIER Raymond and his wife Marcelle set off in a horse-drawn carriage loaded with provisions, linen and mattresses. His daughter Jacqueline and Roland, Raymond's brother, followed on their bicycles to Larchant. Seeing in the côte du chapitre, cars that couldn't get in and that were getting in the way, dead horses on the low-cote, a few French military lorries in the midst of the general panic and chaos, Raymond decided not to continue and to return immediately. The exodus lasted a day. Marcelle's relatives, who were already quite old, had said: "We're not afraid of anything any more, go away, we'll keep the house and look after the animals.

HUGUET Edouard, his wife and children let the animals out into the yard, fill the trough, leave some fodder for the cows and leave in the horse-drawn carriage. Then the unmilked cows, their udders swollen, bellowed desperately until neighbours came to milk them and give them something to eat.

MORTIER Aimé on a bicycle, his wife Berthe on a bicycle and their 2 young boys are in a group with the family of Edouard HUGUET and the family of Camille PLE, his wife, his two young daughters and his horse-drawn carriage. The 4 children are perched on mattresses in the horse-drawn carriage, which also contains food, and bicycles hung after the guards.

Direction the Loire. As they climbed the hill to the Larchant chapter, they saw dead horses and cannons abandoned by the French army. While they were on the tarmac road, the Germans drove through the fields. When they arrived at Gironville in an empty farmhouse belonging to Camille's family, they all settled in for the night. Berthe milked the cows lying in the yard.



The next day, Camille, Edouard, and Aimé put their three hunting rifles in a French army iron container, which they threw into the Gironville pond.

The three families stayed in Gironville for a few days before returning to Villiers. The MORTIER parents returned by bicycle: Aimé with five-year-old Raymond on his shoulders and Berthe with two-year-old Robert tied behind her. The men wanted to retrieve their rifles from the Gironville pond, but the container had disappeared.

The BACHET and PATRON families left together by horse-drawn carriage. Fernande BACHET with her children and Claudine NEVEU in the tapestry carriage to Bellegarde. The Germans prevented them from crossing the Loire, so they all returned to Villiers accompanied by Father SOUMIER in a van.

by bike

André SURGET lived at No. 35 in the Grand Cour, and Marcel, Georges, and Roger LOISEAU lived at No. 37 with their father.The four young men set off on their bicycles. When they arrived in Nemours, they couldn't continue by road because Nemours was closed off, so they rode along the railroad tracks.

Later, André became separated from the LOISEAU brothers, who then returned with a horse-drawn cart they had found along the way. They later returned the horse and cart.

Father Romain LOISEAU, aged 65 and seriously ill, was found dead in his bed by Raymond PELLETIER on June 16, 1940. With no carpenter left in the village to make the coffin, Raymond PELLETIER, a farmer, and Léon SURGET, a mason, made the coffin themselves using whatever materials they had to hand. The mason Edouard LEPAGE acted as gravedigger. When looters came by and found Father "Moigneau" dead in his bed, they closed the door without taking anything. The neighboring SURGET house was also spared from looting.

When they returned to the village, the LOISEAU boys found their father buried. When André returned home 10 days after his departure, he found the rabbits from the lower hutches running free in the yard (they must have gnawed through the wooden doors) and the rabbits from the upper hutches had eaten all the manure in their hutches.

On foot



Robert DORE, father of three children, had not been called to the front at the start of the war. He was a reservist. Shortly before the exodus, he received orders to report to a factory in Gironde to work. He set off on his bicycle. When he arrived at his destination, he was told that he was not needed, so he returned to Villiers, again by bicycle. At that point, he had no news of his family, who had left during the exodus and had not yet returned home.

Ms. DORE Marie, with her mother, her mother-in-law, her children Simone, aged 7 and a half, Bernard, aged 6 and a half, and Jean, aged 1 and a half, in his pram, set off on foot towards the Loire.

They are bombed by Italian or German planes. They lie down in a ditch, the mother holding Jean close to her. They make their way to La Charité-sur-Loire. The family is picked up by the Germans, put on a train, and scattered among Parisian hospitals. Bernard and Simone catch whooping cough there.

During the exodus, the family sleeps in a house where there is an elderly couple. During the night, a German soldier who had spotted the very pretty Mrs. DORE broke a shutter and asked where the pretty lady was. She had hidden in a shed behind a barrel, and the German soldier did not see her and left. The next morning, Mrs. DORE went to the Kommandantur to file a complaint. She recognized the man who had come; he was a German officer.

The great chaos

Families separated during the exodus:

Grandmother DORE, separated from the rest of her family, returns alone to Villiers.

Henri DEBARD, also separated from his wife and children, returned alone to Villiers on July 17 after escaping death in a warehouse explosion. Armed with an Ausweis issued by the Kommandantur in La Chapelle-la-Reine, he went to fetch his family from the hospital in St Armand-Montrond in the Cher department. All the children had contracted whooping cough.



Die Ortskommandantur
L.Sch.Batl. 451.

La Chapelle la Reine, 18.7.40.
Feldpostn. 02512.

Ausweis.

Herr Henri D e b a r d, wohnhart zu Villers-sous-Grez, ist berechtigt, am 23.7.40 mit der Eisenbahn nach St. Amand(Cher) zu fahren, um dort seine kranke schwangere Frau zu besuchen.

Rueckfahrt erfolgt voraussichtlich innerhalb von fuenf Tagen.

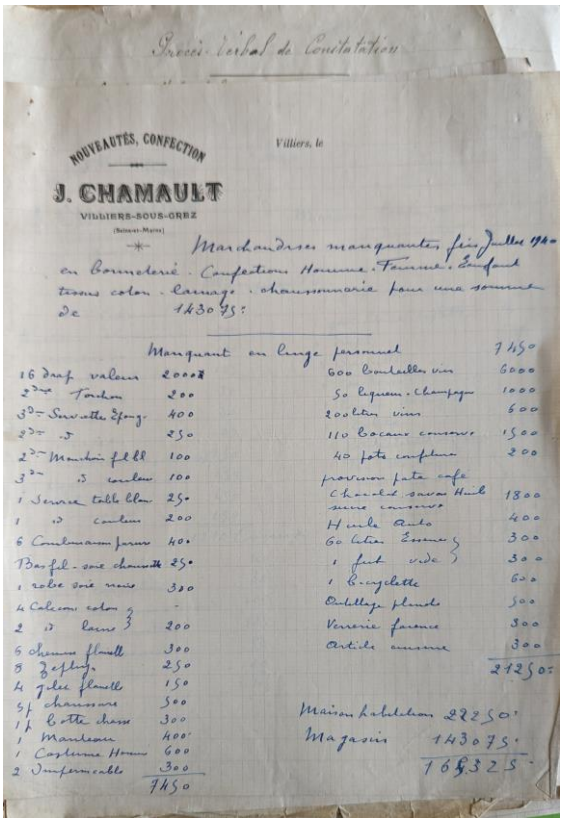
Der Ortskommandant:
i.V.
Oberfeldwebel

Ausweis établi à la Kommandantur de La Chapelle-la-Reine

Abandoned or lost animals:

Raymond CHAMPION recounts: "During the exodus, a shod ox that must have been part of a family's convoy escaped and entered the first house in the village with an open door, which was the CAMPIGOTTO house (at 32 Rue René LEFEBVRE). Marguerite, panicked, went to find her neighbor Fernand CHAMPION, who took the ox to his home. Since no one came to claim the ox, after a few days Ferdinand BARBIER, a former butcher, slaughtered the ox and cut it up at his home (a former butcher shop) at 9 Rue Bachet. The meat was sold to raise money for the prisoners' care packages."

The return to the village


Procès Verbal de Constatation

NOUVEAUTÉS, CONFECTION

J. CHAMAULT

VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

Villiers, le

Marchandises manquantes, fin Juillet 1940

Manquant en linge personnel 7450

Maison habitation 22250

Magasin 143075

16 draps valeur 2000

600 bouteilles vin 6000

50 liqueurs champagne 1000

200 litres vin 600

110 boccaux conserves 1500

40 pots confiture 200

provision pâte café 1800

Chocolat savon Huile sucre conserves

Huile Auto 400

60 Litres Essence 300

1 fut vide 300

1 Bicyclette 600

Outillage plomb 500

Verrerie faïence 300

Articles ménage 300

21250

1 Costume Homme 600

2 Imperméables 300

7450

165325

Roadside weapons and ammunition

On their way back from exile, several families saw large quantities of ammunition abandoned by fleeing French soldiers on the side of the road.

Looted houses

Upon returning to their homes, the residents who had fled found that most of their houses had been looted to some extent. The Charpentier family's house had been broken into, and the children's toys and other items had been stolen or broken.

Gérard PASMANT: "Upon returning from exile, the PASMANT family found that the Germans had broken down the doors of their house, opened the cupboards, and set up beds on the floor with sheets and blankets. When they saw the children, they agreed to leave and departed, taking with them linens, kitchen equipment, a bicycle, and other items."

Several lists kept at the town hall list the families affected and the items that have disappeared.

The DEBARD house was looted, with damages amounting to 5,380 francs. The GIGOT family (dentists) left on June 12 after locking everything up. A bailiff's report dated October 4, 1940 describes a house that had been completely ransacked, with furniture broken. Many items were missing, including linens and dishes.

The CHAMAULT clothing store and the CHAMAULT residence were completely ransacked; clothing, bedding, kitchen equipment, provisions, tools, gasoline, etc. were missing. The total estimated loss was 165,325 francs at the time.

Upon returning home, the DORE family found their house and forge ransacked. Blacksmith's tools, a woman's bicycle, linens, and clothing were missing, with a total estimated value of 1,896 francs.

Narcisse PETIT has not recovered a clock, medals, clothing, household linen, a case of fine wine, all worth a total of 9,465 francs.
Auguste VERNET, who was away from home from 3 p.m. on June 15 to 9 p.m. on June 20, returned to find his house emptied of various items and linen worth 4,655 francs.
The home and shop of the ECONOMIQUES TROYENS were also looted, but the details of the damage are unknown. It is only reported that part of the stock and tools disappeared in June 1940.

Who committed all these acts of looting?

People passing through, that is to say, other people fleeing the area, helped themselves to objects or food they needed, but certainly also the Villarons who had not fled and went to help themselves in houses they knew to be abandoned. Later, Mrs. DORE, who was taking her husband's bills to the farmers, recognized some of her belongings in a few houses, but she did not claim anything.
Exasperated, on August 25, 1940, the mayor ordered the inhabitants, under penalty of legal proceedings, to deposit any objects that did not belong to them and that might be in their homes at the town hall within 48 hours. It is not known whether the mayor's order was followed...



RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

DÉPARTEMENT DE SEINE-& MARNE
ARRONDISSEMENT de MELUN
MAIRIE DE Villiers-sous-Grez

Villiers-sous-Grez, le 25 Aout 1940.

Avis

Le Maire informe les habitants qu'il est prescrit à toute personne, ayant chez elle des objets quels qu'ils soient, ne leur appartenant pas, de les déposer ou d'en faire la déclaration à la Mairie dans les 48 heures. Ceux qui ne se conformeraient pas à cette prescription, s'exposent à des sanctions judiciaires.

Villiers sous Grez le 25 Août 1940.
Le Maire

The start of the school year

After the debacle, classes gradually resumed in July 1940 with limited enrollment, and for Villiers, the school year did not begin until October 1, 1940, due to a lack of teachers in July.
A total of 8 million French people fled the country.

THE GERMANS OCCUPY THE VILLAGE

The arrival of the Germans

During the night of June 13-14, 1940, the sound of cannon fire could be heard in the distance in Villiers. At dawn on June 14, the Germans entered a deserted Paris. On the afternoon of June 15, the electricity was cut off in Villiers, leaving the village without light or radio to receive news.

On Sunday, June 16, around 2:30/3:00 p.m., the first German soldiers arrived in the village on bicycles, riding through the streets in all directions, asking if there were any French or Senegalese soldiers in the village. There were no soldiers or Senegalese in Villiers. Then, coming from Bourron and heading towards Larchant, around 2,000 motorcyclists arrived noisily, soon followed by numerous trucks and men on foot or on horseback. It was a never-ending parade. A German military telephone was quickly installed in the center of the village, to the general amazement of the Villarons.

On June 17, two horse-drawn mobile kitchens arrived and supplied the German soldiers with food and the horses with oats.

Testimony of René AMIOT: "At our house, at the beginning of the German occupation, the german truck was parked on the right just after the gate. The German soldiers gave us a few odds and ends; the meat was inthe cellar. Then they left."

Testimony of Raymond MORTIER: "When the French left, the German infirmary arrived in our courtyard with two horses driven by elderly Germans. They did not get out of the car and then went with an officer to the baker's."

On June 18, a German contingent moved into the village houses.

On June 20, food supplies had been running low for a week: there was no more meat or butter, just a few cheeses and eggs left on some farms.

At 10 p.m. on June 24, the unusual ringing of the church bell alerted residents that the armistice had been signed. France had surrendered. The very next day, the victors imposed their will.

On June 25, posters announced the new measures taken by the Germans. On June 27, 1940, the French government moved to Vichy.

The first measures taken by the Germans

On Tuesday, June 25, Marshal Pétain announced the terms of the armistice.

The main measures were:
-German occupation of more than half of France.
-Demobilization of the French armies.
-Surrender of military equipment to the Germans.
-Disarming of the French fleet in ports.

The occupation of the village by the Germans



Villiers is in the zone occupied by the Germans, who have already settled throughout the village in empty houses and even in those occupied by the French.
The officers are staying in the bourgeois houses, the soldiers in the farms and other houses. The Kommandantur is setting up at Vincent HYSPA's house at 34 rue de l'Eglise.

Testimony of Rolande FLEUREAU: "During the war, Germans came to the house at 11 Rue de Larchant where I lived with my parents. At first, the Germans wanted us to sleep on the floor so they could take our beds, but in the end they took my room and I had to sleep in my parents' room.
We were terrified of the Germans. The ones whostayed with us weren't too nasty; they had already fought in World War I.But there were younger ones who were clearly looking for women,especially at the Villa des Bois. "

Testimony of Jacqueline PELLETIER: *"At 32 Rue Bachet, at the beginning of the German occupation, German soldiers stayed in the attic above the bedrooms."*

Sometimes unusual situations arise: one evening, the Germans put their horses in the barn at Mathieu's house, 21 Route de Nemours; the next morning, the Germans found their horses in the cellar! During the night, the horses had stamped their feet so hard that they broke through the floor of the barn, which was just above the cellar vault. The horses fell one floor. The story does not say whether the horses were injured.
Houses and barns were requisitioned to store horses, cars, trucks, and food supplies (wheat, oats, fodder, potatoes, etc.).

According to industrial energy records, we know which houses Germans live in based on their electricity consumption:

Du 28 juin au 31 juillet 1940 :

- DOUCHET 23 rue du Buisson
- SOSSON 30 rue de Larchant

Du 30 juin au 30 septembre 1940 :

- AUBRY Alexandrine 35 rue René LEFBVRE

Du 15 juin au 17 octobre 1940 :

- CHAMAULT Jules 15 rue René LEFEBVRE
- CHAMAULT Jules 27 rue de l'Eglise (novelty shop)
- DELION 3 rue René LEFEBVRE
- HUTTE Hubert 3 rue de Nemours
- HYSPA Vincent 34 rue de l'Eglise
- JEANNEROT Marie 23 rue René LEFEBVRE
- LEPAGE André 30 rue de l'Eglise
- MARTIN Gabriel 22 rue de l'Eglise
- PAMPIN Marc 14 rue René LEFEBVRE
- PATERSON 12 rue du Buisson
- TARDIEU 1 rue de Nemours
- VERGER
- VERNEY Auguste
- WOUTERS 8 rue de Larchant

Then, it seems that German soldiers are no longer stationed full-time in the village.

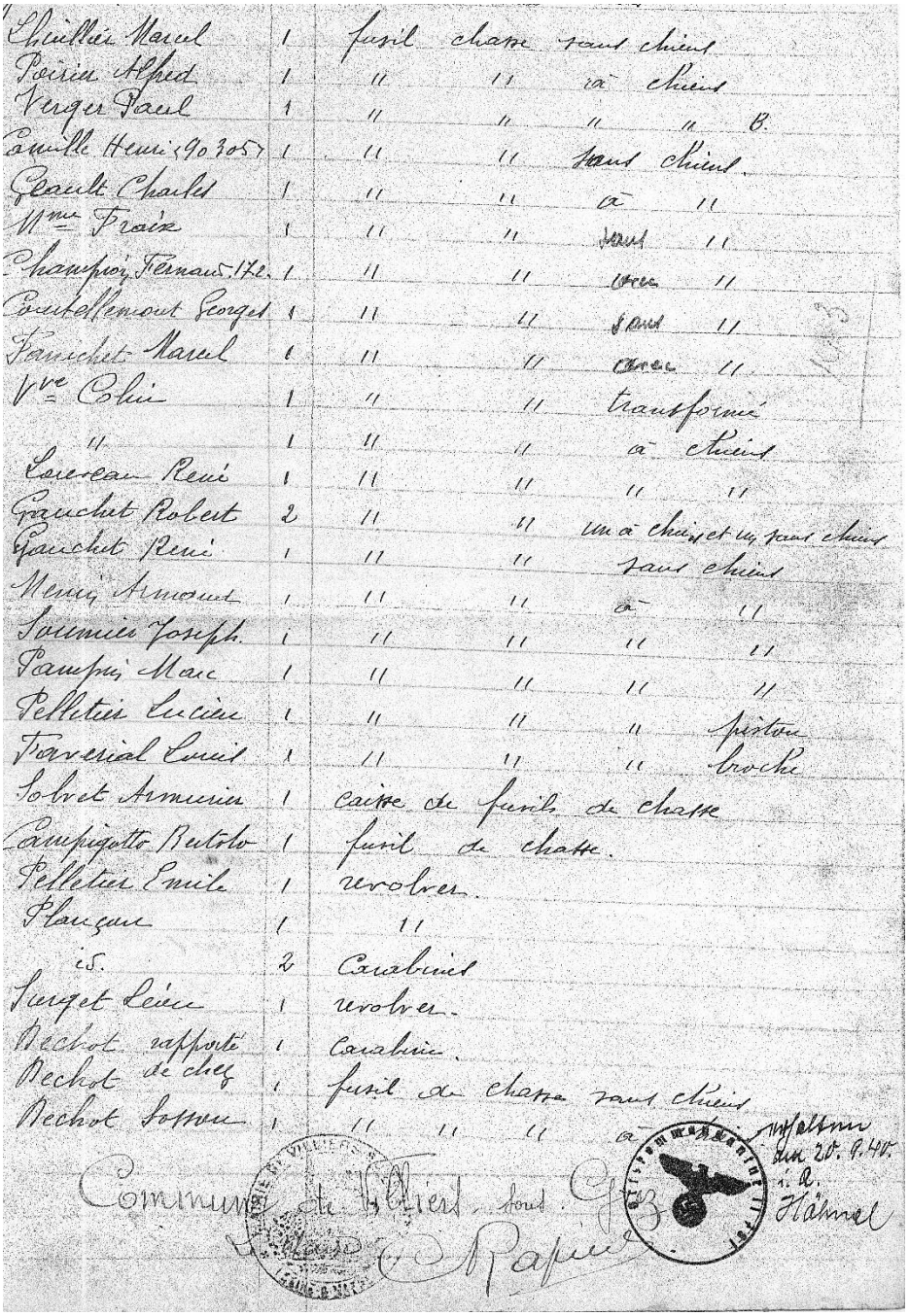
The surrender of arms

The men of the village must take any weapons of war, hunting weapons, or collection guns they may have at home to the town hall.

A list was drawn up on June 30, signed by Mayor Charles RAPINE and bearing the German stamp and signature of the German official HAHMEL. The list includes 5 bolt-action rifles, 26 hunting rifles with dogs, 30 hunting rifles without dogs, 29 carbines, 13 revolvers, and 2 cane guns.

The total of 56 hunting rifles handed in is not surprising in a village of hunters. But many hunters had two rifles: an old model and a newer one. So the old rifles were handed over to the Germans and the newer ones were hidden in the corners of houses or gardens.

This was the case for the MILANDRE family: one rifle was taken to the town hall, but another was hidden in the oat loft. One day, a German soldier went up to the loft to requisition some oats and discovered René's rifle, who was a prisoner. Being a good sport, the German leaned the rifle against the wall and didn't say a word. The rifle was quickly hidden elsewhere.



Chevallier Marcel	1	fusil chasse	sans chien
Poirier Alfred	1	"	" à chien
Verger Paul	1	"	" " B.
Camille Henri (90305)	1	"	" sans chien.
Gerault Charles	1	"	" à "
Mme Fraix	1	"	" sans "
Champion Fernand 172.	1	"	" avec "
Courtellemont Georges	1	"	" sans "
Fauchet Marcel	1	"	" avec "
Vve Colin	1	"	" transformé
"	1	"	" à chien
Lorcreau René	1	"	" "
Gauchet Robert	2	"	" un à chien et un sans chien
Gauchet René	1	"	" sans chien
Menu Armand	1	"	" à "
Soumier Joseph	1	"	" " "
Pampin Marc	1	"	" " "
Pelletier Lucien	1	"	" " Spirton
Parreial Louis	1	"	" " Brocki
Sobret Armand	1	caisse de fusil de chasse	
Campigotto Bertolo	1	fusil de chasse.	
Pelletier Emile	1	revolver.	
Blanquet	1	"	
id.	2	Carabines	
Sergent Léon	1	revolver.	
Dechot rapporté	1	Carabine.	
Dechot de chez	1	fusil de chasse sans chien	
Dechot Simon	1	" " "	à " Inspektion Lux 20. 9. 40. i. A. Hämmel

Commune de Villiers sous Grez

Extract from the weapons registry.

Street sweeping

Testimony of Bernard Bachet: "When the Germans settled in Villiers after the exodus, they gathered all the villagers in the square, handed them brooms, and asked them to sweep the streets. The streets were particularly dirty because the French troops had left with their horses, leaving straw and quite a lot of manure everywhere. It was amusing to see Father DECHOT, who didn't work and lived off his income, forced to use a broom."

This scanning session was confirmed by Raymond CHAMPION and Roland WOUTERS..

Cleaning up the roadsides

Following the exodus, some roadsides were littered with the wrecks of civilian vehicles that had run out of fuel, military vehicles, and ammunition, all abandoned during the French military rout of June 1940. All this scrap metal had to be cleared away, as it was being recovered by the Germans and turned into new military equipment.

Obligation to monitor the Bourron-Malesherbes railway line at night

The Moret-Bourron-Malesherbes railway line, known as the Filay line, which runs north of the Villiers region, is a strategic 26 km junction between the PLM (Paris Lyon Marseille) and PO (Paris Orléans) networks. It is guarded at night by men from the village known as auxiliary track guards, appointed by the mayor to monitor the track and prevent sabotage. To defend themselves or attack potential saboteurs, given that French citizens are prohibited from owning guns, the men are equipped with sticks. Guaranteed effectiveness against potential armed saboteurs from the Resistance!
The locomotives that ran on this strategic track were a little sluggish when climbing the Vignette hill and made a distinctive noise that was familiar to the farmers working in the surrounding fields.

Testimony of Raymond CHAMPION:" During the night, the Germans forced the men of the village to taketurns standing guard over the railroad tracks. It was a guard duty assigned by the mayor. You could get someone to replace you, but you had to report it... It was the old men who stood guard, and they were paid.My father and I, with a hunting rifle, and Gilbert COURTELLEMONT, with a stick, stood guard together in the quarry. A violent rain storm broke out, and Fernand and his son took refuge in the old stable (a wooden hut) for the quarry horses, while Gilbert took shelter under a half-overturned wagon. Another night, they fell asleep in the hut! I would take pancakes or waffles, prepared by Lucie PURSEIGLE, to the cave between the Recloses level crossing and the bridge, very close to the crossing. The cave is now walled up. The guards would listen to the tracks to see if a German patrol was coming, and then they would take up their positions.Nothing happened, no incidents, which is the main thing. If there had been a problem, the guards would have been caught by the Germans. The guards had a pass to move around because there was normally a curfew at night. Father AMIOT (Henri) and Father MORTIER (Aimé) went there several times."

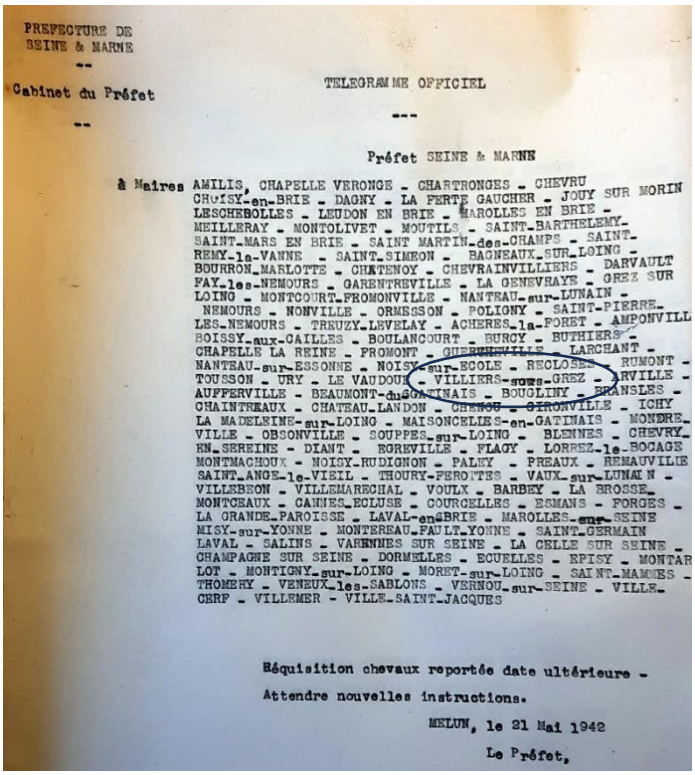
Villiers escaped the clearing of military grounds, train stations, bombed areas, and the monitoring of telephone lines.

Requisitioning of motor vehicles

VERNEYAuguste reports that the German authorities requisitioned items from his home, including a Renault car with 5,300 km on the clock! It was worth 35,750 francs when new and there was luggage inside the car worth 5,605 francs.
Before the Germans arrived, a car belonging to a Parisian merchant was hidden in a barn under a pile of firewood at Aimé MORTIER's house. Marcel PATRON's car was also hidden under a pile of wood or firewood.

Requisitions of horses, agricultural equipment, and miscellaneous items

Upon their arrival, the Germans wanted to know the sowing declarations for wheat, oats, and beets. In 1940, probably in July, farm horses had to be taken to the German requisitioning office at Pré Chamblain in Melun. One farmer brought a mare that was in heat, which caused a great commotion and a joyful chaos in the field where stallions and geldings were kept. Overwhelmed by the situation, the Germans sent home those who arrived with new horses. What became of the mare and the slightly agitated horses?



PREFECTURE DE
SEINE & MARNE
--
Cabinet du Préfet
--

TELEGRAMME OFFICIEL

Préfet SEINE & MARNE

à Maires AMILIS, CHAPELLE VERONGE - CHARTRONGES - CHEVRU
CHOISY-en-BRIE - DAGNY - LA FERTE GAUCHER - JOUY SUR MORIN
LESCHEBOLLES - LEUDON EN BRIE - MAROLLES EN BRIE -
MEILLERAY - MONTOLIVET - MOUTILS - SAINT-BARTHELEMY-
SAINT-MARS EN BRIE - SAINT MARTIN-des-CHAMPS - SAINT-
REMY-la-VANNE - SAINT-SIMEON - BAGNEAUX-SUR-LOING -
BOURRON-MARLOTTE - CHATENOY - CHEVRAINVILLIERS - DARVAULT
FAY-les-NEMOURS - GARENTREVILLE - LA GENEVRAYE - GREZ SUR
LOING - MONTCOURT-FROMONVILLE - NANTEAU-sur-LUNAIN -
NEMOURS - NONVILLE - ORNESSON - POLIGNY - SAINT-PIERRE-
LES-NEMOURS - TREUZY-LEVELAY - ACHERES-la-FORET - AMPONVILL
BOISSY-aux-CAILLES - BOULANCOURT - BURCY - BUTHIERS -
CHAPELLE LA REINE - FROMONT - GUERCHEVILLE - LARCHANT -
NANTEAU-sur-ESSONNE - NOISY-sur-ECOLE - RECLOSES - RUMONT -
TOUSSON - URY - LE VAUDOUE - VILLIERS-sous-GREZ - ARVILLE -
AUFFERVILLE - BEAUMONT-du-GATINAIS - BOUGLIGNY - BRANSLES -
CHAINTREAUX - CHATEAU-LANDON - CHENOU - CIRONVILLE - ICHY
LA MADELEINE-sur-LOING - MAISONCELLES-en-GATINAIS - MONDRE-
VILLE - OBSONVILLE - SOUPPES-sur-LOING - BLENNES - CHEVRY-
EN-SEREINE - DIANT - EGREVILLE - FLAGY - LORREZ-le-BOCAGE
MONTMACHOUX - NOISY-RUDIGNON - PALEY - PREAUX - REMAUVILLE
SAINT-ANGE-le-VIEIL - THOURY-FEROTTES - VAUX-sur-LUNAIN -
VILLEBEON - VILLEMARECHAL - VOULX - BARBEY - LA BROSSE-
MONTCEAUX - CANIES-ECLUSE - COURCELLES - ESMANS - FORGES -
LA GRANDE-PAROISSE - LAVAL-en-BRIE - MAROLLES-sur-SEINE
MISY-sur-YONNE - MONTEREAU-FAULT-YONNE - SAINT-GERMAIN
LAVAL - SALINS - VARENNES SUR SEINE - LA CELLE SUR SEINE -
CHAMPAGNE SUR SEINE - DORMELLES - ECUELLES - EPISY - MONTAR
LOT - MONTIGNY-sur-LOING - MORET-sur-LOING - SAINT-MAMMES -
THOMERY - VENEUX-les-SABLONS - VERNOU-sur-SEINE - VILLE-
CERF - VILLEMER - VILLE-SAINT-JACQUES

Réquisition chevaux reportée date ultérieure -
Attendre nouvelles instructions.

MELUN, le 21 Mai 1942

Le Préfet,

October 9, 1940: requirement to present horses loaned by German troops or abandoned by French or German troops at Melun, at the Chamblain meadow.

On May 1, 1942, the Germans wanted to requisition 15,000 more horses in addition to the 52,000 already acquired. They did not take into account the fact that agriculture, having no more gasoline, could only rely on animal traction. The plan was to requisition horses in the free zone. Finally, on May 25, 1942, the prefect of Seine-et-Marne sent a telegram to the mayors stating that the mobilization of horses was postponed to a later date. Farmers came to the town hall to report that they had been victims of crop requisitions by the Germans. On September 1, 1940, Edouard HUGUET had to provide 650 kg of oats and a field of seed, all worth 1,150 francs.

On September 14, 1940, postman René MARION had his two bicycles, worth 1,550 francs, confiscated.

Sheep wool was also requisitioned.
Certificate from the DELION family with an estimated value of 14,900 francs of missing equipment without having received requisition vouchers.

René VANNI, a merchant, had food, linen, and crockery worth a total of 15,311 francs requisitioned.
Only these few reports can be found in the town hall, but there were surely many others.

As a precaution, the villagers hid their valuables, jewelry, banknotes, bottles of spirits and champagne and weapons that had not been handed over to the Germans, in the cellar, the garden, the attic, or far buildings..



The Germans painted inscription on the facades of houses t indicate whether they had bee requisitioned (letters NAOD) or as in this photo, their capacity t accommodate soldiers. Near th head of the person on the right you can see the letters COAA 25 which means accommodation fo 25 people. This photo was take during the liberation, in Villiers, a 2 Rue Gabriel BACHET, near th location of the commemorativ plaque.

Respecting the French civilian population

One day, Denise MILANDRE was violently jostled by a German soldier, leaving her with a black eye. Denise complained to the German commander of the village. He lined up his men and asked Denise to identify the culprit, but Denise did not recognize him. Otherwise, the guilty party would have had a rough time, because the Germans did not take the order to "be kind to the French civilian population" lightly.

German time

From October 20, 1940, all of France was required to switch to German time, i.e., Berlin time, which is our current daylight saving time.

The German flag

The harvest was threshed in September–October 1940. To feed the threshers, Raymond CHAMPION had to go and get meat from the butcher in Larchant. The Larchant Villiers road was closed because of German ammunition depots, so he took the Dame Jouanne road. Coming out of the woods and arriving at the Larchant cemetery, he saw a huge German flag flying at the top of the tower, which came as a real shock to him. Ever since, every time he takes this road, Raymond thinks of the German flag flying at the top of the tower.

The curfew

From September 1940 onwards, no lights were to be visible from outside at night, either in the streets or in the courtyards of houses. Street lighting was turned off, shutters were closed, and windows without shutters were covered with dark blue paint. This measure was intended to prevent enemy bombing, as even the slightest light was clearly visible from an airplane.

Residents were prohibited from walking in the village streets at night, under penalty of being reported and considered a suspect.

Permits required for travel

A permit is required to travel on foot, horseback, or by car outside of towns and villages. Only cars with an SP (public service) permit issued by the prefecture and the Feldkommandantur are allowed to travel, and they must have their headlights covered, which greatly reduces the driver's visibility.

Aimé MORTIER, a lumberjack, must go to the Germans staying at SOSSON's house to obtain the necessary pass so that he can go to work in the woods.

German ammunition depots off-limits

Testimony from Raymond CHAMPION: "This German ammunition depot was in the woods, near the road from Villiers to Larchant. The road was blocked and guarded by German."

And from René AMIOT:"The German ammunition was kept along the road from Larchant to Villiers, which was closed to traffic at the time. To get wood at Chemin de Puiselet, you had to take a long detour to get back tothe village."

Reorganization of hunting in November 1940

Only German soldiers are allowed to hunt with rifles. The French are allowed to hunt rabbits that damage crops using ferrets and nets. Poaching with snares is also common.

THE GERMAN OCCUPATION BECAME INCREASINGLY OPPRESSIVE OVER TIME

Means of transportation

The railways and trains were under German control.
There were no more cars, no more gasoline, and no driving permits, so people traveled mainly on foot or by bicycle.
The Germans requisitioned trucks.
There was a shortage of tires, and only Germans were allowed to buy bicycle tires.

Means of communication

The press and newspapers are controlled by the Germans, who use them for propaganda, as in the newspaper "L'Abeille de Fontainebleau."
As for radio, listening to Radio London is prohibited, as are foreign radio stations.

Meeting places

Temporary closure of cafés, theaters, and cinemas, unless the performance is authorized by the Germans.
From July 11, 1941, playing or singing the Marseillaise is prohibited.
From May 5, 1942, celebrating the feast of Joan of Arc is prohibited; only a mass is tolerated.

A noisy presence

In the city, the Germans were a noisy presence, with military parades, the sound of boots, guttural songs, and numerous flags bearing the swastika. In the countryside, it was quiet.

Control of French industrial production

French industrial production came entirely under German control, with even work stoppages being monitored and a 54-hour working week imposed in May 1943. Bronze statues such as Rosa Bonheur's bull in Fontainebleau were seized by the Germans to be melted down and used to make cannons.



Monitoring injuries:

Raymond MORTIER testifies: "In 1940, Aimé MORTIER had an accident with the threshing machine at PURSEIGLE's. He got a belt with staples in his leg. The doctor in La Chapelle disinfected the wound and applied a bandage. The doctor undoubtedly had to report the accident. A German doctor then came, removed the bandage, checked to see if it was a gunshot wound, treated the wound, and reapplied the bandage."

German justice

The Germans impose fines for theft and also punish any patriotic acts: a V drawn on a wall, a patriotic song, etc. More serious penalties were imposed for sabotaging telephone lines (deportation to Germany)and, from July 30, 1942, the death penalty for anyone who welcomed or sheltered enemy aircraft crews or paratroopers.
The Germans rewarded those who reported downed aircraft or aircraft forced to make an emergency landing, and those who helped capture airmen or paratroopers.

German policy in 1940

A reminder of the German occupation in Villiers: a German newspaper found in an attic inhabited by the occupiers.



Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung

Berlin, Sonntag, 21. Juli 1940

Reichs-Ausgabe

79. Jahrgang

This newspaper dated July 21, 1940 reports on the speech given by HITLER the previous day in Berlin. The speech glorifies Germany's campaign in Poland and the destruction of France, offering England the choice between total destruction by Germany or an end to the war. Hitler also announces the appointment of Göring as Reichsmarschall (Reich Marshal). He becomes the most important man in Germany after Hitler.



Hermann GÖERING

THE CHALLENGES OF DAILY LIFE

The village's water and electricity supply.

Sometimes the water is also cut off. The village wells are used to water livestock.

Gérard PASMANT recalls: "There were frequent power cuts, which caused the pump supplying the village water tower to stop working. We had to wait for the electricity to come back on before we could get water from the tap. Some residents used their wells or hand pumps to get water when the power was out, and some had not even had running water installed yet. Once LOUVEAU, a skilled mechanic who owned a large steam engine that powered a threshing machine for harvesting, installed his steam engine next to the water house on the Nemours road, i.e., at the water tower well pump. He rigged up some belts and got the municipal pump working, so the residents could get water from their taps.

The shortage of transportation



Cars have not been on the road since June 28, 1940. Given the scarcity of fuel, the government encourages the use of gas-powered trucks (using charcoal or mineral coal). Gasoline was reserved for Germans and priority French vehicles. In February 1943, France handed over to Germany the fuel it had recovered from Romania under an agreement.

Luckily, there were still bicycles!



The heavy bicycles of the time were used to travel from the village to the neighboring town. Townspeople would come to the village by bicycle to buy supplies, which they would carry back in two panniers attached to the back of the bike and a bag attached to the luggage rack. The bikes were equipped with a yellow metal license plate with black numbers, attached to the rear fender. It was best to be in compliance with the rules, as German checks were frequent.

Finding bicycle tires is very difficult, even with a good tire repair kit, because there is a shortage of rubber. Some people make strings of washers cut from old inner tubes and attached to each other with wire. It must have been painful to pedal with tires like that!



As a teenager, Gérard PASMANT often cycled between Paris and Villiers, mostly on a bike path that ran alongside the blue route.

Unemployment

On January 18, 1941, the city council offered unemployed people the chance to widen the paths in the woods for 10 francs a day for men, 5 francs extra for their wives, and 2.2 francs per child. Nothing is known about whether this offer was ever carried out.

Paper restrictions

Government agencies have paper quotas. Newspapers are printed in ½ or ¼ sheet format and consist of a single sheet. Notebooks have narrow margins, and writing is done on the covers. Teachers write to their inspectors on notebook paper, as there is no more writing paper.


1re ANNEE. — N° 13 BIMENSUEL 1er DECEMBRE 1942

BULLETIN SOCIAL DU MARÉCHAL

« Le travail des Français est la ressource suprême de la Patrie »

EDITIONS DU MINISTERE DE L'INFORMATION, 10, RUE DE SOLFERINO, PARIS.

The difficulties faced by farmers during the war

Constraints

October 9, 1940: requirement to present horses loaned by German troops or abandoned by French or German troops at Melun, at the Chamblain meadow.

A prefectural decree sets the dates for beginning the harvest to deliver grain. The price of crops is taxed, as are straw, hay, and the little fertilizer available.

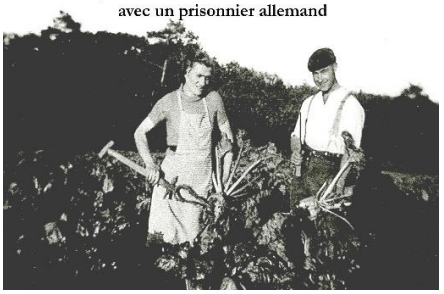
Reduced workforce

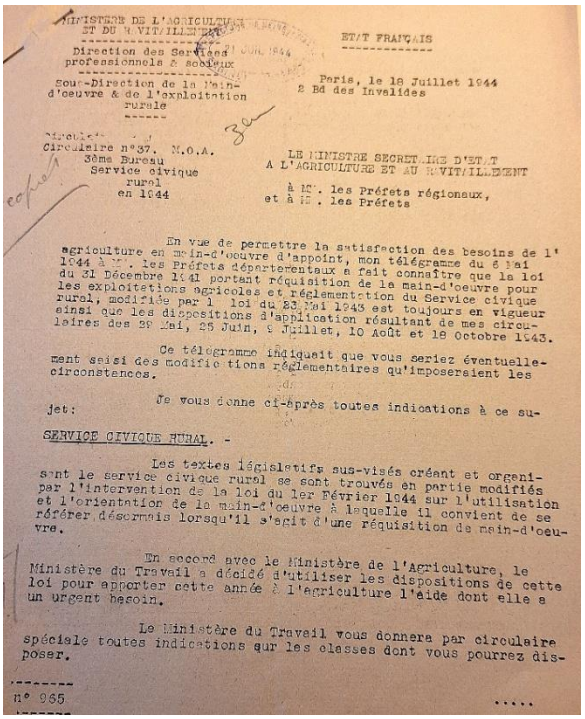
For large seasonal jobs, young workers or students are mobilized to work on farms (and they have to make sure that the farm is not too far from their homes).

German prisoners are sometimes placed on farms to work in the fields. Gilbert PURSEIGLE supplies potatoes to women from the city, presumably from Fontainebleau, on condition that they come and collect them from the fields.



Jeanne CORNET dite Louloutte
avec un prisonnier allemand





MINISTERE DE L'AGRICULTURE ET DU RAVITAILLEMENT
Direction des Services professionnels & sociaux
Sous-Direction de la main-d'oeuvre & de l'exploitation rurale

ETAT FRANÇAIS

Paris, le 18 Juillet 1944
2 Bd des Invalides

Circulaire n°37. M.O.A.
30ème Bureau
Service civique rural
en 1944

LE MINISTRE SECRETAIRE D'ETAT A L'AGRICULTURE ET AU RAVITAILLEMENT

à MM. les Préfets régionaux, et à MM. les Préfets

En vue de permettre la satisfaction des besoins de l'agriculture en main-d'oeuvre d'appoint, mon télégramme du 6 Mai 1944 à MM. les Préfets départementaux a fait connaître que la loi du 31 Décembre 1941 portant réquisition de la main-d'oeuvre pour les exploitations agricoles et réglementation du Service civique rural, modifiée par la loi du 23 Mai 1943 est toujours en vigueur ainsi que les dispositions d'application résultant de mes circulaires des 29 Mai, 25 Juin, 4 Juillet, 10 Août et 18 Octobre 1943.

Ce télégramme indiquait que vous seriez éventuellement saisi des modifications réglementaires qu'imposeraient les circonstances.

Je vous donne ci-après toutes indications à ce sujet:

SERVICE CIVIQUE RURAL. -

Les textes législatifs sus-visés créant et organisant le service civique rural se sont trouvés en partie modifiés par l'intervention de la loi du 1er Février 1944 sur l'utilisation et l'orientation de la main-d'oeuvre à laquelle il convient de se référer désormais lorsqu'il s'agit d'une réquisition de main-d'oeuvre.

En accord avec le Ministère de l'Agriculture, le Ministère du Travail a décidé d'utiliser les dispositions de cette loi pour apporter cette année à l'agriculture l'aide dont elle a un urgent besoin.

Le Ministère du Travail vous donnera par circulaire spéciale toutes indications sur les classes dont vous pourrez disposer.

N° 965 .....

The Department of Agriculture and Supply is looking for workers to help farmers.

Young people born in 1925, 1926, and 1927 can register between March 6 and 11, 1944, for rural civic service in the 1944 agricultural campaign. Those interested should go to the town hall where they collect their food ration cards to fill out a registration form.

Limited supplies

We collect the last of the used sisal binding twine to make rope. We can no longer find twine for the harvesters because sisal twine is no longer coming in from the colonies, so we absolutely must find a replacement. We therefore make balls of paper string. This string is not very strong and often breaks; in wet weather, it is not very resistant.Artificial fertilizers: Germany takes our phosphates and gives us very little nitrogen fertilizer in exchange.

Difficulties in finding horseshoes, horseshoe nails, and coal for forges and threshing machines. Purchase vouchers are required to obtain them.

René AMIOT says: "We didn't have any oil to lubricate the farm machinery during the war, so we salvaged whatever we could."

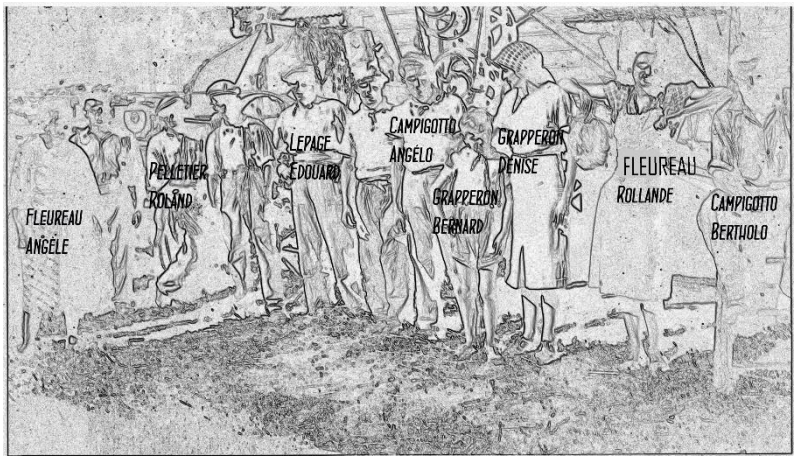
Surveillance des récoltes



The threshing machine at Bertrand and Angèle FLEUREAU's in 1941 or 1942

In 1940-1941-1942-1943, to prevent crops from falling into enemy hands, many barns and sheds were set on fire. Mayors had to organize patrols to guard the harvests. The guards had only sticks to defend themselves. How effective were they against arsonists who might be armed? In Villiers, on October 4, 1942, an accidental fire destroyed a pile of straw behind the AMIOT farm.





Wheat production in Villiers

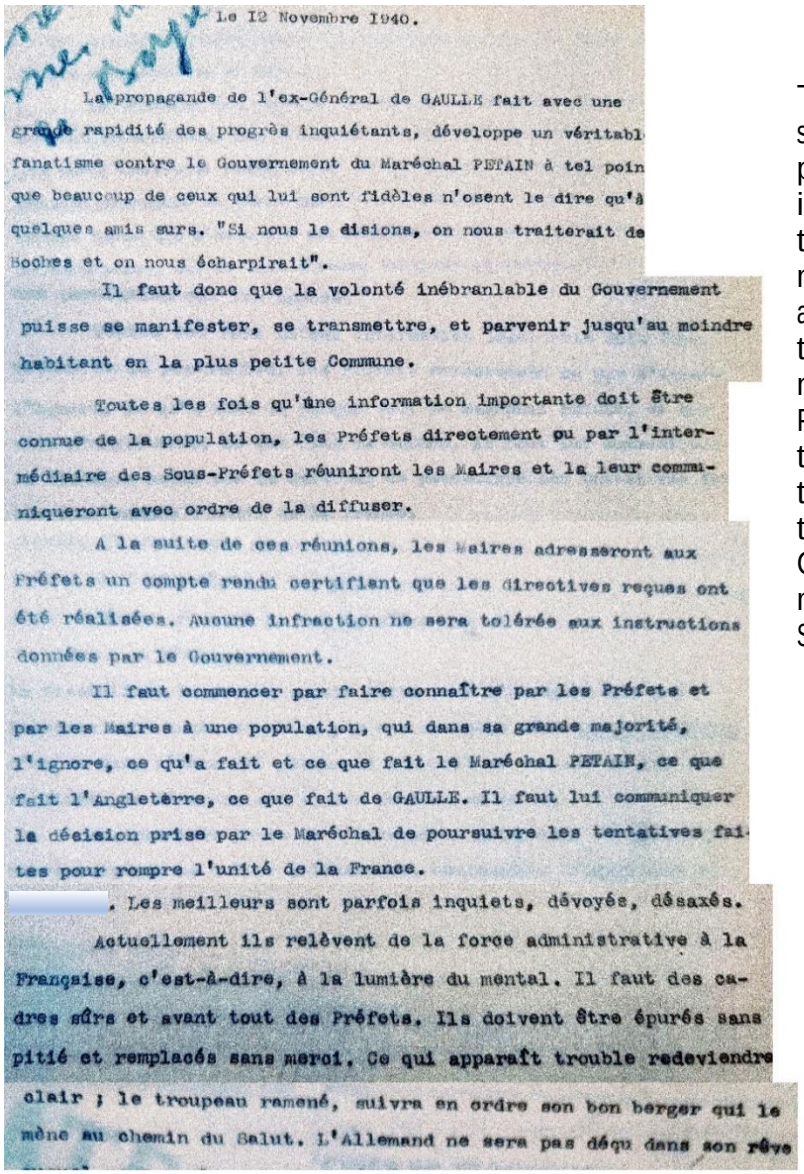
Year	Wheat production in quintals
1938	2654
1939	1465
1940	752
1941	534
1942	?
1943	?
1944	893
1945	?

News item: A major fire in the woods of Larchant and Villiers

Ginette PATRON recounts: "The fire was very violent, spreading very quickly, with the tops of the fir trees catching fire one after the other and the flames reaching over the road from Larchant to Villiers. The men fought the fire with the meager resources of shovels and picks. I witnessed the violence of the fire. I went to bring drinks to the men who were fighting the fire. Today, I recognize how reckless the men and I were to be so close to the flames. Five plots of woodland belonging to my father burned down at a place called Les Rogeats. Afterwards, the land was completely scorched. For three years, all the fir trees planted by my father died. The following year, he tried to sow pine seeds, but they did not sprout. There were only huge broom bushes, which eventually died, and then oak trees grew back when the land had regained a small amount of humus."

On October 2, 1943, the municipal council voted to grant a loan of 3,000 francs to the workers who had fought the great fire in the woods in the commune of Villiers-sous-Grez.

The weight of propaganda for Pétain



Le 12 Novembre 1940.

La propagande de l'ex-Général de GAULLE fait avec une grande rapidité des progrès inquiétants, développe un véritabl fanatisme contre le Gouvernement du Maréchal PETAIN à tel poin que beaucoup de ceux qui lui sont fidèles n'osent le dire qu'à quelques amis surs. "Si nous le disions, on nous traiterait de Boches et on nous écharpirait".

Il faut donc que la volonté inébranlable du Gouvernement puisse se manifester, se transmettre, et parvenir jusqu'au moindre habitant en la plus petite Commune.

Toutes les fois qu'une information importante doit être connue de la population, les Préfets directement pu par l'intermédiaire des Sous-Préfets réuniront les Maires et la leur communiqueront avec ordre de la diffuser.

A la suite de ces réunions, les Maires adresseront aux Préfets un compte rendu certifiant que les directives reçues ont été réalisées. Aucune infraction ne sera tolérée aux instructions données par le Gouvernement.

Il faut commencer par faire connaître par les Préfets et par les Maires à une population, qui dans sa grande majorité, l'ignore, ce qu'a fait et ce que fait le Maréchal PETAIN, ce que fait l'Angleterre, ce que fait de GAULLE. Il faut lui communiquer la décision prise par le Maréchal de poursuivre les tentatives faites pour rompre l'unité de la France.

. Les meilleurs sont parfois inquiets, dévoyés, désaxés.

Actuellement ils relèvent de la force administrative à la Française, c'est-à-dire, à la lumière du mental. Il faut des cadres sûrs et avant tout des Préfets. Ils doivent être épurés sans pitié et remplacés sans merci. Ce qui apparaît trouble redeviendra clair ; le troupeau ramené, suivra en ordre son bon berger qui le mène au chemin du Salut. L'Allemand ne sera pas déçu dans son rêve

The cult of the marshal is reflected in the sale of rinkets, gadgets, ashtrays, plates, encil cases, notebook covers, images, and portraits of the marshal by the mill. Portraits of Pétain are mandatory in town halls,classrooms, and public services.In Fontainebleau, the square in front of the castle is now called "Place du Maréchal Pétain."Decoration of the Order of the Francisque for services rendered to the French State and for loyalty to the Marshal.
Coins bearing the Francisque and the motto "Family, Work, Fatherland."
Stamps bearing the image of Pétain.

On the left, a montage of several excerpts from a letter dated November 12, 1940, from thegovernment to senior officials.

Theft and assaults on individuals

As life became increasingly difficult, in addition to thefts directly from the fields, thefts from homes became more frequent.
Already on September 28, 1941, during the harvest, Edouard MICHOU's silver watch had been stolen.

VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

Vol d'une montre. — M. Edouard Michoux, 30 ans, mécanicien, attaché à la batterie Fraix, n'a pas retrouvé sa montre dans la poche de sa veste accrochée à un semoir, le 26 septembre. C'est une montre en argent avec inscription Campagne d'Orient 1916 ». On recherche l'auteur du vol.

VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

Une cave cambriolée. — Une ombre rocambolesque — visage couvert et chapeau de brigand — est venue dans la cave de Mme Suzanne Soumier, 30 ans, la nuit du 14 septembre, et y a volé 10 bocaux de viande, 3 bouteilles de vin, 2 litres de vinaigre, 1 litre d'eau-de-vie de pommes, 6 œufs et 2 kilos de haricots, le tout estimé mille francs.

Suzanne SOUMIER's cellar was broken into during the night of September 14, 1943, and food products worth 1,000 francs were stolen.

Despite crop surveillance, thefts are common.

La Chapelle-la-Reine

VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ. — *La chasse aux pommes de terre :* M. Raymond Michaut, 35 ans, se plaint de la disparition de 300 pieds. Mais une mystérieuse cycliste a versé 1.000 francs au maire pour les prisonniers de Villiers, ajoutant qu'elle était l'auteur du vol.

Armed attacks

In Guercheville, on November 20, 1943, armed and masked men attacked Mrs. BRUNET, Mr. DOUINE, and Mr. AUDEBERT. A total of 60,000 francs was stolen during these three attacks.

In Villiers, on November 24, 1943, Ms. Valentine Beauvais was attacked by five armed and masked men, who stole 1,500 francs. Was this the same gang that had struck four days earlier in Guercheville?

Photo panoramique de Villiers-sous-Grez dans les années 50



RELATIONSHIP

Food and basic commodities

Bread

Bread rationing was introduced by the French government in June 1940.

Bakers ran out of flour between the exodus and the harvest of 1940.

> Raymond CHAMPION reconts : « Un jour le boulanger SIMON au 28 rue Brûlée vient chez son voisin Fernand CHAMPION en disant « Je n'ai plus de farine ». Fernand répond : « On peut arriver à trouver encore un peu de blé mais il va falloir aller le faire moudre au moulin à Nemours et il nous faut un laissez-passer de la part des Allemands. Fernand va trouver un officier allemand qui logeait chez Hélène HYSPA, officier dont le père était allemand mais dont la mère était française et qui était assez conciliant. L'officier signe le laissez-passer. Une collecte du blé est organisée dans le village et quelques voitures à chevaux contenant chacune 10 sacs de 1 quintal vont au moulin de Nemours sous bonne escorte avec un soldat allemand dans la 1ère voiture et un autre soldat allemand dans la dernière voiture. Le boulanger a pu refaire du pain pour le village et reprendre sa tournée dans le village ».

The baker COLIN (based in the current bakery) hid flour at his neighbor Edouard LEPAGE's house, just across the street from his own. At night, the sacks of flour were secretly carried across the street to feed the kneading machine. The Germans never found out!

> Raymonde AMIOT recounts: "Daily life: To obtain flour, we would break wheat in the crusher (which was usually used to crush grain for animals) and then sift it to obtain flour and make bread."

Sugar

On July 15, 1940, given the difficulties encountered in supplying the town with sugar, the municipal council decided to immediately implement the food card system for sugar distribution. Fernand CHAMPION was unanimously elected to provide a monthly report on the village's existing stock of goods.

Oil

There was a shortage of oil for cooking. Farmers grew oilseed rape, a plant whose crushed seeds provide oil. There was an oil mill in Boiroux near Villemaréchal, 20 km from Villiers. People would go to Boiroux at night by bicycle to deliver seeds and return with oil. It was risky because they had to avoid being caught by the Germans!

Wine

Wine is rationed. In Villiers, this is not a problem because the village's many vineyards fill the barrels of farmers and private individuals.

Meat

Gérard PASMANT recounts: "During the war, a herd of about a hundred cows, coming from who knows where, made their way on foot to Paris to supply the Parisians with fresh meat. The herd passed through Villiers, where three cows were sold and immediately slaughtered at the Tintin shed (Jules Beauvais). One of the three cows did not die immediately and ran away covered in blood. It was later caught and killed."

Farmers and individuals raising animals must declare them. Authorization is required to slaughter sheep or pigs raised by families.

Andrée DEBARD's account combines hidden pigs and the search for cars: this took place during the German retreat, when soldiers were looking for cars to flee more quickly.

"We had a garage that was very visible from the street. A German soldier knocked loudly on the kitchen door.
My mother opened it, and he said 'car' and "garage." I think my mother said "No." But he rushed through the kitchen toward the back door. My mother followed him. To get to the garage, you had to pass in front of a shed where my parents raised a pig nicknamed Dudule. I think Dudule was smart and sensed the danger, so he didn't growl. Of course, my mother thought that out of spite, since the German hadn't found a car, he would take the pig. The soldier was very disappointed because the garage contained only a handcart, a wheelbarrow, and bicycles, but no car. And Dudule remained silent."

In the city, stray cats were quickly turned into a stew known as rabbit stew.

Days without

There were also days without, meaning without bread or meat or wine or pastries.

Stocking up in town and stocking up in the countryside

In town, it was very difficult to find food: rutabagas and Jerusalem artichokes replaced potatoes requisitioned by the Germans, and people tried recipes that could be made with very little, but which were not very effective in satisfying their hunger! So, whenever possible, they turned to the surrounding countryside, where food was easier to find. As it was tolerated to provide a little food to family members, it's amazing how many people from neighboring towns and even Paris found cousins in Villiers and the surrounding villages. Rabbits didn't live long in their hutches and eggs were collected before they were laid. It was the same in all rural areas.

Farmers were forbidden from selling food to individuals who were not members of their family. If they did so, the goods were confiscated and the producer risked a fine.

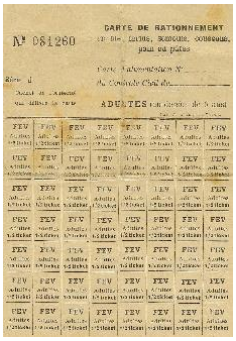
Food ration cards

These were introduced in the fall of 1940. The cards had to be collected every month from the town hall; coupons had to be presented every day at shops, but there was no guarantee that people would receive what they were entitled to...

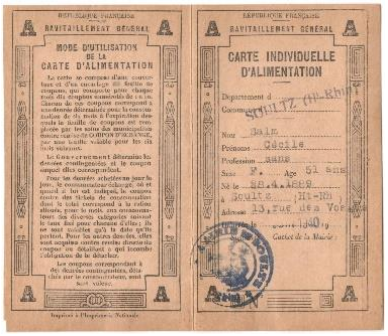
The cards were issued according to people's food needs and were divided into six categories, then eight categories (three E categories based on the age of the children):



E card (under 3 years old)



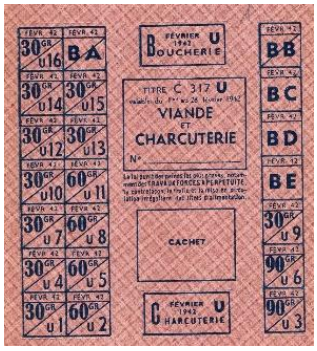
J card (child)



A card (regular person)



T Card
(manual laborer)



C Card (agricultural worker)



V Card (over 70 years old)

Precious tickets had to be cut out and presented to retailers, who would then stick them onto a summary sheet to be submitted to the town hall.

Claudine NEVEU recalls: "Fernande BACHET gave my mother some wheat, which we ground in the coffee grinder to make 'tofé' with the flour obtained, 2 eggs, milk, and sugar; it made a real Christian treat."



To document this topic of rationing, below is the rationing table for adults.

CATEGORIE A (ADULTE)

Denrées	1941 (oct.)	1942 (jan.)	1943 (mai)	1944 (août)	1945 (juil.)
Pain	275 g/jour	275 g/jour	275 g/jour	300 g/jour	Vente libre (peu de temps)
Pâtes/tapioca	250 g/mois	250 g/mois	250 g/mois	Néant	250 g/mois
Viande	250 g/se.	180 g/se.	120 g/se.	120 g/se.	90 g viande boucherie + 60 g cheval/semaine
Sucre	500 g/mois	500 g/mois	500 g/mois	500 g/mois	500 g/mois
Légumes secs ou riz	200 g/mois Néant	250 g/mois Néant	Néant Néant	Néant Néant	250 g (lentilles) Néant
Chocolat	Néant	Néant	Néant	Néant	Néant
Fromage	50 g/semaine	50 g/semaine	50 g/semaine	50 g/semaine	60 g/semaine
Matières grasses	450 g/mois	450 g/mois	310 g/mois	180 g/mois	
Lait	Néant	Néant	Néant	Néant	Néant
Confiture	Néant	Néant	Néant	Néant	Néant
Vin	1 l/semaine	1 l/semaine	4 l/mois	4 l/mois	4 l/mois
Café (mélange)	150 g/mois	150 g/mois	150 g/mois	150 g/mois	150 g/mois

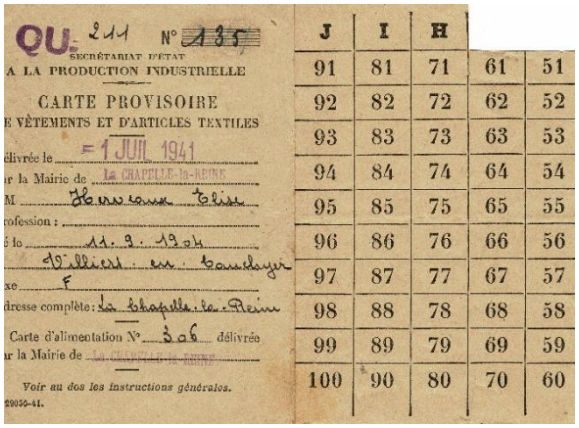
And the one that is more generous in quantity, for manual laborers.

Denrées	Adulte	Travailleur de force
Pain	300 g/jour	350 g/jour
Viande	120 g/semaine	570 g/semaine
Fromage	50 g/semaine	50 g/semaine
Matières grasses	310 g/mois	610 g/semaine
Vin	4 l/mois	8 l/mois
Sucre	500 g/mois	500 g/mois
Café mélangé ou Café pur	150 g/mois 15 g/mois	150 g/mois 15 g/mois

In addition to food, many other items were rationed:

Tobacco since January 1941 (tobacco cards, 1 or 2 packs of cigarettes every 10 days).
Toilet soap since early 1941: 100 g per month per person, household soap 75 g per month per inhabitant.
Clothing with textile cards from June 1941: Requests for clothing and shoes must be justified. The same applied to a woolen diaper and two cotton diapers for a future baby, a dress and a suit for future newlyweds, clothing for future communicants, ordinary work clothes or canvas trousers, a canvas jacket and a shirt for workers, or clothing for prisoners and deportees returning from Germany.
Tableware and household items are only issued in exchange for the corresponding vouchers.









Consequences of restrictions

Everything is requisitioned and rationed by the Germans, foodstuffs rot in train stations while city dwellers go hungry!
Queues at shops, with gossip spreading as people wait in line.
The impact of food rationing on health: more cases of liver disease, diabetes, high cholesterol, and alcoholism, as alcoholic beverages are banned in cafés and wine bottles can only be purchased with ration tickets.

The era of bartering: non-essential goods are exchanged for food.

The black market: there is an official price for goods. When a commodity is sold at a price higher than its real value, it is said to be sold on the black market. This is punishable by law, but it must be proven.
The black market was practiced almost everywhere in France.
There were numerous thefts in orchards and potato fields because people were hungry.

Replacement or recovery products

Flour is mixed with varying amounts of bran, resulting in brown bread or black bread that is almost inedible.
Saccharin replaces sugar. Chicory roots, chicory, barley roasted in a pan or oven are used for coffee; rutabagas (turnips) and Jerusalem artichokes are used instead of potatoes.
Tobacco is replaced by corn silk, lime, viburnum, or walnut leaves.
Soap made from clay and sand (which scratched the skin a little) replaces fatty soap. The new shaving soap is made from tallow.
Finely crushed eggshells are used to make toothpaste.
Knitting wool contained less wool and a lot of sawdust, which made sweaters itchy.
To save fabric, shorter and less voluminous skirts became fashionable. Nettle fibers were used to make synthetic fabrics such as fibranne and rayon.
For shoe soles, leather is replaced by a single piece of wood or an articulated board, which is more comfortable for walking. Réjane AMIOT repaired each of her children's only pair of shoes by nailing wooden soles to them. Galoshes were worn with socks.

Raymond MORTIER explains: "The soles of galoshes were made of beech wood, which split easily. Clogs were made of birch or walnut."

Laundry detergent can be made from plants of the soapwort family. In Villiers, when Saponite detergent was no longer available, people did laundry with wood ash, just like their grandmothers did.
Used adult clothing was cut up to make children's clothes. Seamstresses had plenty of work. One seamstress showed Réjane AMIOT how to cut short pants from old adult clothes to dress her two boys. Sheets and clothes with holes were patched.
The fabric from parachutes that fell in Villiers was salvaged to make clothes: a girl's dress for Nicole Bachet, Bernadette Ruis's wedding dress, and underwear for the resistance fighters.
Old packaging was salvaged: toothpaste tubes, shoe polish tins, light bulbs, empty tobacco packets, and wrapping paper.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Assistance from the municipality

As social security did not exist at the time, people in serious financial difficulty asked their municipality of residence for assistance to cover their family's medical expenses. The request was submitted to the municipal council, which either accepted or rejected the request for medical assistance. This assistance already existed before 1939.

Requests for free medical assistance

Accepted:
For Mr. JUFFET, on December 17, 1939, given that the family had two young children, and for Mrs. MERY, who had no other source of income than the military allowance of her mobilized husband.
For Mrs. LEROUVILLOIS and Mr. MOREL Jean on February 12, 1940.
For Mrs. FASSY Angèle on December 22, 1940, nanny to the three VAUCIEUX girls, whose mother died a few years ago and whose father is a prisoner in Germany. The family has no resources.

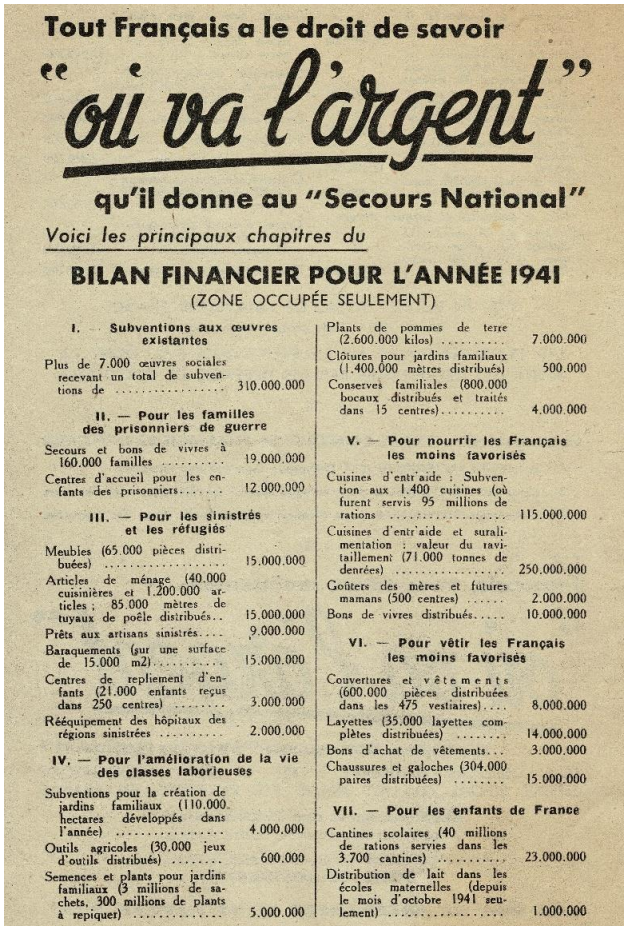
For Mrs. LEFEBVRE René on December 4, 1941, mother of three young children whose husband is a prisoner of war and whose only source of income is military allowance. The council also votes to provide free medical assistance for her son, who needs surgery for a hernia.
For the three children of René LEFEBVRE on March 15, 1942.
For the year 1943, free medical assistance is granted to the three LEFEBVRE children, to Jacques RODDES, an orphan, and to the five MICHOU children.
For Miss Louise AUVRAY on April 20, 1943, disabled, living with her sister, Mrs. Henri FLEUREAU, due to the war.
For Mrs. Marie CHAMAULT and Mrs. Louise RENARD on February 16, 1944.
For the year 1945, for Mrs. Marie CHAMAULT and Mrs. Louise RENARD, as well as Mr. Jacques RODDES and the five MICHOU children.
For the year 1945, to Mrs. Marie CHAMAULT and Mrs. Louise RENARD, as well as to Mr. Jacques RODDES and the five MICHOU children.

Free medical assistance for women in childbirth and breastfeeding allowance

December 17, 1939 for Mrs. BACHET Fernande
February 12, 1940 for Mrs. CHARPENTIER Marthe
March 31, 1940 for Mrs. LEFEBVRE Madeleine

Assistance from Secours National

This organization already existed in 1914-1918. It was responsible for supplementing the actions of public authorities and coordinating relief efforts for civilian victims, providing assistance with work, food, housing, clothing, and heating. Mrs. BATTESTI in La Chapelle-la-Reine was the cantonal representative of Secours National, delegated from 53 rue Grande in Fontainebleau. She is returning to service because during the 1914-1918 war she was a nurse in the volunteer military hospital created by her husband, Dr. Antoine BATTESTI, which operated from August 2, 1914, to August 3, 1917, when the wounded were transferred to larger hospitals.
Next, the financial report of the Secours National for the year 1941.



Tout Français a le droit de savoir

"où va l'argent"

qu'il donne au "Secours National"

Voici les principaux chapitres du

BILAN FINANCIER POUR L'ANNÉE 1941

(ZONE OCCUPÉE SEULEMENT)

I. — Subventions aux œuvres existantes

Plus de 7.000 œuvres sociales recevant un total de subventions de	310.000.000

II. — Pour les familles des prisonniers de guerre

Secours et bons de vivres à 160.000 familles	19.000.000
Centres d'accueil pour les enfants des prisonniers	12.000.000

III. — Pour les sinistrés et les réfugiés

Meubles (65.000 pièces distribuées)	15.000.000
Articles de ménage (40.000 cuisinières et 1.200.000 articles ; 85.000 mètres de tuyaux de poêle distribués	15.000.000
Prêts aux artisans sinistrés	9.000.000
Baraquements (sur une surface de 15.000 m2)	15.000.000
Centres de repliement d'enfants (21.000 enfants reçus dans 250 centres)	3.000.000
Rééquipement des hôpitaux des régions sinistrées	2.000.000

IV. — Pour l'amélioration de la vie des classes laborieuses

Subventions pour la création de jardins familiaux (110.000 hectares développés dans l'année)	4.000.000
Outils agricoles (30.000 jeux d'outils distribués)	600.000
Semences et plants pour jardins familiaux (3 millions de sachets, 300 millions de plants à repiquer)	5.000.000
Plants de pommes de terre (2.600.000 kilos)	7.000.000
Clôtures pour jardins familiaux (1.400.000 mètres distribués)	500.000
Conserves familiales (800.000 bocaux distribués et traités dans 15 centres)	4.000.000

V. — Pour nourrir les Français les moins favorisés

Cuisines d'entr'aide : Subvention aux 1.400 cuisines (où furent servis 95 millions de rations	115.000.000
Cuisines d'entr'aide et suralimentation : valeur du ravitaillement (71.000 tonnes de denrées)	250.000.000
Goûters des mères et futures mamans (500 centres)	2.000.000
Bons de vivres distribués	10.000.000

VI. — Pour vêtir les Français les moins favorisés

Couvertures et vêtements (600.000 pièces distribuées dans les 475 vestiaires)	8.000.000
Layettes (35.000 layettes complètes distribuées)	14.000.000
Bons d'achat de vêtements	3.000.000
Chaussures et galoches (304.000 paires distribuées)	15.000.000

VII. — Pour les enfants de France

Cantines scolaires (40 millions de rations servies dans les 3.700 cantines)	23.000.000
Distribution de lait dans les écoles maternelles (depuis le mois d'octobre 1941 seulement)	1.000.000
Distribution de biscuits à la caséine (7.780 tonnes de biscuits)	93.000.000
Distribution de comprimés vitaminés aux enfants et aux futures mamans (70 millions de comprimés)	12.000.000
Colonies de vacances (180.000 enfants reçus dans 2.220 colonies)	37.000.000
Garderies d'enfants (275.000 enfants reçus dans 660 garderies)	12.000.000
Arbres de Noël (850.000 jouets et albums distribués)	2.000.000

VIII. — Activités et secours divers

Assistance par le travail (371 millions de pièces fabriquées — 2.155.000 heures d'ouvriers)	17.000.000
Secours, dons et prêts d'honneur accordés après enquête sociale (63.000 familles prises en charge)	30.000.000
Combustible distribué (40.000 stères de bois et 12.000 tonnes de charbon)	9.000.000
Bons d'achat de pharmacie	9.000.000
Lutte contre la maladie	3.000.000
Dépistage de la tuberculose	2.000.000
Centres d'enseignement ménager (15.000 élèves reçus dans 270 centres d'enseignement)	8.000.000
Centres d'accueil divers (gares, lignes de démarcation, etc., 80 centres ouverts)	12.000.000
Dons aux familles nombreuses.	20.000.000

SUR UN BUDGET TOTAL DE **1.314.768.000** FRANCS

(Année 1941 - Zone occupée seulement)

LES FRAIS GÉNÉRAUX NE S'ÉLÈVENT QU'A 8 % DONT LA MOITIÉ EST REPRÉSENTÉE PAR LES DÉPENSES DE PERSONNEL

☆

Ce budget subit : **TROIS CONTROLES FINANCIERS OFFICIELS**

1° - Le contrôle **INTÉRIEUR** d'un **Directeur Général des Finances.**

2° - Le contrôle **EXTÉRIEUR** d'un **Délégué spécial du Ministère des Finances.**

3° - Le contrôle **SUPÉRIEUR** d'une **Mission spéciale de la Cour des Comptes.**

☆

Français, vous savez maintenant

"où va l'argent"

que vous donnez au "Secours National"

LE "SECOURS NATIONAL" EST LE PLUS GIGANTESQUE EFFORT SOCIAL QUI AIT JAMAIS ÉTÉ ENTREPRIS EN FRANCE

40.000 personnes dont **35.000 bénévoles** y consacrent toutes leurs forces.

AIDEZ-LE, VOUS AUSSI, EN SOUSCRIVANT DES **BONS DE SOLIDARITÉ.**

« UN BON DE SOLIDARITÉ NE SE REFUSE PAS ! »

IE6-4-42

State assistance with military allowances

Families left without resources due to the departure of their breadwinner to war could apply for military allowances by filling out a special form signed by the mayor of Villiers.

Applications for assistance were made in December 1939 by families from the village and two refugee families in Villiers.

Below is the table showing the submission of military allowance applications on January 21, 1940, to the relevant department, one month after these applications were made at the town hall.

Families left without resources due to the departure of their breadwinner to war could apply for military allowances by filling out a special form signed by the mayor of Villiers.

Family support soldier	*Claimant*	*Reason for the request*	*Observation*
ALLAVORNE Edouard arrived at the depot on September 2, 1939.	CARRÉ Louise Wife ALLAVORNE E.	Evacuated from Paris, lives in Villiers. No resources. Can't find any work.	
CHAMAULT Victor, born on June 28, 1914, called up on August 27, 1939	DRIANCOURT Marguerite, wife CHAMAULT V.	About to give birth on September 27, 1939	Departed in December 1939
CHAMPION Fernand, born on October 14, 1895, enlisted on September 2, 1939, discharged on December 14, 1939	MANDION Odette wife CHAMPION Fernand	A child named Raymond born on July 17, 1926	
CHAMPION Roger, born on May 21, 1912, drafted on August 27, 1939, residing in Maison-Alfort	MEYERJosette married to CHAMPION Roger	Refugee in Villiers, family without resources	

Family support soldier	*Claimant*	*Reason for the request*	*Observation*
COLIN Raymond, born on January 27, 1914, drafted on September 3, 1939	EBEL Simone, wife of COLIN Raymond	Without resources	Returned to Paris before January 22, 1940
COSSON Marcel, born on April 18, 1896, called up on August 23, 1939, sent home at the end of December 1939	COSSON Léopold born in 1856	83 years without resources	
JOURDAN Robert, born on May 15, 1914, drafted on August 25, 1939, assigned to special duty to work in a factory	CHAMAUT Geneviève, wife of JOURDAIN Robert	He is responsible for his wife Geneviève, aged 26, and his son Claude, aged 1.	
VANNI ené, called up on September 9, 1939	TALBOT Simone, épouse VANNI René	Wife without occupation and an 8-year-old daughter, Josette	Long gone, she is said to have opened a trading company.

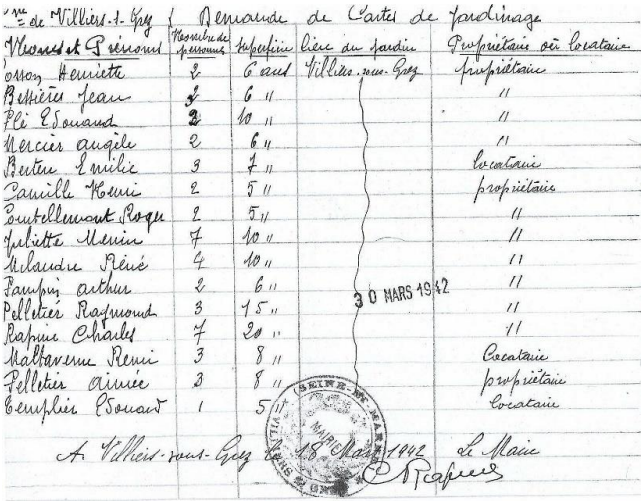
Allotment gardens and family gardens

In February 1942, the government decided to increase the number of allotment gardens, but a gardening card was required to purchase seeds, seedlings, and seedlings. The management of this service was entrusted to Secours National.
The Secours National encouraged the creation of family gardens and set up the distribution of gardening cards for 1942 and subsequent years in order to obtain potato plants and seeds free of charge or for a fee.
The occupant of a garden declared the size of the garden and the number of people fed by it.

Of course, there are all the villagers, but also city dwellers who own houses in Villiers (BOISARD and LAMBLAT from Suresnes, CHAUDAGUE from Alfortville, HUBLER and PUSSARD from Levallois Perret, PASMANT from Paris 13th arrondissement, FOURREE from Paris 13th arrondissement), as well as people staying in Villiers with relatives or friends who provide them with accommodation and allow them to cultivate a piece of their garden. Seeds can be purchased from a designated seed merchant in La Chapelle-la-Reine, Bourron-Marlotte, or Nemours.
The surface area indicated for the gardens ranges from 200 m² to 2000 m², and the number of people using the garden ranges from 1 for BOISARD and TEMPLIER Edouard to 9 for the CHARPENTIER, COSSON, DEBARD, and PASMANT families.

In 1942, Villiers had a total area of 10 hectares of gardens, 2.3 hectares of which were planted with potatoes.
The 1936 census recorded 466 inhabitants, but we must deduct the 24 prisoners of war held in Germany and those who died or left the village between 1936 and 1942. On the other hand, births, people who married and moved from another municipality, and refugees who settled in Villiers by chance or with family or friends must be added. It is impossible to know the exact number of people living in Villiers during the war, but it can be estimated at around 480.

.

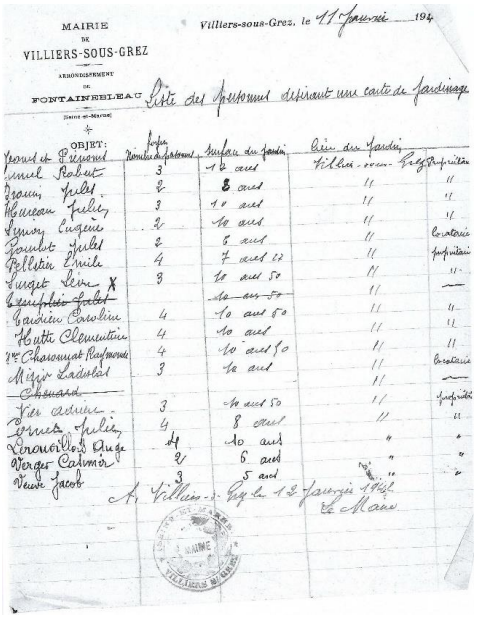


Demande de Carte de jardinage

Noms et Prénoms	Nombre de personnes	Superficie	Lieu du jardin	Propriétaire ou Locataire
Ossoy Henriette	2	6 ares	Villiers-sous-Grez	Propriétaire
Bessière Jean	1	6 "		"
Plé Edouard	2	10 "		"
Mercier Angèle	2	6 "		"
Bertin Emilie	3	7 "		Locataire
Camille Henri	2	5 "		Propriétaire
Pontellement Roger	2	5 "		"
Juliette Mevin	7	10 "		"
Alexandre René	4	10 "		"
Faupin Arthur	2	6 "		"
Pelletier Raymond	3	15 "		"
Rapine Charles	7	20 "		"
Malbranche Remi	3	8 "		Locataire
Pelletier Annie	3	8 "		Propriétaire
Remplier Edouard	1	5 "		Locataire

A Villiers-sous-Grez le 18 Mars 1942 Le Maire

30 MARS 1942



MAIRIE DE VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ
ARRONDISSEMENT DE FONTAINEBLEAU
Seine-et-Marne

Villiers-sous-Grez, le 11 Janvier 194

OBJET: Liste des personnes désirant une carte de jardinage

Noms et Prénoms	Nombre de personnes	Surface du jardin	Lieu du jardin	
Arnal Robert	3	10 ares	Villiers-sous-Grez	Propriétaire
Bravin Jules	2	8 ares	"	"
Moureau Julien	3	10 ares	"	"
Lejeune Eugène	2	10 ares	"	"
Faublet Jules	2	6 ares	"	Locataire
Pelletier Emile	4	7 ares 50	"	Propriétaire
Surget Léon X	3	10 ares 50	"	"
~~Remplier Gabriel~~		~~10 ares 50~~		
Pavillon Caroline	4	10 ares 50	"	"
Hutin Clémentine	4	10 ares	"	"
Vve Chasseigne Raymond	4	10 ares 50	"	"
Mizin Ladislas	3	10 ares	"	Locataire
~~Chevard~~				
Vve Arnal	3	10 ares 50	"	Propriétaire
Lejeune Jules	4	8 ares	"	"
Lecouvillard Hugo	4	10 ares	"	"
Verger Calixte	2	6 ares	"	"
Veuve Jacob	3	5 ares	"	"

A Villiers-sous-Grez le 12 Janvier 194 Le Maire

Pursuant to the law of October 31, 1941, relating to allotment gardens and potato plants in family gardens, a register of applications for gardening cards must be kept up to date. Below is a transcript of the Villiers register.

Name	***Garden area in square meters***	***Number of people affected***	***Card date***	***Area in square meters planted with potatoes***
AHERER L.	525	4	07/04/1942	
ALEXI Roland	1.000	3	10/01/1942	300
AUBRY Emile veuve	1.500	4	10/01/1942	400
AUBRY Georges		2		400
AUBRY Henri veuve	800	2	10/01/1942	200
BARBIER Ferdinand	1.000	2	10/01/1942	200
BERNASSE E.	500	2	07/04/1942	
BERTEAU E.	700	3	30/03/1942	
BERTHIER Raymond	1.500	4	10/01/1942	400
BESANGER Céline	400	3	10/01/1942	200
BESSIÈRES Jean	600	3	30/03/1942	
BOISARD	400	1	13/02/1942	
BOISARD Henri de Suresnes	1.000	4	08/07/1942	
BOISNÉ Léon				200
BOISSEAU Marcel	1.800	6	10/01/1942	500
BORDEREAU Paul	400	2	10/01/1942	200
BOUGLÉ Henri	600	6	10/01/1942	300
BOUREILLE Henri	2.000	4	10/01/1942	400
CAMILLE Henri	500	2	30/03/1942	
CERTAIN Edouard	800	4	10/01/1942	400
CERTAIN Raoul	1.000	5	10/01/1942	500
CHAILLOU A.	1.000	4	10/03/1942	
CHAMAULT Alexandre	1.200	6	07/04/1942	
CHAMAULT Jules	1.100	5	10/01/1942	500

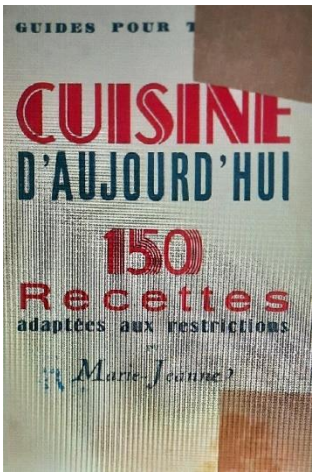
CHARPENTIER Armand	1.200	9	10/01/1942	600
CHARONNAT Raymonde				400
CHAULAGUE Gaston d'Alfortville	1.500	6	08/07/1942	
CHENARD Paul	2.000	4	10/01/1942	400
CORNET Julien		2		400
COSSON Edmond	1.300	9	10/01/1942	650
COURTELLEMONT Roger	500	2	30/03/1942	
CUNIN E. de Paris IX	1.000	5	07/04/1942	
DEBARD Henri	1.200	9	10/01/1942	600
DELCROIX Gaston	400	2	10/01/1942	200
DORÉ Robert	1.200	6	10/01/1942	600
DROUIN Jules		2		200
DUKA M.	1.000	4	07/04/1942	
EBEL Léon	2.000	6	10/01/1942	300
FANICHET Roger	1.500	4	10/01/1942	400
FLEUREAU Bertrand	1.200	4	07/04/1942	
FOUCAULT	800	2	13/02/1942	
FOURÉE de Paris XIII	1.000	3	08/07/1942	
GAUTHIER Marie veuve	2.500	6	10/01/1942	600
GOURBOT Jules				200
GRAVET Charles	500	4	10/01/1942	250
GRAVET Gilbert	500	3	10/01/1942	250
GRAVET Hélène	600	2	10/01/1942	200
GUÉNOT	1.000	5	20/02/1942	
GUILLIN Cyrille		3		200
GUILLORY Marcel	1.000	2	10/01/1942	200
GUYOT M.	500	2	20/02/1942	
HUBLER Edouard	500	2	26/05/1942	
HUREAU Julien		2		300
HUREAU Maurice	1.200	2	10/01/1942	200
HUTTE Clémentine		1		400
JACOB veuve		1		250
JUFFET G.	800	4	07/04/1942	
JUMEL Robert	1.200	3	10/01/1942	200
LAMBLAT Georges	1.100	3	08/07/1942	
LAMOUREUX Narcisse	1.200	6	10/01/1942	600
LANSCIONI Gaston	1.300	2	10/01/1942	400
LAURENT Narcisse		2		100
LECOMTE Ulysse	1.000	5	13/02/1942	
LEFEBVRE René	1.200	6	13/02/1942	
LEGRA Victor				200
LEGROS A.	800	5	07/04/1942	
LEGROS H.	700	2	10/01/1942	
LEROUVILLOIS Ange		2		400
LETELLIER André	1.000	4	04/04/1942	
LHUILLIER Marcel	1.200	6	10/01/1942	500
LOISEAU Emile	1.000	2	10/01/1942	200
LOISEAU Romain	1.500	6	10/01/1942	600
LOISEAU R.	700	3	07/04/1942	
MALTAVERNE Rémi	800	3	30/03/1942	
MANTEAU	800	3	13/02/1942	
MARGUET	1.000	4	13/02/1942	
MARION René	900	4	10/01/1942	400
MARTIN Gabriel	600	3	13/02/1942	
MENIN Juliette	1.000	7	30/03/1942	
MERCIER A.	600	2	30/03/1942	
MICHOU Edouard	500	2	10/01/1942	250
MILANDRE René	1.000	4	30/03/1942	
MIQUET J.	500	2	13/02/1942	
MIZIO Ladislas		2		300

MORTIER Aimé	1.200	4	13/02/1942	
PAGEAU	1.000	3	20/02/1942	
PAMPIN Arthur	600	2	30/03/1942	
PASMANT	2.000	9	08/07/1942	
PELLETIER Aimée	800	3	30/03/1942	
PELLETIER Emile		2		350
PELLETIER Raymond	1.500	3	30/03/1942	
PELLETIER Roland	525	4	07/04/1942	
PERRON D.	800	4	07/04/1942	
PETIT Narcisse	800	4	10/01/1942	400
PLÉ Edouard	1.000	2	30/03/1942	
PRZYBYLSKI Jean	600	5	10/01/1942	300
PUSSARD Marcel	500	2	26/05/1942	
RAPINE Charles	2.000	7	30/03/1942	
RAPINE J.	1.500	6	07/04/1942	
ROBIN J.	1.000	5	20/02/1942	
ROBIN Juliette veuve	1.000	5	10/01/1942	500
SERADA				500
SIMON Eugène		2		200
SOSSON Henriette	600	2	30/03/1942	
SOUMIER Joseph	2.500	7	10/01/1942	700
SOUMIER Louis	1.600	4	10/01/1942	400
SOUMIRT R.	1.500	6	07/04/1942	
STIMECK J.	1.200	8	13/02/1942	
SURGET Léon		3		300
TARDIEU Caroline		1		400
TEMPLIER Edouard	500	1	30/03/1942	
TEMPLIER Jules	1.000	2	10/01/1942	200
TESTARD Jules	800	2	10/03/1942	
VERGER Casimir				300
VERGER Paul	500	2	10/01/1942	200
VIER Adrien		2		300
VIOLON M.	1.500	6	10/01/1942	600
VIRATEL Henri	1.200	5	07/04/1942	
WERGER Eugénie	1.200	3	10/01/1942	300
TOTAL	**99.750**	**418**		**23.000**

Farmers who produced potatoes are not included in this table.

Recovery

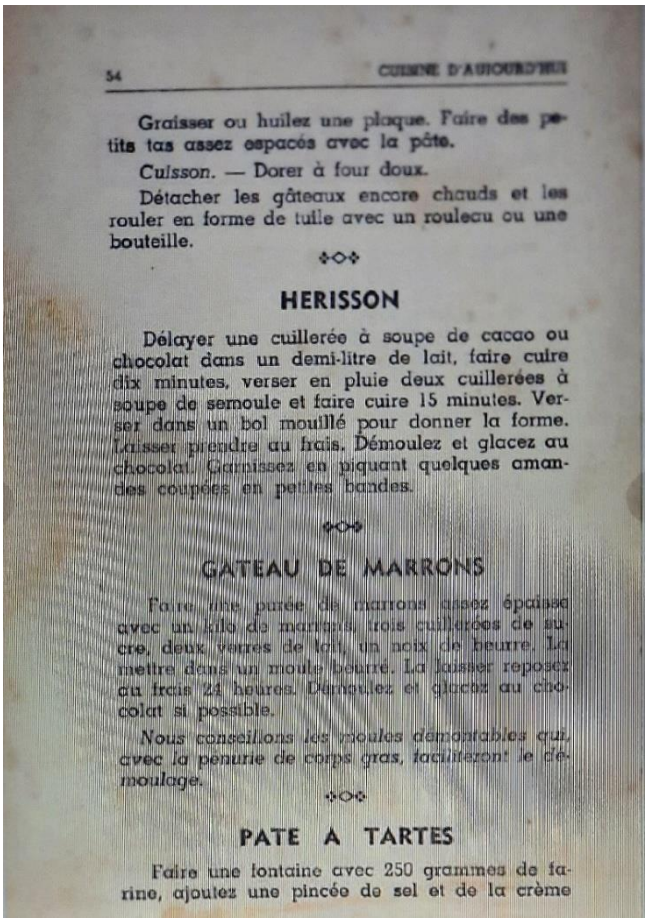
Schoolchildren collect bones to make shoe polish, used socks for baby wool, and small pieces of string to make large cables. Tableware, old clothes, and old materials are also collected.
These items are recycled for the benefit of the Secours National.



Advice for mothers on cooking

We teach them how to sterilize vegetables, make recipes using vegetables not requisitioned by the Germans, make soups with peelings, etc.

Schoolchildren collect bones to make shoe polish, used socks for baby wool, and small pieces of string to make large cables. Tableware, old clothes, and old materials are also collected.



54 CUISINE D'AUJOURD'HUI

Graisser ou huilez une plaque. Faire des petits tas assez espacés avec la pâte.

Cuisson. — Dorer à four doux.

Détacher les gâteaux encore chauds et les rouler en forme de tuile avec un rouleau ou une bouteille.

HERISSON

Délayer une cuillerée à soupe de cacao ou chocolat dans un demi-litre de lait, faire cuire dix minutes, verser en pluie deux cuillerées à soupe de semoule et faire cuire 15 minutes. Verser dans un bol mouillé pour donner la forme. Laisser prendre au frais. Démoulez et glacez au chocolat. Garnissez en piquant quelques amandes coupées en petites bandes.

GATEAU DE MARRONS

Faire une purée de marrons assez épaisse avec un kilo de marrons, trois cuillerées de sucre, deux verres de lait, un pain de beurre. La mettre dans un moule beurré. La laisser reposer au frais 24 heures. Démoulez et glacez au chocolat si possible.

Nous conseillons les moules démontables qui, avec la pénurie de corps gras, faciliteront le démoulage.

PATE A TARTES

Faire une fontaine avec 250 grammes de farine, ajoutez une pincée de sel et de la crème

Food aid for children

The national relief organization organized snacks for children and distributed casein biscuits in city schools.

Financial aid for prisoners' families

The sale of postcards of the marshal and solidarity vouchers provided financial aid to prisoners' families.

Organization of collections

On December 28, 1942, an agricultural collection took place throughout the department of Seine-et-Marne. This collection amounted to 125 tons of various foodstuffs, including apples, carrots, turnips, cabbages, leeks, potatoes, Jerusalem artichokes, rabbits, poultry, eggs, etc.

On August 17, 1943, a collection of items was organized for the town of Lorient, which had been completely devastated by bombing in April 1943. It was declared the first martyred city in France. Unfortunately, there were others to follow.

Organization of summer camps

Summer camps in Seine-et-Marne welcomed children of prisoners of war in Boissise-la-Bertrand and children from the martyred city of Lorient in Barbizon.
On November 18, 1944, Secours National was replaced by Entr'aide Française. One million victims to help. Distribution of Entr'aide Française parcels in 1944 and 1945 to families in need. Parcels containing 2,000 cockades and collection pins were sold on the public highway on February 10 and 11, 1945

The Red Cross

It works in the field of health care, providing assistance to the wounded and victims of bombing.



P. 10.014 fd *

AU COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE - GENÈVE

MESSAGE - EXPRESS

Urgent
Eilt

L'utilisation de ce message est réservée exclusivement aux **prisonniers de guerre** ou **internés civils** et leurs **proches parents** sans nouvelles directes depuis plus de **trois mois.**

Ausschliesslich für **Kriegsgefangene** oder **Zivilinternierte** und deren **Angehörige**, bestimmt, die seit mehr als **drei Monaten** ohne direkte Nachrichten sind.

EXPEDITEUR
Nom et prénom (en toutes lettres et en majuscules) *

ABSENDER
Name und Vorname (voll ausgeschrieben und in Druckbuchstaben) *

COMBE Yvonne
Villiers-sur-Grez
Seine et Marne

Adresse
Anschrift

150

DESTINATAIRE
Nom et prénom (en toutes lettres et en majuscules) *

EMPFÄNGER
Name und Vorname (voll ausgeschrieben und in Druckbuchstaben) *

COMBE Jules N° 12217
Kdo 150 *
Stalag XII F

Adresse
Anschrift

Sergent Jacques
Homme de confiance
Français du Stammlager XII F

* Prisonniers de guerre : indiquer le grade, le numéro du prisonnier et l'adresse complète du camp.
Internés civils : indiquer le numéro de l'interné et l'adresse complète du camp.

* Bei Gefangenen stets Angabe des Dienstgrades, der Kriegsgefangenen-, ggf. der Lagernummer.
Bei Zivilinternierten stets Angabe der Nummer und dem betreffenden Lager.

Message au verso.
Mitteilung umseitig.

LE DÉLÉGUÉ A PARIS

GENÈVE

She visits prison camps and delivers mail and packages to prisoners.

Religious institutions

They also participate in efforts to help local communities in the parishes where they are based.



VILLIERS SCHOOL DURING THE WAR

Enrollment and school start dates

Children must be 5 years old to attend elementary school. The first school year begins after the Easter holidays for children born between January and April, and the second school year begins in early October for all children born between May and December of the current year.

The 1939-1940 school year was very disrupted

For the start of the school year on October 2, 1939, in Villiers, the teacher enrolled 36 additional children, all from Paris (including Gérard PASMANT), bringing the total number of students to 77. The young Parisians were taken to the countryside for safety, as there were fears of bombing in the capital. In addition, daily life in the city quickly became very difficult, so people turned to family and friends living in the countryside to take in their children. The number of pupils in the canton's village schools suddenly swelled in September 1939.

Start of the school year on April 1, 1940: enrollment of five students, including two from Paris.

May 20, 1940: enrollment of four students, including three who were not native to Villiers.

The exodus: The evacuation order was given, and all schools in the canton of La Chapelle-la-Reine closed between June 13 and 15, 1940. After the debacle, classes gradually resumed in July with limited enrollment, returning to normal enrollment at the start of the school year in October. In Villiers, the teacher Marceau COUILLET had not yet returned from the war, so the new school year did not begin untilOctober 1, 1940.

From 1940 to 1946

On January 3, 1941, journalist Jean TARDIEU enrolled his 5-year-old daughter Alix in school.

In April and May 1943: nine new pupils enrolled (including Gérard PASMANT, who had returned to Paris in early 1942, and Bernard GRAPPERON).

On October 18, 1943, two pupils aged 5 and 7, who were being fostered by a family in Villiers, enrolled. Their fathers were prisoners of war.

The school resumed normal operations in October 1945.

Children in public care

These children, often orphaned by the war, were placed with foster families in the village who needed physical and financial assistance.

In October 1946, the following children were enrolled in school: Jean DELATUILERIE, Josiane MAILLARD, Michèle BLONDEAU, soon followed by Serge MAILLARD, Marcel HÉBERT, Johan PICOT, and Louise MARTEL, known as Louisette.



Group 2 of the 1941–42 school year



School year 43 - 44

Date	School enrollment	Number of registrants and reason for registration
3 octobre 1938	45	
2 octobre 1939	77	36 enfants parisiens placés à la campagne par crainte de bombardements sur Paris
1 avril 1940	82	2 enfants parisiens en plus des 3 enfants de Villiers
20 mai 1940	86	4 enfants placés à Villiers
3 octobre 1941	50	2 enfants de Villiers
13 avril 1942		3 enfants de Villiers
Octobre 42		1 enfant de Villiers
18 octobre 43	46	11 enfants dont 2 enfants de prisonniers, originaires de Paris
25 avril 1944		5 enfants parisiens
2 mai 1944		4 enfants parisiens
2 octobre 1944		8 enfants de Villiers
Pâques 45	74	3 enfants de Villiers
1 octobre 1945	58	8 enfants de Villiers
1 octobre 1946	54	7 enfants de Villiers

Teachers

The selection of teachers: Teachers are closely monitored by the French government. As proof, the circular sent to the prefect on December 27, 1940 states, "The selection of personnel who will be responsible for general and physical education in various educational institutions must be made with the utmost care and take into account the physical and athletic qualities of the candidates, as well as their moral values and sense of duty.... Inspectors must possess exceptional moral qualities."

In Villiers, teachers change frequently.

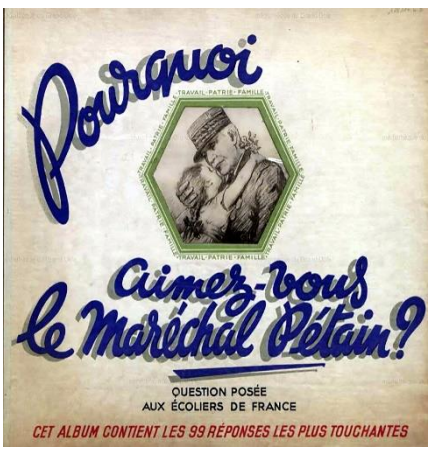
From October 1938 to September 1939 COUILLET Marceau.

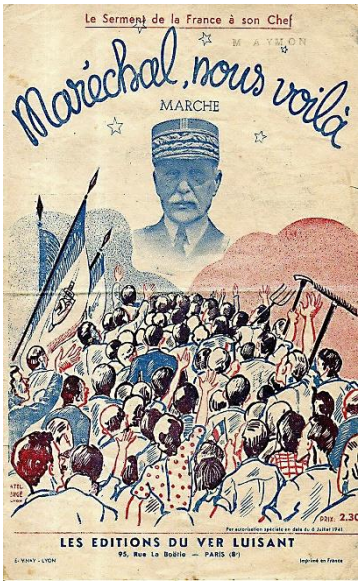
Gérard PASMANT recounts: We had a teacher, Mr. COUILLET, who didn't stay with us very long. The ruralpoliceman came into the classroom and handed the teacher a piece of paper. After reading it, he left usimmediately, forced to go to war. A female teacher replaced him."

From October 1939 to July 1940: a substitute whose name is unknown.
From October 1, 1940, to June 11, 1943: Raymond Berthier and his wife Lucienne.
From June 12, 1943, onwards, there were no more teachers at the Villiers school. Classes resumed on October 1, 1943, with a new teaching couple, Marius David and his wife Hermine.
From October 1939 to July 1940: a substitute whose name isunknown. From June 12, 1943, there were no more teachers atthe Villiers school. Classes resumed on October 1, 1943, with anew teaching couple, the Davids.

The curriculum

The school curriculum imposed the cult of Marshal Pétain. In each classroom, a picture of Marshal Pétain and his message to French youth had to be displayed. The school day began with the raising of the flag and the children singing "Maréchal, nous voilà" (Marshal, here we are). The Marshal attached great importance to the family and especially to the education of young people. Dictation texts, moral lessons, and songs were intended to convey the Head of State's message to young French people. Students had to express their gratitude to him by answering the question"*Why do you love Marshal Pétain?"* Marius and his wife Hermine.



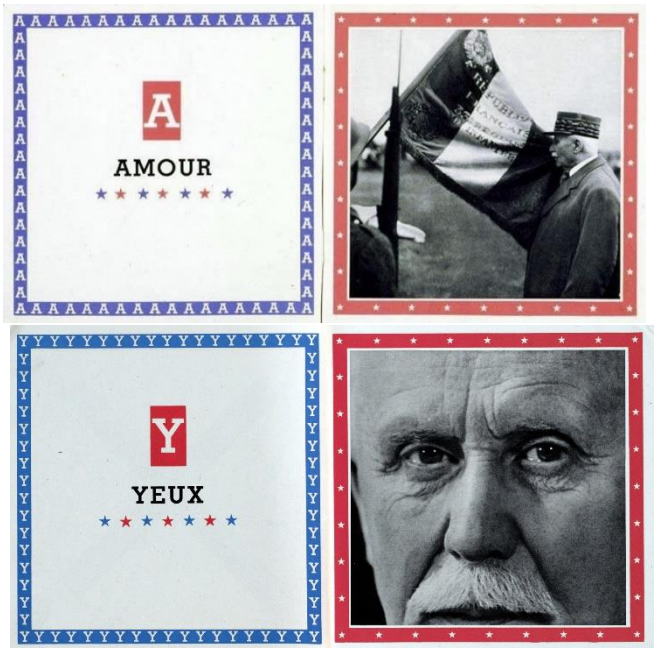


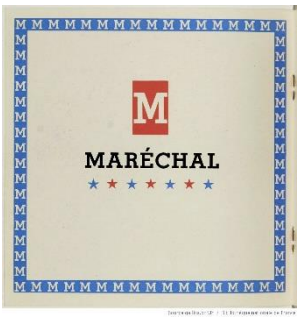
Song: Maréchal, here we come
Abécédaire illustré: K avec le képi du maréchal, Mle maréchal, F la francisque, B le bâton de maréchalLes cahiers de coloriage représentent Pétain.Bon-point avec dessin dumaréchal et de lafrancisque.Les livres d'histoire sont censurés pour le chapitre«l'orgueil allemand» au cours de la premièreguerre mondiale.



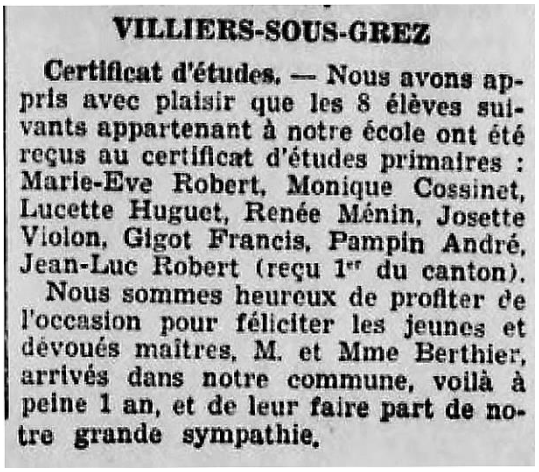
Sport must be developed in schools, and sports associations are springing up, such as the Educational and Sports Association of the canton of La Chapelle-la-Reine, but due to a lack of financial resources, plans for sports fields will never get beyond the drawing board.







The Certificate of Studies



VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

Certificat d'études. — Nous avons appris avec plaisir que les 8 élèves suivants appartenant à notre école ont été reçus au certificat d'études primaires : Marie-Eve Robert, Monique Cossinet, Lucette Huguet, Renée Ménin, Josette Violon, Gigot Francis, Pampin André, Jean-Luc Robert (reçu 1er du canton).

Nous sommes heureux de profiter de l'occasion pour féliciter les jeunes et dévoués maîtres, M. et Mme Berthier, arrivés dans notre commune, voilà à peine 1 an, et de leur faire part de notre grande sympathie.

Article du 11 juillet 1941

The examination for the school certificate at La Chapelle continued with some ups and downs: on July 31, 1940 (following the exodus, there couldn't have been many people there!). It then took place on June 11, 1941, June 12, 1942, May 28, 1943, May 30, 1944, and June 8, 1945. As teaching had been disrupted by the war, the exam took place in 1946 in two parts, the first on May 24, 1946, and the second on June 7, 1946. In 1947, everything finally returned to normal.

School holidays

Probably to mirror the German school calendar, the summer holidays in 1940 were shortened. In other years, the summer holidays ran from August 15 to October 1, with no All Saints' Day, winter, February or spring holidays during the year. Of course, during 1940, 1941, 1942, and 1943, the November 11 holiday marking Germany's defeat was eliminated. Our region was liberated at the end of August 1944, so November 11, 1944, was once again a holiday, but this was not the case in Alsace, which was still occupied.

Material conditions in schools



Poor-quality paper is scarce. The school lacks paper. It is conserved by drawing lines and writing on the covers of notebooks, narrowing the margins of sheets, and using the blank pages of previous years' attendance registers.
The schoolteacher writes to his inspector on a sheet of school notebook paper rather than on letter paper.Vouchers are required to obtain notebooks, paper, ink, etc.

Tasks assigned to schoolchildren

Collecting Colorado beetles

Colorado potato beetles invade fields and threaten potato crops by destroying young shoots.



At the time, there were no insecticides. In the occupied zone, the Germans ordered the academic inspectorates to help fight the Colorado beetles so that they could then requisition large quantities of potatoes. The academy passed on the order to collect the beetles to teachers in all primary schools in 1942, 1943, and 1944.

Children must capture the Colorado beetles by hand, collect the adult insects and larvae in a small metal box with a small opening, and crush the egg clusters. Teachers must destroy the insects and send the estimated quantities destroyed, measured in liters, to the school board every month.



The collection is supervised by the police three mornings a week for children aged 8 to 14. At the end of each collection day, the mayor issues a certificate confirming that the class has participated in the collection of Colorado beetles. Some farmers are reluctant, believing that the children searching for Colorado beetles cause more damage to the fields than the insects themselves.

Catching cockchafers



In the same vein, in the fall, schoolchildren must capture cockchafers, whose larvae, white grubs, damage crops. The teacher must destroy the cockchafers that are collected.



Various collections

Schoolchildren must collect wool, rags, bones, glass, copper, iron, and old paper. Everything is brought back to school.

Rationing of shoes for children

Clothing, fabric, shoes, galoshes, and slippers are subject to a card application and the obtaining of tickets. Each child was entitled to one pair of shoes every two years. As children's feet sometimes grow very quickly, the mayor inspected their shoes during school hours and then decided whether or not to grant them a voucher to buy shoes. In the photo of group 2 of class 41/42, we can see a fine display of galoshes in the front row.



The surrender of May 8, 1945, and its consequences:

The surrender was celebrated on May 8 in some villages and only on May 9 in all schools, with the words “victory holiday” or “victory celebration” written in the attendance register.

Then came the long wait for the return of prisoners of war and deportees. Children who had not seen their fathers for several years asked, “Who is this man coming to our house?” Fathers returned home and did not recognize their children, who had changed so much in the space of three or six years!

With the war over, during the summer of 1945, children who had been sent to the countryside as a precautionary measure returned to their original schools in the city, which led to a further change in school enrollment in rural areas. The school in Villiers went from 74 students in July 1945 to 58 students in October 1945.




Libération

La capitulation inconditionnelle de l'ensemble des forces allemandes a été signée hier matin dans une école de Reims, à 2 heures 41 (REUTER)

JOUR DE VICTOIRE

La condition de l'homme est sauvée

“Le gouvernement allemand a été forcé, à la suite de l'effondrement de toutes les forces physiques et matérielles de l'Allemagne, de demander à l'ennemi la cessation des hostilités ” — SCHWERIN VON KROSIGK

Ce matin Conseil de la Victoire

AUJOURD'HUI A 15 HEURES LA VICTOIRE SERA PROCLAMÉE

Frémissant et ému Paris a vécu son dernier jour de guerre

LA CÉRÉMONIE HISTORIQUE DE REIMS

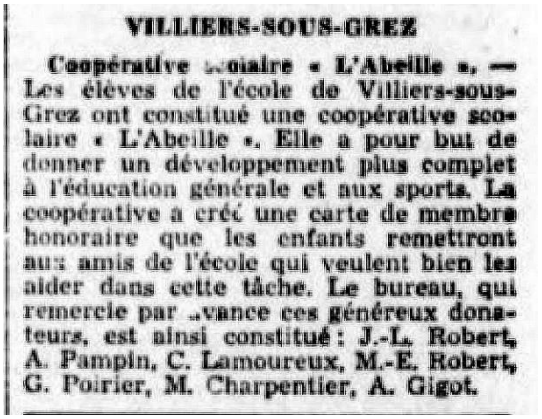
Ce soir cessez le feu !



THE SCHOOL COOPERATIVE—THE BEE

Creation of the school cooperative "L'Abeille" (The Bee)

Under the leadership of teacher Raymond BERTHIER, the Abeille de Villiers school cooperative was founded in November 1941. Its aim was to provide a more comprehensive approach to general education and sports. The board consisted of Mr. ROBERT, André PAMPIN, Mr. LAMOUREUX, Jacqueline ROBERT, Marguerite CHARPENTIER, Georges POIRIER, and A. GIGOT.



VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

Coopérative scolaire « L'Abeille ». — Les élèves de l'école de Villiers-sous-Grez ont constitué une coopérative scolaire « L'Abeille ». Elle a pour but de donner un développement plus complet à l'éducation générale et aux sports. La coopérative a créé une carte de membre honoraire que les enfants remettront aux amis de l'école qui veulent bien les aider dans cette tâche. Le bureau, qui remercie par avance ces généreux donateurs, est ainsi constitué : J.-L. Robert, A. Pampin, C. Lamoureux, M.-E. Robert, G. Poirier, M. Charpentier, A. Gigot.

On July 15, 1942, the municipality voted to grant a subsidy of 1,000 francs to the Abeille school society for the organization of concerts, the proceeds of which would be donated to the local committee for the assistance of prisoners of war to send parcels to prisoners.

Performances of L'Abeille

On May 5 and 19, 1942, the PLÉ ballroom was transformed into a theater. The stage was the raised area where the musicians usually stood. The stage was accessed by climbing a stepladder located in the courtyard and then passing through an open window. The set was designed by Henri SIMONIN and René CHAMPIN. The stage curtains were the double curtains belonging to the PLÉ family.



LA CHAPELLE-LA-REINE

VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

Groupe théâtral « L'Abeille ». — Le jeune groupe théâtral « L'Abeille » de Villiers-sous-Grez, s'est donné pour tâche de venir en aide aux prisonniers de la commune. Les 5 et 19 mai, 2 représentations théâtrales furent données et obtinrent le plus grand succès. Tous les jeunes acteurs se sont révélés comme des artistes en herbe... et charmèrent les nombreux spectateurs. Ces derniers, en échange ouvrirent largement leurs bourses puisque c'est une somme de 10.000 fr. qui ira à nos prisonniers. Merci à tous ces jeunes gens pour leur bonne volonté.

L'Abeille gives two performances of COURTELINE's "Lidoire," starring Raymond CHAMPION, André SURGET, Denise NEVEU, and Henri SIMONIN. Then Jeanine and Yolande PLÉ sing, accompanied on the piano by teacher Lucienne BERTHIER. Yolande PLÉ dances the bourrée in traditional Auvergne costume with René CHAMPIN. The shows raise 10,000 francs for the prisoners.





Yolande PLÉ, Jacqueline CHARPENTIER Et Henri SIMONIN

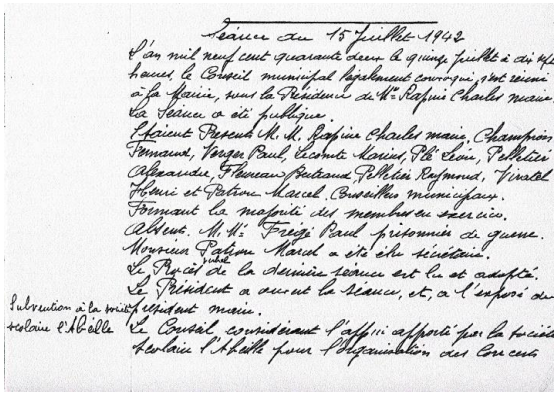


After the performances, a photograph was taken in the courtyard of the PLÉ hotel, featuring all the actors from L'Abeille and almost all the young people in the village at that time.

Haut de gauche à droite : *André FAUVET, Bertolo CAMPIGOTTO, Marcel MENIN, Raymond CHAMPION, Angélo CAMPIGOTTO, Suzanne NAUDET, Louis SOUMIER, Yvonne X, Paulette FLEUREAU, Raymond BERTHIER, Lucienne BERTHIER, André SURGET, Yvonne CHARPENTIER, Fredo REBOUT.*

2nd row from left to right : X, *Jeanine VIOLON, Georges LOISEAU, Janine PLÉ, Jacqueline ROBERT, Raymond PURSEIGLE, Yolande PLÉ, Ginette PATRON, Fortuné CAMPIGOTTO, Denise NAUDET, Huguette LEBEC, Yvonne COSSON, Lucette NAUDET, Renée CHAMPION, Lulu DELAHAYE, ½ frère de Fredo, Pierre NAUD.*

1er row : *Joséphine CAMPIGOTTO, Denise NEVEU, Odette MENIN, Janine NAUDET, Fernande MERCIER, Marcel LORRAIN, Jean BOUVIER.*



Séance du 15 Juillet 1942
L'an mil neuf cent quarante deux le quinze juillet à dix heures, le Conseil municipal légalement convoqué, s'est réuni à la Mairie, sous la Présidence de M. Paquis Charles maire.
La Séance a été publique.
Etaient Présents M. M. Paquis Charles maire, Champion Fernand, Vergon Paul, Lecomte Maurice, Plé Léon, Pelletier Alexandre, Fleureau Antonin, Pelletier Raymond, Vivatel Henri et Patron Marcel, Conseillers municipaux.
Formant la majorité des membres en exercice.
Absent. M. M. Frezet Paul prisonnier de guerre.
Monsieur Patron Marcel a été élu secrétaire.
Le Procès verbal de la dernière séance est lu et adopté.
Le Président a ouvert la séance, et a l'exposé de
Subvention à la Société l'Abeille
Le Conseil considérant l'appui apporté par la Société l'Abeille pour l'organisation des Concerts

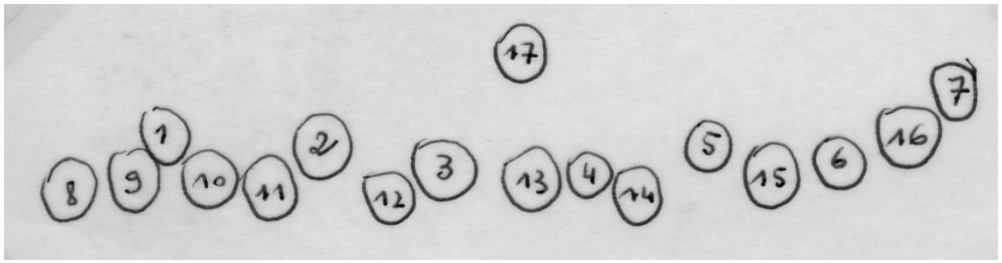
On July 17, 1942, the City Council, considering the support provided by the company "l'Abeille" for the organization of concerts, the profits of which are donated to the local committee for assistance to prisoners for the sending of parcels to them, voted a subsidy of 1,000 francs to the said company so that it could purchase what was necessary for decorations, books, etc.

Two performances were also given in the PLÉ all, on December 25, 1942, and on Sunday, December 25, 1942, and Sunday, December 27, 1942, with an American-style auction of cigarettes following the show. The show consists of three plays: "Il ne faut pas jouer avec le feu" (Don't Play with Fire) by ROCHERON, "La grenouille" (The Frog) by BRETONNET, and "Une étrange maladie" (A Strange Illness) by CARLES.
The actors were Raymond PURSEIGLE, Yolande PLÉ, Jean BOUVIER, Henri SIMONIN, Jacqueline CHARPENTIER, and Huguette LEBEC. Singers Denise NEVEU, Yolande, and Janine PLÉ performed "Si l'on pouvait arrêter les aiguilles" (If We Could Stop the Hands of Time), the popular song by Berthe SYLVA.

HOLIDAYS DURING THE OCCUPATION

The French government encourages the organization of folk festivals, charity galas, and circus performances. Religious ceremonies are permitted. Solemn communions are an opportunity for families to get together (below, the one on May 7, 1944).





1 BACHET Michel
2 JUMEL Madeleine
3 COMBE Gisèle
4 AMIOT Raymonde
6 LHUILLIER Madeleine
5 DORÉ Simone
7 DEBARD Henri
8 RODDES Jacques
9 FRAIX Jean
10 RUISS Bernadette
11 BACHET Bernard
12 PRZYBYLSKI Jean
13 DORÉ Bernard
14 AMIOT René
15 FRAIX Michel
16 DEBARD René
17 curé LECALONEC

A folk festival was organized by Miss SOSSON in September 1942 with the girls from the patronage.

(Patronage: a charitable organization providing daycare and leisure activities for children)



1 : ? – 2 : Mlle SOSSON – 3 : Pierrette MICHOU – 4 :? – 5 : Madeleine JUMEL – 6 : Janine AUBRY – 7 : Raymonde AMIOT – 8 : Elisabeth PROVOST – 9 : Simone DORE – 10 : Gisèle COMBE – 11 : Gisèle POIRIER 12 : Monique MARION

May 1

It had always been Saint Philip's Day. Since May 1, 1889, it has also been Labor Day. From 1941 to 1945, the name Labor Day disappeared (no doubt because of the parades and demonstrations it engendered) and Saint Philip's Day was celebrated again, especially in honor of Philippe Pétain. Labor Day was reinstated on May 1, 1946, by General De Gaulle.

A cantonal arts event was organized in Villiers by the cantonal educational and sports association on June 14, 1942.

The entrance fee was 10 francs, with free admission for schoolchildren. A garage was provided for bicycles, as this was the main means of transport due to a lack of fuel and restrictions on motor vehicle use.

Several Parisian artists were in attendance, including two actors and a singer.

All the children from the canton's schools sang Beethoven's "Lied de mai" and Rapin's "La marche des enfants de France" together. The school singing competition saw the school in Recloses win a cup. The school in Villiers came second.

At the same time, pupils' drawings were exhibited, with Henri DEBARD from Villiers winning third prize. A presentation of sewing projects enabled the school in Noisy to win a prize for its tea set.

On August 15, 1942, the municipal council voted to award a subsidy of 500 francs to the canton's educational and sports association.

Mother's Day.

It was established by Marshal PETAIN, who wanted to honor mothers, and set the first Mother's Day on Sunday, May 31, 1942. As this was also the day of First Communion in Villiers, Mother's Day in Villiers was postponed to Sunday, June 7. At PLÉ, the young girls of L'Abeille served a reception for the children and their mothers. Yvonne LOISEAU recited "La mère" by Charles Louis PHILIPPE. Diplomas were awarded to mothers who had been decorated by the French family.



VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

La fête des mères. — Par suite de la première communion le 31 mai, la fête des mères fut célébrée le 7 juin dans notre village. Tous les enfants du pays assistèrent au goûter qui leur fut offert. Les jeunes filles de la section « L'Abeille » se dévouèrent pour servir tous nos jeunes bambins et les mamans furent heureuses de contempler la face réjouie des enfants, surtout des petits. Yvonne Loiseau récita « La Mère », de Charles Louis Philippe, au vin d'honneur donné en l'honneur des mamans. Puis les enfants suivirent leurs mamans pour le retour, tous heureux du caractère d'intimité et de simplicité qu'avait revêtu cette fête.

Les organisateurs remercient toutes les personnes qui généreusement ont prêté leur concours actif pour la réussite de cette manifestation.

Transcription of an article from the newspaper

L'Informateur dated June 12, 1942:
VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

Mother's Day. – Following First Communion on May 31, Mother's Day was celebrated on June 7 in our village. All the local children attended the tea party that was offered to them. The young girls from the "L'Abeille" section devoted themselves to serving all our young children, and the mothers were happy to see the joyful faces of the children, especially the little ones. Yvonne Loiseau recited "La Mère" by Charles Louis Philippe at the reception held in honor of the mothers. Then the children followed their mothers home, all happy with the intimacy and simplicity of the celebration. The organizers would like to thank everyone who generously lent their active support to make this event a success.

The Christmas tree

On December 4, 1941, the council voted to grant a subsidy of 200 francs for a Christmas tree for the school children. On Sunday, December 20, 1942, the school cooperative organized a Christmas party in the large PLÉ hall. The school children sang, and then toys were distributed to children aged 2 to 14. Parents were welcome to accompany their children.

Newspaper article dated December 18, 1942

VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

Arbre de Noël. – La coopérative scolaire organise pour le dimanche 20 décembre un arbre de Noël. Les enfants exécuteront quelques chants qui seront suivis d'une distribution de jouets pour tous les enfants de la commune de 2 à 14 ans. Cette manifestation aura lieu à 14 h. 30, salle PLÉ. Les parents sont cordialement invités à accompagner leurs enfants

VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ

Arbre de Noël. — La coopérative scolaire organise pour le dimanche 20 décembre un arbre de Noël. Les enfants exécuteront quelques chants qui seront suivis d'une distribution de jouets pour tous les enfants de la commune de 2 à 14 ans. Cette manifestation aura lieu à 14 h. 30, salle Plé. Les parents sont cordialement invités à accompagner leurs enfants.

Clandestine dances

Young people want to have fun and dance. Clandestine dances are organized in attics with wooden floors to the sound of accordions and other easily transportable instruments. An emergency exit through the gardens at the back of the houses is provided in case a lookout alerts them to the arrival of the Germans.

Testimony of Joséphine CAMPIGOTTO: "The young people were going to the dance in the large hall at Camille PLÉ's house, and also in a room in the old Saint Etienne hotel. Suddenly, some Germans came in through the gate and hung their rifles along the wall. One German said, 'Let's see if we can see any troops.' All the young people went home. Maria, Angelo, and I went home through the back.
Once, we danced on the asphalt of the Nemours road, after the Larry, and when a car came, we hid in the woods. We also went to dances at Hyspa's house upstairs, on the wooden floor."

During the war, Rolande Fleureau and Jacqueline Pelletier organized a ball at the Saint Etienne hotel to raise money for prisoners. They gave the money from the collection box to the mayor.



Show performed for the benefit of prisoners of war by the Abeille school cooperative, created to help prisoners.

FEAR OF BOMBING

Allied bombing

Since the spring of 1943, France had been regularly bombed by Allied aircraft in order to destroy German forces. Hearing the characteristic hum of the so-called flying fortress bombers passing overhead at night, residents feared bombing raids and took precautions. They stored sleeping supplies and a minimum amount of food in their cellars.
This is why Lucette VOCELLE, who had just given birth to her first child Bernard on January 14, 1944, set up the cradle in the cellar for a week or two. And so Bernard began his life, near the barrels!

René AMIOT recounts: "Fearing bombing, we had put supports in the cellar at home. Before going down into the cellar, we saw shells flying overhead, bright things above the countryside. Bombs fell in the grounds of Bourron Castle, as well as on the highway and the railroad tracks."

In the evening or early night, people could hear the humming of the engines of the flying fortresses as they dropped their bombs on German cities. This very distinctive humming sound has remained in people's memories: Raymond Mortier was looking for mushrooms at the edge of the woods around 1990 when he heard and recognized this very distinctive humming sound he had heard when he was 10 years old. He went out into the fields and saw a flying fortress passing overhead, flying slowly at low altitude, as he could see the heads of the two pilots. The fortress was not on a war mission but was returning from the annual aviation festival in La Ferté-Alais.

Raymond MORTIER recalls: "The planes began flying from 10 a.m. to noon, heading for Germany and returning around 5 p.m. or during the night. The British bombed at night and the Americans bombed during the day. Astronomical amounts of fuel were consumed..."

The bombing of Bourron visible from Villiers

From Villiers, you could see the bombs falling on Bourron. The village of Bourron was one of the favorite targets of Allied pilots. It had a train station, a German fuel depot, and, most importantly, a refinery that converted rapeseed oil into fuel for German submarine engines.

Forteresse B 25



Gérard PASMANT remembers the bombings of 1944: "Every day, planes flew back and forth. In the distance, we could hear the bombings. One evening around 10 or 11 p.m., the vibrations from a plane made us leave the house.
We climbed a ladder to look over the wall that blocked the horizon. It was a P.61 plane nicknamed "the black widow" that had just dropped flares. It dove, gained altitude, then dove again toward the ground, rockets and machine guns firing, creating a veritable fireworks display. The tracer bullets showed us the target:the SNCF train station in Bourron-Marlotte. There were lots of explosions and vibrations, and the sky was red. The show lasted about thirty minutes. In reality, it was not the Bourron station that was targeted, but the oil factory near the Bourron station, where the Germans were converting table oil into motor oil.
Following these two bombings, we dug a trench in the garden, like many of our neighbors, to protect ourselves from possible new attacks.
In July, a humming sound coming from the west grew louder in the sky. Three waves of four twin-engine B.25 MITCHELL bombers were approaching. Within seconds, we were all in the trench. The planes were flying very low. The doors under the fuselages were open, and suddenly each aircraft dropped a string of bombs from its holds. Once again, the target was the oil refinery. ...
There was a terrible noise; we could hear the explosions 4 kilometers away, and the ground shook for several seconds.
In early August (August 7), three waves of B17 flying fortresses bombed the refinery again, causing oil tanks to burst and destroying several houses at the entrance to Bourron."



Fortress B 17

Bourron was bombed several times during the summer of 1944: on July 7, during the night of July 14-15, on August 7, and on August 24. The bombs often fell near their targets, destroying the train station and the refinery, as well as around forty houses and the church and its cemetery. There were around fifteen casualties and, sadly, six civilians were declared "Died for France."

During the bombing on August 7, a wagon carrying rapeseed oil was ripped open. As soon as the alert was over, the news spread quickly and many people came to collect rapeseed oil from the bomb craters to use for cooking. In the days that followed, the smell of frying filled the streets of Bourron and the neighboring villages!

Raymond MORTIER recounts: "Following a bombing raid on the refinery in Bourron, Roger TEMPLIER and I went to fetch oil in Bourron, on foot with a handcart containing one or two milk cans borrowed from FRAIX.
People collected the oil from the ground with a saucepan and then filtered it. We drew oil from the wagon, using cinnamon because we didn't have any pots. When cooking, the oil boiled a lot the first time and then smoked less."

René AMIOT recounts: "After the Bourron refinery was bombed, once at night and once in the afternoon, a heavy bombardment shook the Bourron cemetery. Another time, a P.38 twin-tail Mosquito plane strafed and blew up a train with its rockets. We found shell casings from its machine guns in Villiers in the fields, in Les Rouillères, yellow and khaki shell casings."

Bombing of the Bourron oil refinery



Wave jammers and leaflets

Allied planes dropped thousands of thin strips of aluminum foil to jam German radar waves. They also dropped leaflets and newspapers written in French with information about France, its allies, and even the whole world. The Germans forbade people from picking up these leaflets, but they did so anyway and the leaflets circulated. Was it also forbidden to pick up the strips of aluminum foil?

René AMIOT: “We would watch the squadrons fly by and say to ourselves, ‘They're not going to give up on this.’ They were dropping golden pieces of paper to jam the airwaves.”

Gérard PASMANT: "Often in the morning, we would find metal strips that Allied planes had dropped to jam radio systems. Other times, even in broad daylight, small newspapers written in French would fall from the sky to announce the upcoming landing. For the children, it was a game to collect them, to see who could get the most, and the same went for the metal strips. We didn't realize the danger; if the Germans had caught us with our harvests..."

The bombers' fuel tanks

Bombers have large metal fuel tanks that they drop when they are empty. Since the government asks children to collect everything, they pick up these tanks, called fuel tanks, for themselves and transform them when they can.

Raymond MORTIER recalls: "We collected empty gasoline cans dropped by super fortresses, twice the size of a table and 40 cm high, which must have held about 1,000 liters. Some tanks were made of sheet metal, others of partitioned cardboard. I collected 8 or 10 liters of gasoline in a container, and later we used the container, which was now scrap metal, to build a boat that we put in the Loing River at Grez."

Gérard PASMANT recalls: "Some planes dropped their extra fuel tanks in the middle of nowhere. These cans were made of light metal, and by cutting them in half lengthwise, we got two small boats to sail on the Loing, where we often went swimming. One afternoon, I saw a flying machine drop its fuel tank. Without a moment's hesitation, I knew it was for me! Running along the road to La Chapelle, I followed the trajectory of the fuel tank, which crashed into a small wood. I was the first on the scene, but the tank was made of plastic-coated cardboard and the casing was damaged. There was still a little fuel left in it. I rolled it home and it ended up in the trash."

The bombings of Bourron as recounted by the inhabitants of Bourron

Bourron suffered six minor bombings and four more significant ones:

July 7, 1944

Testimony of Charles MONIER:

"In Bourron, we are subjected to daily strafing and bombing by Allied aircraft; the refinery, the train station, and the railroad tracks are being targeted.
On the afternoon of July 7, I was in the garden when the bombing started, and a plane flew low over my head. I rushed into my hole, but a minute later it came back at very low altitude. It flew over again, but behind it I saw a black object flying about fifteen meters above the ground. This time I realized it was a bomb. I heard a dull thud, then immediately a huge boom. The sky darkened, then a shower of earth and rubble fell on my back. I climbed out of my hole without a scratch, but the garden and the farm shed were devastated. The bomb had fallen 30 meters away from me."

Night of July 14 to 15, 1944

Testimony of André LYONNET

"Every night, there was a plane called the Marauder that flew over the railroad tracks and fired a few bursts at the trains. On the night of July 14-15, there were 60 fuel tanks on the tracks at Bourron station, which were used to refuel German vehicles. Machine gun bullets hit the tanks, which caught fire. It was like fireworks. The small plane also dropped two bombs, which fell into the woods."

August 7, 1944

Testimony of André LYONNET

"It was the great bombing of August 7: the castle district, the Hôtel de la Paix, the Place de la Ferme, the national highway, and the woods along the railroad line, but few bombs fell on the refinery.
A bomb fell on a tank, piercing it on the side; it contained rapeseed oil, which spilled into the hole. Word quickly spread that the oil was edible, so people rushed with buckets and cans to collect some of this precious commodity."

Bourron station after the bombing





La petite commune de Bourron-Marlotte a été particulièrement éprouvée il y a cinquante ans, le 7 juillet, le 15 juillet et, surtout, le 7 août 1944. De violents bombardements ont causé beaucoup de dégâts et provoqué la mort de sept personnes. L'objectif des "forteresses volantes" américaines, c'était une raffinerie de "corps gras" et la gare de Bourron-Marlotte où se trouvaient des citernes et un train d'essence qui "flamba en hautes gerbes rouges". Le 7 août, il y eut une centaine de points de chute, dont près de la moitié dans le centre de l'agglomération. Une quarantaine de maisons avaient, malheureusement, été atteintes, dont l'hôtel de la Paix. On entendait le bruit des bombes et on voyait les lueurs de l'incendie jusqu'à Nemours et Fontainebleau.

MM. René Royer et Claude Gervais, deux Bellifontains, nous ont confié des photographies de ces violents bombardements de Bourron-Marlotte. En 1944, M. René Royer, photographe à l'imprimerie ménard (cartes postales) avait été obligé d'abandonner provisoirement sa profession pour devenir encaisseur à la Compagnie du Gaz. C'est au cours de ses tournées qu'il photographia les dégâts causés par les avions U.S. Pour sa part, M. Claude Gervais, apprenti menuisier à Bourron-Marlotte, qui n'avait pas 18 ans, était réfractaire au S.T.O. Dans la journée il était dans les bois fabriquant des fagots pour les boulangers de Paris, avec son oncle, René Barbillon, de Montigny-sur-Loing, qui se cachait lui aussi de l'occupant. La future femme de M. Claude Gervais, née Alice Guillory, habitait elle aux Basses-Loges et fut témoin de la bataille du Pont de Valvins...

Des souvenirs qu'on n'oublie pas.

A local newspaper dated August 11 reports on this deadly bombing: around a hundred bombs were dropped, nearly half of them in the center of the town, around forty houses were hit, four people were killed, three seriously injured and taken to Fontainebleau hospital, and a dozen people suffered minor injuries and were treated at the scene.

Mayor Raymond DUPOND and Mr. MOUCHET from La Sablière organized the requisitioning of able-bodied men to help the firefighters clear the debris. Prisoners from Melun Central Prison participated as volunteer bomb disposal experts in the village.

August 24, 1944:

Henri FROMENT: "After several visits by Americans to the country. The bombing was very violent and stunned our people, who thought they were safe."

The bombing caused one death and material damage. It was the last bombing at last!

Below are some of the houses bombed in Bourron-Marlotte.



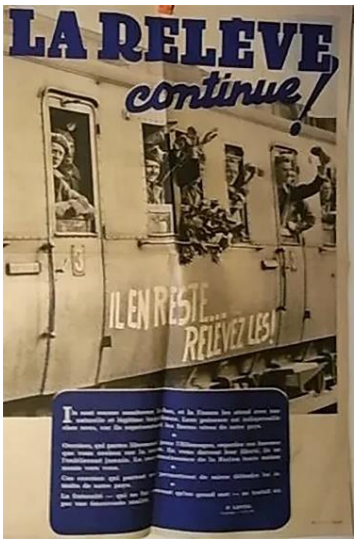
WORKING IN GERMANY: THE NEXT GENERATION AND THE STO



Volunteering

In May 1942, Gauleiter (Nazi party official) SAUCKEL informed the French government of the Reich's desire that 250,000 French volunteer workers be designated by the Vichy authorities before July 1942 to go and work in Germany.
Initially, the French government appealed for volunteers, but there was little response. Pierre Laval, President of the Council, negotiated with the Germans, who maintained their demand for workers.

La Relève



Germany needed both agricultural and industrial labor to replace the men who had left for the Eastern Front. Posters covered the walls, urging workers to "replace" prisoners by showing solidarity.
On June 22, 1942, LAVAL announced on the radio that he had obtained the principle of relief from the occupiers: for every three volunteers leaving to work across the Rhine, one French prisoner of war would be released, under the slogan "three for one." In fact, the Germans wanted skilled workers, who were in short supply in France. In the cities, employment offices were set up to recruit volunteers.
On August 18, 1942, at the Compiègne train station, a train carrying French volunteers leaving for Germany crossed paths with a train carrying French prisoners released under the Relève agreement. In August 1942, the Germans released only 60,000 prisoners out of the 100,000 they had promised to release under the "Paris Agreements."

On September 24, 1942, the Germans requested 133,000 specialists before October 15. To encourage workers to go to Germany to work, the French government decided to allocate half of the worker's salary in France to their families. The expense would be covered by a tax on commerce and industry.
Factory managers were required to draw up lists of their staff, starting with single people, then married people without children, then married people with one child, and so on.
Trains will depart for Germany on October 21, 22, and 24, 1942, from the Gare du Nord or Gare de l'Est stations, in principle for six months or one year. In the event of family events, those required to work may obtain a 15-day leave of absence. To do so, workers returning from Germany had to report their arrival in France to the town hall of their place of residence, which then informed the Werberstelle at 39 Avenue Thiers in Melun. Similarly, when the return journey to Germany began, the Werberstelle had to be notified. It is true that some took advantage of their leave to disappear into thin air, such as Raymond PURSEIGLE from Villiers. Permits became increasingly rare as many people forgot to return to work in Germany. On January 24, 1944, the Ministry of the Interior insisted on searching for those who had not returned to Germany.
Former prisoners of war from 1914-1918 and those from 1939-1940 who could have been released did not participate in the Relève.

In Seine-et-Marne, under the Relève program, 2,043 men left on December 31, 1942, 1,520 men on March 1, 1943, and 2,000 men on February 28, 1943, for a total of 5,563 men. The following returned to Villiers: HUGUET Edmond, LANERY Marcel, MICHAUT Raymond.

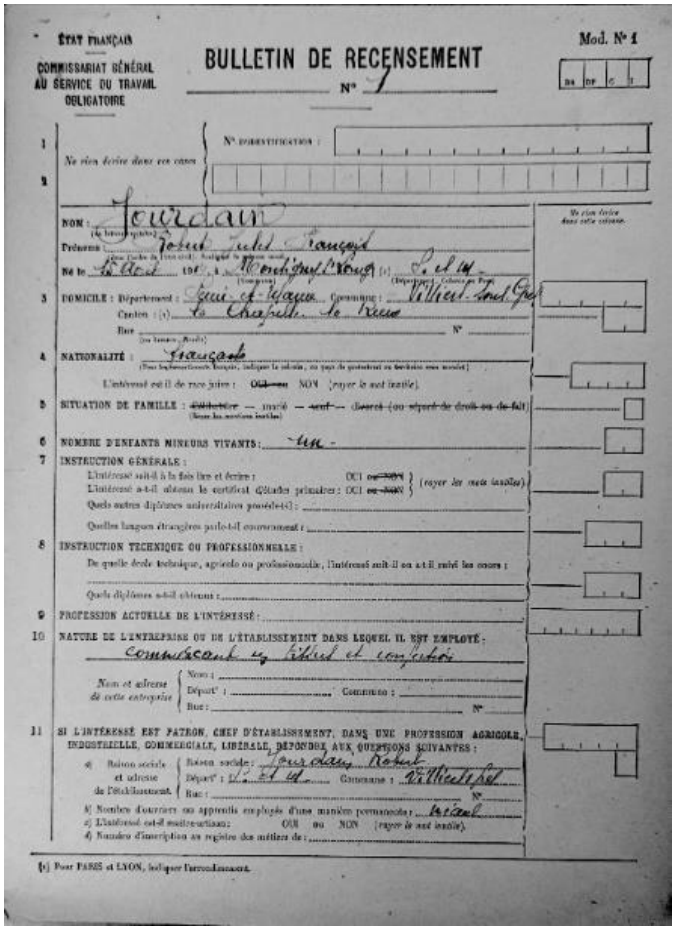
The class of 1942

Men born in 1922 did not do military service, as the French army was banned by the Germans. The Germans saw them as a pool of young people available to work in Germany. Men from the class of '42 were conscripted and had to leave for Germany.
In Villiers, this affected Raymond PURSEIGLE, a farmer, Marcel LOISEAU, a mason, and Jean MERCIER.

> Raymond PURSEIGLE recounts: "Marcel, Jean, and I all worked at the same factory, EIBIA, which manufactured Wolff brand powder. The factory was located in Germany, near Hamburg, Bremen, and Hanover, in Walsrode to be exact. The factory was liberated by the British. I returned from Germany in 1943, claiming that my mother had died (which was not true), and went into hiding in the Bourbonnais region with my father's family, using false papers under the name Jean BLANCHET."

The Compulsory Labor Service

As there were not enough volunteers to go to Germany, a law passed on September 4, 1942, but postponed by Laval in February 1943, instituted compulsory labor for men aged 18 to 60 and for single women aged 21 to 35.
November 1942: Company bosses were summoned to Melun to designate the workers who would have to leave for Germany. Fortuné CAMPIGOTTO, a worker at the Sablières de Bourron sand pits, was requisitioned by his boss, who had to designate three of his workers. The boss chose from among his workers who had no dependents. On November 14, 1942, Fortuné took the train from Paris to go to work in Germany in a factory near Magdeburg.
On February 17, 1943, the STO (Service du Travail Obligatoire, or Compulsory Work Service) was extended to all French men between the ages of 18 and 60, except farmers, because French soil had to produce enough food to feed the German soldiers!



ÉTAT FRANÇAIS
COMMISSARIAT GÉNÉRAL AU SERVICE DU TRAVAIL OBLIGATOIRE

BULLETIN DE RECENSEMENT N° 1

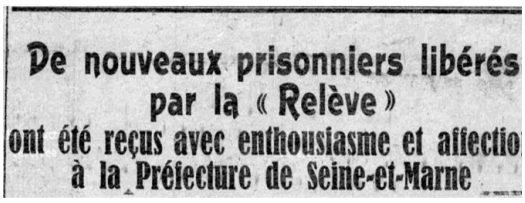
Mod. N° 1

NOM : Lourdan
Prénoms : Joseph Jules François
Né le 5 Avril 1921 à Montigny-Lencoup (Seine-et-Marne)
DOMICILE : Département : Seine-et-Marne Commune : Villiers-sous-Grez
Canton : La Chapelle-la-Reine
Rue : N°
NATIONALITÉ : Français
SITUATION DE FAMILLE : célibataire — marié — veuf — divorcé (ou séparé de droit ou de fait)
NOMBRE D'ENFANTS MINEURS VIVANTS : Un
INSTRUCTION GÉNÉRALE :
L'intéressé sait-il à la fois lire et écrire ? OUI
L'intéressé a-t-il obtenu le certificat d'études primaires ? OUI
Quels autres diplômes universitaires possède-t-il ?
Quelles langues étrangères parle-t-il couramment ?
INSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE OU PROFESSIONNELLE :
De quelle école technique, agricole ou professionnelle, l'intéressé sait-il ou a-t-il suivi les cours ?
Quels diplômes a-t-il obtenus ?
PROFESSION ACTUELLE DE L'INTÉRESSÉ :
NATURE DE L'ENTREPRISE OU DE L'ÉTABLISSEMENT DANS LEQUEL IL EST EMPLOYÉ : Commissaire en fibre et confection
Nom et adresse de cette entreprise : Nom : Départ. : Commune : Rue : N°
SI L'INTÉRESSÉ EST PATRON, CHEF D'ÉTABLISSEMENT, DANS UNE PROFESSION AGRICOLE, INDUSTRIELLE, COMMERCIALE, LIBÉRALE, RÉPONDRE AUX QUESTIONS SUIVANTES :
a) Raison sociale et adresse de l'établissement : Raison sociale : Lourdan, Robert Départ. : S.-et-M. Commune : Villiers-s/Gr Rue : N°
b) Nombre d'ouvriers ou apprentis employés d'une manière permanente : Aucun
c) L'intéressé est-il mutualiste ? OUI ou NON (rayer la mention inutile).
d) Numéro d'inscription au registre des métiers de :
(1) Pour PARIS et LYON, indiquer l'arrondissement.

An additional 250,000 workers must be sent to Germany, namely French citizens aged 20 to 22 who will have to work in Germany for two years.

In May 1943, a new obligation to provide 220,000 men for the STO (Compulsory Work Service); in August 1943, a new obligation to provide 500,000 men. Of the 500,000 workers who left for Germany, only 100,000 prisoners returned to France. 250,000 prisoners became "free workers"! According to the relief agreements, three for one, 160,000 prisoners should have returned, and this is not compensated for by the "free workers" since they remain in Germany!

LE BRIARD EDITION 1 DU 16 OCTOBRE 1942


De nouveaux prisonniers libérés
par la « Relève »
ont été reçus avec enthousiasme et affectio
à la Préfecture de Seine-et-Marne

Some Frenchmen volunteered to leave for financial gain, as French workers were paid very little. Those required to join the STO had to undergo a medical examination conducted by a special commission at the Melun dispensary on March 2, 1943. The doctor declared a few men unfit for service, but he couldn't reject too many!

According to the law of February 1, 1944, signed by Pierre Laval, on April 20, 1944, a censu was conducted of men aged 16 to 60 and women without children aged 18 to 45 for th purpose of assigning them to labor service in Germany.
Packages allowed for labor deportees: Every French worker in Germany could receive on standard postal parcel every two months, with a maximum weight of 5 kg. When posting the parcel the worker's family had to present a certificate from their local town hall confirming that the recipien was working in Germany and that the sender was entitled to send them the parcel.

L'organisation TODT

Created in 1938 by Fritz TODT, a Nazi activist since 1922, it was a German paramilitary corps initially composed of unemployed people and later of prisoners and deportees to carry out major works: construction of highways, the SIEGFRIED line, the Atlantic Wall in France, etc.



The employment agencies recruiting workers for TODT and the Atlantic Wall are located in Fontainebleau at Place du Maréchal Pétain 3, Rue Royale, and in Nemours at 4 Rue de Paris. The Germans are also recruiting from General De La Porte du Theil's youth work camps.
On February 22, 1943, 3,543 men left Seine-et-Marne for Germany and 2,000 men for TODT; on March 21, 1943, 425 men left for Germany and 384 men for TODT.

Introduction of the work certificate

In France, this certificate is mandatory for men working in industry, commerce, or skilled trades. Anyone who refuses to participate in the STO cannot obtain this work certificate and is therefore unable to work in France. They have two options: work for Germany or join the Resistance.



TODT Organization
French workers building the Atlantic Wall.



Life in the labor camps

Fortuné CAMPIGOTTO recounts: "I was deported to Oschersleben near Magdeburg to a camp made up of large wooden barracks; there were 192 men in each barrack, and each barrack was heated by wood stoves. I worked in a factory manufacturing parts for aircraft engines and V1-V2 rockets. The factory was bombed and then moved to an underground salt mine, where it was hot and the salt stung the skin.
The deportees collected small pieces of unused aluminum and secretly made small objects for themselves (tobacco tins, rings) and kitchen utensils (pots, pans) to sell to German housewives, who were also suffering from the many restrictions imposed by the war and were beginning to run out of everything.
Food was scarce and poor. Nettle soup, moldy soup at that, every day, one or two potatoes and a piece of bread; on Sundays, a sausage as well! From time to time, a guy managed to escape and snatch some potatoes from the fields.
We shared our care packages with Pierre BOUCHU, a worker at the Bourron lime kiln. (Fortuné's mother and Pierre's wife agreed not to send their care packages at the same time.)
On Sundays, we didn't work, so we could go out into town. Some of us hung out with German girls, but most of us stayed at the camp, killing time as best we could. We did our laundry when the weather allowed us to dry our clothes. In the meantime, we wore our sweaters inside out during the week and right side out on Sundays, when they looked clean." We still cared about our self-esteem and elegance!



A barrack at the STO camp in Oshers-Loeben. Among the 70 occupants, Fortuné CAMPIGOTTO can be identified by the cross.

The Downed American Plane (December 1942)

On December 12, 1942, an American B-17 Flying Fortress was shot down in the forest near Achères-la-Forêt, at a place known as *Les Bois des Petits Béorlots*.
The crackle of gunfire could be heard as far away as Villiers, since in those days there was very little background noise. News that an American bomber had been brought down by the Germans spread quickly through the nearby villages around Achères.





Crew of the B-17 Flying Fortress *(James Toney, bottom right)*

The Man Who Fell from the Sky



As he did every morning, Pierre Lavau, an employee of the French Railways, inspected the two tracks of the strategic line running from the Bourron-Marlotte junction to Malesherbes. He lived in a small gatekeeper's house beside the road between Villiers-sous-Grez and Bourron-Marlotte.
One morning, as he passed near the Vignette Bridge, he noticed a man quickly hide behind a tree. Thinking it was a poacher checking his traps, Pierre continued his inspection. On his way back from La Chapelle-la-Reine, the man stepped out of the woods and approached him. His cheeks were scratched, and one lip was nearly split open.

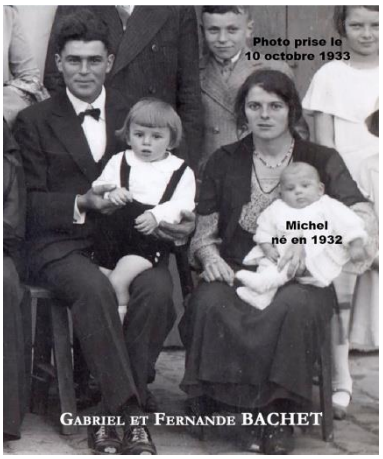


He didn't speak, but spread his arms and pointed to the sky, miming a fall.
Pierre Lavau immediately understood—this was an American airman, a survivor from the downed Flying Fortress, and he wanted to help him. But Pierre couldn't keep the man in his own home; district officials visited too often, and too many people stopped at his roadside cottage.

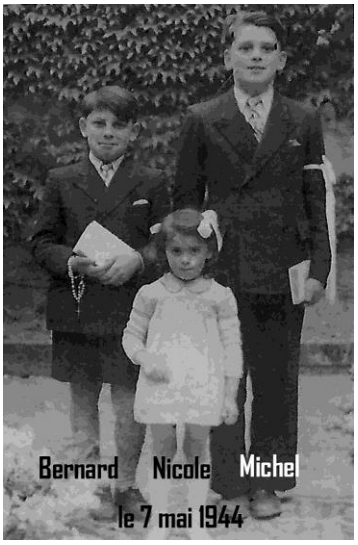
La famille BACHET abrite l'aviateur américain James TONEY pendant 3 semaines



Gabriel takes the aviator back to his farm, and problems arise as soon as he arrives. It is impossible to communicate other than through gestures. During the day, a number of people come to the farm to buy milk, eggs, and vegetables, so the aviator stays upstairs in the bedroom.



He receives a visit from the Bachet children, Nicole, barely 3 years old, and especially the two boys, Michel, 11, and Bernard, 9 and a half, who are fascinated by this young man, slightly older than them, who doesn't speak French but whom they quickly come to regard as a kind of big brother. The family decided to call him "Fernand"—the first name of Fernande's (Gabriel's wife) brother—who visited the farm almost every day. This was a wise precaution in case one of the children inadvertently mentioned the aviator in front of other people.



At the time, Denise NEVEU, Mrs. BACHET's cousin, and a clerk named Georges LOISEAU also lived on the farm.
James only came down to the kitchen in the evening when the farm gate was locked. He seemed to enjoy French food. During the day, he kept himself busy as best he could. In the US, he had worked in a bedspread factory and was so skilled at sewing that he began embroidering the household linens.
On Christmas Day, the BACHET parents invite their family members over for the traditional meal. As most people are unaware of the aviator's presence, he lies on the bed all day so as not to make any noise in the house that might betray his presence. Michel and Bernard go upstairs from time to time in the afternoon to see him.

Who is James TONEY?

The bombing raids always follow the same pattern. The planes take off from England, fly across part of France, turn back much further than their actual target, and bomb the final target on their return to England.



James "Sandy" Toney , nicknamed "the Sandy One" for his light hair and easy grin,was born on April 19, 1919 , in Commerce, Georgia, USA . He was a member of the crew of the B-17 Flying Fortress named "One O'Clock Jump," assigned to bomb the Rouen -Sotteville railway marshalling yard . James served as the tail gunner .

The Fortress was attacked and shot down by two German fighter planes flying above the B-17. The aircraft exploded in mid -air and split in two. James managed to free himself from the cabin and parachute out; his parachute opened at about 200 meters above the ground and caught in the trees. Pulling on the harness, James managed to reach the ground safely. He hid for several hours, then later that evening stopped a passing cyclist, who took him home and gave him civilian clothes.

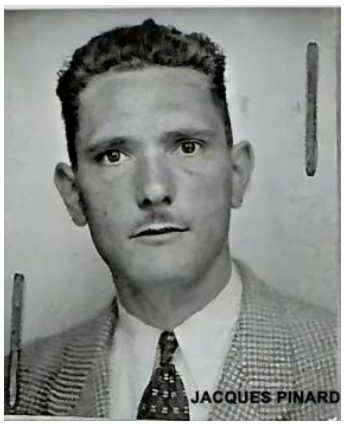
Airmen flying on missions carried several essential items with them: English and French money, a small compass, and a map of France printed on a large silk handkerchief.

A Path to Freedom

A born resistor at heart, Gabriel Bachet knew he had to find a network that could help James return home. Drawing on his old military connections, he contacted a former comrade from the Villemin Hospital, where he had served as a soldier during 1939–1940. That man put him in touch with Yves Péhou, the head of a Resistance network operating in Paris.

Le long périple de James TONEY pour regagner l'Angleterre

With the help of Mlle Fleury de By-Thomery, an anti-Pétainist who had worked as a translator at the American embassy, James' departure was prepared in conjunction with contacts in the south of France. On January 2, a young man named Jacques Pinard, who was part of the Publican/Buckmaster network and spoke a little English, came to Paris to pick up James at Gabriel's house.



To make sure that the man claiming to be Jacques Pinard was truly the right contact, he presented half of a torn five-franc note, which had to fit exactly with the other half that Gabriel kept. When the two pieces matched perfectly, the transfer could begin.

At the Bourron train station, Pierre Lavau hid James inside the tender of the locomotive, while Jacques took a seat on the train as a regular passenger. Once they reached Gare de Lyon in Paris, Jacques retrieved James and took him to his home in Saint-Germain.

There, after having his photograph taken, false identity papers were made forJames. Every detail of the next stage of his journey was carefully explained to him—everything had to be understood and memorized, since he could not carry a written itinerary, maps, or train schedules without risking exposure.

Then began a long train journey. Crossing the demarcation line was difficult but successful thanks to the help of railway workers. James arrived in Dax and then Toulouse. Whenever anyone spoke to him, James pretended to be deaf and mute. James stayed on a farm near Toulouse for five days. He then travels to Luchon where, on January 8, 1943, smugglers, in exchange for money, help a group of 12 people, including James, cross the border into Spain. But the Spanish civil guards arrest James, who had been advised to say that he was an American civilian residing in Switzerland, as he had his American passport with him. After a telephone conversation between the Civil Guard and the American Consulate in Barcelona, James was allowed to cross Spain to Gibraltar and then return to England on March 15, 1943.



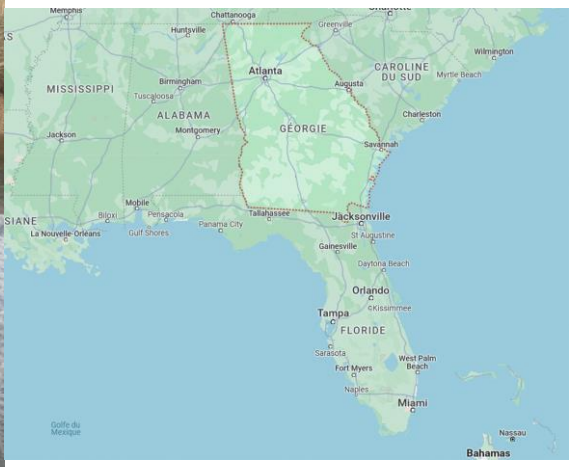
What Became of James's Companions?

Because it was foggy that day, the Germans were unable to determine exactly where the plane had crashed, which allowed some of the airmen to hide at first and later escape.
Of the ten men in the crew, a second airman also parachuted and was rescued by Robert Chicard in La Chapelle-la-Reine; he eventually made his way to Spain and then to England.
A third airman, also on the run, managed to reach England through Spain as well.
Sadly, two of the airmen were killed, and the remaining five were captured by the Germans.

After the War

James Toney returned home to Georgia, but sadly, he died in a car accident near Atlanta in 1947.
In 1947, Fernande, the wife of Gabriel Bachet, received a certificate signed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, expressing the gratitude of the United States to Gabriel Bachet for having helped and protected an Allied soldier from the enemy.
Decades later, through the power of the Internet and the help of Franck Signorile, a genealogical "helper" who assists families that once sheltered American soldiers, the family of James Toney was found.
His great-niece, Bobbie Walker, and great-grandniece, Wendy Walker, were overjoyed to learn more about the life and story of their great-uncle.





Bobbie et Wendy WALKER

GABRIEL BACHET –Resistance Member

Gabriel Bachet

Gabriel Bachet, born on December 25, 1905, in Villiers, was a farmer who worked his land at 13 Rue de Milly in Villiers. He married Fernande Laurent on October 2, 1928, and together they had three children. In 1939, Gabriel was mobilized and assigned to the Villemin Hospital in Angicourt (Oise)—a facility that no longer exists today. While stationed there, he took note of several men who openly held strong anti-German views.



Wedding Photo — Gabriel and Fernande, October 2, 1928

Joining the Resistance

In December 1942, Gabriel sheltered an American airman, James Toney, in his home for several weeks after Toney had parachuted from a Flying Fortress shot down by the Germans. Gabriel then sought a way to help him return safely to England.



Yves PEHOOU

He reached out to his friends from the Villemin Hospital, who put him in touch with a group leader — Yves Péhoou, a pilot and member of the B.O.A. (Bureau des Opérations Aériennes) in Paris. Péhou was responsible for locating potential parachute drop zones not too far from the capital.

Gabriel joined the B.O.A., which determined that the area around Villiers, with its mix of fields and woods, was well suited for airdrop operations.

Gabriel Becomes Leader of the BOA Group in Villiers



Gabriel then became the head of the BOA group in Villiers. He organized a small team of Resistance members made up of trusted relatives and friends, including Fernand Laurent and Raymond Michaut from his own family.

From Villiers: Théodule Combe, Marcel Boisseau, Louis Soumier, Angélo Campigotto, René Lefèbvre, and Georges Naudet.

- From Ury: Maurice Duros and Marcel Narcy. From Grez-sur-Loing: Pierre Lavau, and from Bourron-Marlotte: Robert Grenet.

Gabriel's Leadership and Missions of the BOA Group

Gabriel served as the leader of the BOA group in Villiers, receiving orders from a superior within the organization known by the code name "Renard."

The B.O.A. (Bureau des Opérations Aériennes) had three main missions:
1. Airdropping supplies and equipment for urban Resistance networks,
2. Parachuting liaison agents into occupied territory, and Gathering intelligence for the Allies.

On June 11, 1944, four members of Gabriel's group carried out a sabotage mission, cutting an underground telephone cable used by the Germans near Nemours. Gabriel also passed along to the Americans the location of the Bourron refinery plant, which was later bombed by Allied forces. Henri Debard later recounted that he had taken part in topographical surveys for the American army, right under the noses of the Germans.

In 1943, the schoolteacher Marius David gave me written permission to miss school for a month so I could help a surveyor who was taking measurements. I held the surveyor's measuring rod, and the data he collected was later sent to the American army.
After the war, someone came to see us, thanked me, and gave me a small reward. I also received a token of thanks from the surveyor himself."



The Parachute Drops

A parachute drop zone was identified and reported to the appropriate authorities. It was located at the edge of the woods, in the fields on the plateau at a place known as Le Dessous du Landy, parcel ZB 128, near a wooded path leading down to the village. The site was marked out by several members of the group and assigned the code name "Folie Collective."

The parachute drops were announced by personal messages broadcast over Radio London, repeated several times throughout the day. In the evenings, when they came home from school, Michel and Bernard Bachet would listen to these mysterious personal messages, which seemed meaningless to most people—but for the Resistance, they were the secret signal to act.

The first message received signaled the preparations to begin, while the second message—either identical to the first or continuing its opening phrase—indicated that the operation was to be carried out immediately.
Bernard still remembers the messages:"De la bicyclette à la pédale"and"C'est une folie collective."
The radio transmitter, essential for emergency communication, was operated and hidden by Robert Grenet near the Bourron quarry, where he worked. A first parachute drop of weapons, flashlights, and radio equipment took place at the end of 1943, received by five men from the Bachet group. In February 1944, another airdrop of weapons and equipment took place, this time involving ten men from the group.
On June 15, 1944, the drop was preceded by the coded message"Deux petits fous accompagnés d'un grand fou" ("Two little fools accompanied by one big fool"), signaling the arrival of three parachutists and four tons of weapons and supplies.
Twelve men took part in transporting and burying the eighteen containers in the woods along La Pente du Crot auFer, before the contents were later distributed to Resistance fighters in Champagne-sur-Seine and to a network inParis.
Some of the weapons were hidden at the Monastery of the Oblate Fathers in La Brosse- Montceaux. On July 24, 1944, the Germans captured and tortured five monks, trying to force them to reveal where the weapons were hidden. When none of them spoke, the five men were executed, and their bodies thrown into the monastery well. The other monks were imprisoned at the Compiègne camp, and on August 25, they were loaded onto a train bound for Germany. They were finally liberated by the Americans on September 1, 1944, near Péronne. The monastery was ransacked.

The Arrest of Gabriel

Gabriel was betrayed by a liaison agent. On July 2, 1944, the occupants of a black German Citroën Traction stopped two young women chatting on the sidewalk and asked them where Gabriel Bachet lived—as there were no house numbers at that time.
The next morning, around 6 a.m., the Germans pounded on Gabriel's door. Two black cars drove into the courtyard and parked facing the road, ready to leave quickly. They arrested Gabriel, beat him in front of his wife and three children, and forced him into the first car.

> **Nicole Bachet testified:** "The Germans beat my father, and they also struck Madame Péhou, who was thrown back onto the bed. I was in my pajamas, standing at the top of the stairs, clutching my mother's skirt. My father climbed into the car—that is the last image I have of him. After that, I remember nothing."

The Germans searched the entire house. They handcuffed the cart driver, Georges Loiseau, in the downstairs bedroom and, upstairs, found Madame Péhou, the mother of Yves Péhou, a Resistance member. She had taken refuge in the countryside with her daughter-in-law Jeanne, known as Nita, who was also in Resistance, and with little Anita, the baby only four months old.
Thérèse Péhou was taken away in the second black Citroën.

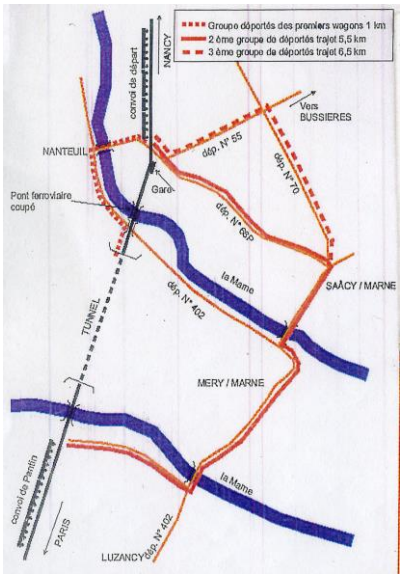


Nita, who had been lying upstairs in the bedroom, reacted instantly: she hid compromising documents inside the baby's diaper, tucked her child into the bed between two pillows, opened the window, and leapt into the street in her nightgown. She twisted her ankle, but fear gave her wings—ignoring the pain, she escaped down the lane. Passing through gardens, she found refuge with Louis Soumier, who hid her in his home at 31 Rue de Milly.
Meanwhile, Fernande Bachet had taken the baby in her arms, crying out, "My baby, my baby!" Fortunately, the Germans did not notice the open window facing the street.
After the Germans left, Nita returned to retrieve her baby and then fled back to Paris, fearing the Gestapo might return to Villiers. Despite the thorough search, the Germans did not find the weapons hidden inside the seed drill or the radio transmitter concealed in an old barrel.

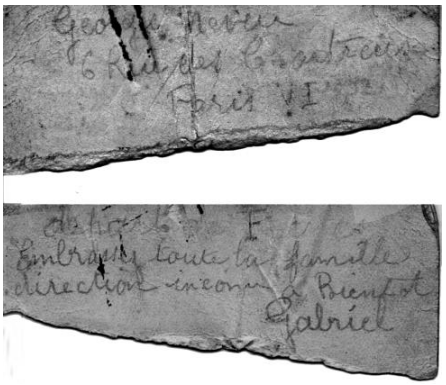
Following another denunciation, the Feldgendarmerie from Melun returned to the Bachet home one evening in early August 1944.
Before opening the door to the Germans, René Lefèbvre and Pierre Lavau, who were both at the farm at the time,hid behind the garden door, each armed with a shovel.
The Germans ordered the two boys, aged 11 and 12, to raise their hands—and likely Fernande's as well. They then searched the house, probably looking for weapons.
Fortunately, they did not discover the revolver hidden beneath the nest of a brooding hen, nor the radio transmitter.They also did not venture into the garden, where Lefèbvre and Lavau remained concealed.

The journey from France to Germany.

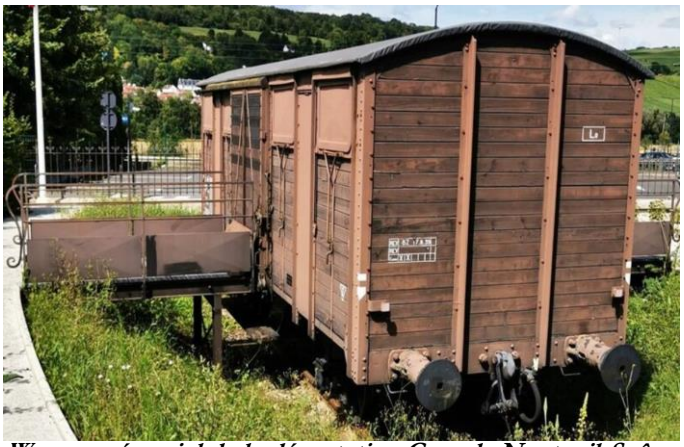
Gabriel was taken to Fontainebleau prison, where he was violently interrogated by KORPF, the sadistic head of the Melun Gestapo. Gabriel was then transferred to Gestapo headquarters on Rue des Saussaies in Paris, where he was tortured again, before being imprisoned in Fresnes prison.
Gabriel, who was clearly very courageous, remained silent under torture, as otherwise many other members of Gabriel's group would have been arrested.



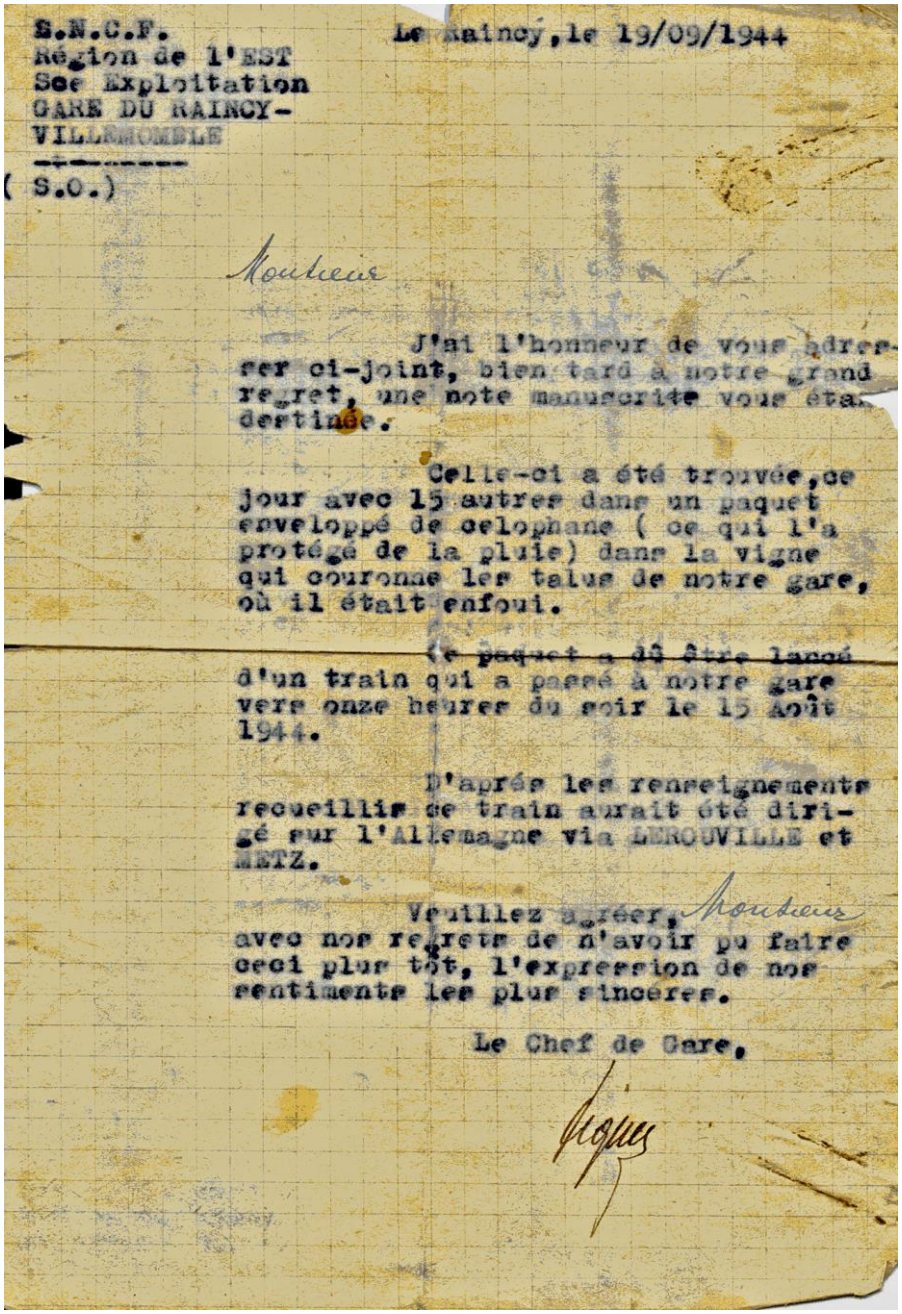
He was then deported on the last convoy to leave Pantin station for Germany on the morning of August 15, 1944, with 2,400 prisoners (men and women) from Fresnes and Romainville prisons. The next morning, the convoy was stopped in the Nanteuil tunnel because the track had been bombed.



The prisoners had to carry the heavy loot taken by the Germans on foot from the Luzancy plain to the Saâcy-sur-Marne train station, 5 km away. There, the deportees were crammed into cattle cars, with 80 to 120 people per car.
A memorial to this event was erected and inaugurated on June 23, 2012, at the Nanteuil-Saâcy train station, in the form of a vintage car, found at the back of a marshalling yard and renovated by the SNCF thanks to subsidies and public donations.
In the car where Gabriel is locked up, someone with paper and a pencil tears his sheet of paper into small pieces. On one of them, Gabriel writes "**Departure from Fresnes. Kisses to the whole family. Destination unknown. See you soon, Gabriel.**" On the back is the address of a cousin in Paris's 6th arrondissement. These few written messages are wrapped in a small package that is thrown out of an opening in the car onto the railroad embankment. The package is recovered by a railroad worker on September 19, 1944, opened, and each short message is delivered to its recipient.



Wagon mémorial de la déportation Gare de Nanteuil-Saâcy



S.N.C.F.
Région de l'EST
Soe Exploitation
GARE DU RAINCY-
VILLEMOMBLE
(S.O.)

Le Raincy, le 19/09/1944

Monsieur

J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser ci-joint, bien tard à notre grand regret, une note manuscrite vous étant destinée.

Celle-ci a été trouvée, ce jour avec 15 autres dans un paquet enveloppé de cellophane (ce qui l'a protégé de la pluie) dans la vigne qui couronne les talus de notre gare, où il était enfoui.

Ce paquet a dû être lancé d'un train qui a passé à notre gare vers onze heures du soir le 15 Août 1944.

D'après les renseignements recueillis ce train aurait été dirigé sur l'Allemagne via LEROUVILLE et METZ.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur avec nos regrets de n'avoir pu faire ceci plus tôt, l'expression de nos sentiments les plus sincères.

Le Chef de Gare,

Letter dated September 19, 1944 "I have the honor of sending you, albeit very late and much to our regret, a handwritten note addressed to you. It was found today along with 15 others in a package wrapped in cellophane (which protected it from the rain) in the vineyard that surrounds the embankments of our station, where it had been buried. This package must have been thrown from a train that passed through our station at around 11 p.m. on August 15, 1944. SNCF Raincy Villemomble station."

Prisoner camps in Germany

Gabriel's train passes through Weimar on August 20, 1944

1) **Buchenwald**

He arrives on September 3, 1944 at the Buchenwald concentration camp, where he is given the registration number 77190. He is then sent to the Dora camp.

2) Dora

He was sent to the Dora tunnel, an external commando of the Buchenwald concentration camp, where secret A4V2 rockets were produced in an underground factory dug by thousands of prisoners under the mountain in 1943.



Tunnel à l'usine de fusées du camp de Dora

3) Ellrich

Then, on September 7, 1944, he left for the Ellrich commando of the Mittelbau concentration camp, where he survived thanks to the solidarity of another deportee, Raymond BEVAN.

4) Nordhausen

In February 1945, Gabriel, in a state of extreme weakness and deemed unfit for work by the SS, was included in a convoy of 1,602 sick prisoners who left on March 3, 1945, for the Nordhausen commando. Like almost all of the prisoners in this convoy, he was reported missing on March 8, 1945. The Nordhausen camp was liberated by the Soviets on May 6, 1945, but the information did not reach France or the Red Cross.

Article relatant le parcours de Gabriel édité dans le livre des 9000 déportés de Mittelbau-Dora

BACHET Gabriel
matricule 77190 à *Mittelbau*-Dora

Gabriel Bachet est né le 25 décembre 1905 à Villiers-sous-Grez (Seine-et-Marne), fils d'Albert et Albertine Bachet, née Vaucelle. Jeune cultivateur, c'est dans cette commune que le 2 octobre 1928 il épouse Charlotte Laurent, cultivatrice. Le couple a trois enfants, Michel, Bernard et Nicole, nés respectivement en 1932, 1933 et 1940. La famille est domiciliée au village natal. Le 5 septembre 1939, Gabriel Bachet est mobilisé et envoyé comme infirmier à l'hôpital Villemin à Angicourt (Oise). Démobilisé, il est autorisé à rentrer dans son foyer.

Selon une attestation, il rejoint dès 1941 le réseau Action de la France combattante comme agent P2, chargé de mission de 3e classe. En décembre de la même année, il recueille un aviateur américain, mitrailleur à bord d'une forteresse volante, Robert-James Toney, qui vient de sauter en parachute de son avion en flammes. Il l'héberge pendant environ deux mois avant de le confier à une filière d'évasion vers l'Espagne. À la suite de cela, il est contacté par le BOA dont il reçoit les ordres par l'intermédiaire de M. Pinard de Laigle (Orne) du réseau Publican/Buckmaster. Gabriel Bachet développe une intense activité résistante, notamment comme chef de dépôt de parachutages. C'est sur dénonciation d'un camarade, suite à des aveux obtenus sous la torture, qu'il est arrêté dans sa ferme le 2 juillet 1944 à l'aube. Il est battu et emmené rue des Saussaies, siège parisien de la Gestapo, puis interné à Fresnes.

Le 15 août 1944, alors que les troupes d'occupation harcelées par la Résistance s'apprêtent à quitter Paris encerclée par la 2e division blindée, les Allemands décident de vider les prisons et de former un dernier convoi de déportés vers Buchenwald près de Weimar en Thuringe. Gabriel Bachet figure sur la liste des 1 650 hommes qui arrivent le 20 août à destination alors que les 550 femmes sont emmenées jusqu'à Ravensbrück. Au début du voyage, il parvient à jeter un message sur la voie qu'un cheminot transmettra à son épouse. Placé en quarantaine, il devient le matricule 77190.

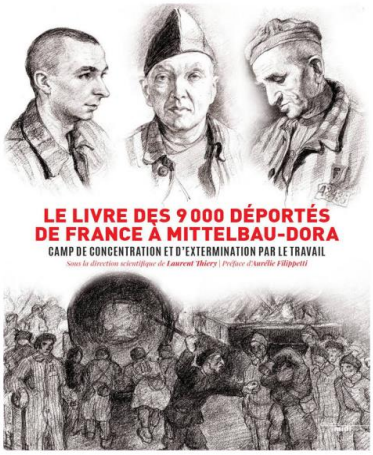
Le 3 septembre 1944, Gabriel Bachet est envoyé au Tunnel de Dora, *Kommando* extérieur de Buchenwald se trouvant près de Nordhausen au sud du Harz. Ce camp annexe cache, sous la montagne du Kohnstein, l'usine souterraine de production des fusées secrètes A4-V2, la *Mittelwerk*, creusée et aménagée un an plus tôt par des milliers de détenus dont plus de la moitié ont péri dans d'affreuses circonstances. Mais il ne la verra probablement pas car il est dirigé dès le 7 septembre vers le *Kommando* tout proche d'Ellrich-Juliushütte, créé en mai 1944 avec mission d'enfouir l'industrie aéronautique allemande. Outre la pénurie totale qui y règne, les SS commandés par leur chef Kammler font preuve d'une totale et dévastatrice sauvagerie. Gabriel Bachet fait face en comptant sur la solidarité de son compagnon d'infortune Raymond Bevan (78197), mais selon le témoignage de celui-ci, « Gaby » se trouve, en février 1945, dans un état de grande faiblesse.

Jugé « inapte au travail » par les gardiens SS, il est en conséquence intégré au convoi de 1 602 malades en partance le 3 mars 1945 pour la Boelcke Kaserne à Nordhausen. Cependant, le transport doit repartir le 6 mars avec 2 252 inaptes pour atteindre le KL Bergen-Belsen le lendemain. Comme la quasi-totalité des détenus, Gabriel Bachet est porté disparu à compter du 8 mars 1945, victime à l'âge de 39 ans de la barbarie nazie. Depuis sa déportation, sa famille est restée sans nouvelles. Seules quelques informations « fragmentaires et contradictoires » sont livrées par les détenus rentrés des camps. La tragique réalité s'imposera alors.

Courageux résistant, Gabriel Bachet fera l'objet d'une citation à l'ordre de la Division.

Sources : Bu7/2-3/1 (Buchenwald) ; DAVCC 21p420240 ; *Les cahiers de la déportation seine-et-marnaise, le dernier convoi* ; LT6/03/1945 ; Mié ; Fiche Arolsen.

Bernard Doncker



The family's desperate search for news of Gabriel

As prisoners began returning from concentration camps in April 1945, the BACHET family still had no news of Gabriel.

On August 12, 1945, his mother wrote to the Ministry of Prisoners, Deportation Department, reporting various pieces of information about Gabriel and asking for them to be verified by the state services.
Undated letter, arrived on August 22, 1945, addressed to the Captain, written by Gabriel's mother and asking for any information, good or bad, about her son.

On September 14, 1945, his wife placed a missing person ad in the newspaper Libération.

On an unspecified date, Fernande received a letter written by Raymond BEVAN, Gabriel's companion at the Ellrich camp, asking for news of Gaby, with a reference to a certified copy of the original from the mayor of Villiers dated May 8, 1946.

On January 28, 1947, Gabriel's mother requested a search for her son from the Ministry of Prisoners, Deportees, and Refugees.

On June 14, 1948, the same request as that made by Gabriel's mother was made, this time by Mr. MOREAU in Montcourt.

The lengthy procedures involved in registering the death

On May 8, 1946, his wife submitted a request to regularize the civil status of a "missing person."
On October 10, 1946, the Ministry of Veterans and War Victims drafted the certificate of disappearance No. 23960 for Gabriel BACHET.
On January 25, 1950, the Fontainebleau Court of First Instance established Gabriel's presumed death on March 3, 1945.
On February 7, 1950, the judgment of the Fontainebleau court declared that Gabriel BACHET had died on the presumed date of March 3, 1945, that the present judgment constituted a death certificate and must be transcribed on that date in the civil registry of the commune of Villiers-sous-Grez.
On June 10, 1950, his wife submitted a request for the words "died for France" to be added to the death certificate of a political internee, political deportee, or labor deportee.
On an unknown date, a certificate arrived from Commander BRAUN, head of the Publican network of the Fighting France, attesting that "*Gabriel BACHET is a member of the Action Network of Fighting France in category P2, a third-class mission officer, arrested by the German police for acts of resistance, he was deported in the convoy known as the 77,000, to which I belonged. Gabriel BACHET behaved admirably during his deportation. He died in the Ellrich extermination camp, surrounded by the esteem and affection of all his comrades.*"

Recognition by France

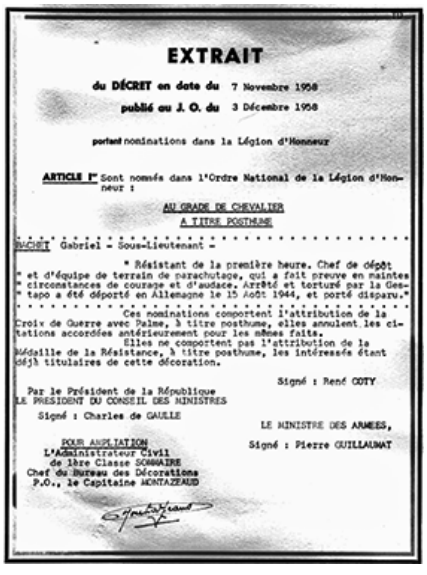
Title of Deported Resistance Fighter
On December 18, 1954, the Minister of Veterans Affairs and War Victims decided to award Mr. Bachet Gabriel, a deported resistance fighter, the title of "Deported Resistance Fighter."

War Cross
On August 29, 1946, Gabriel was cited in the order of the FFI Ile de France division for the following reason: "early member of the Resistance, head of a depot and parachute drop team, who demonstrated courage and daring on numerous occasions. Arrested and tortured by the Gestapo in July 1944, he was deported to Germany on August 15, 1944, and reported missing." This citation includes the awarding of the Croix de Guerre with silver star. Signed by General LEGENTILHOMME, military governor of Paris, commander of the 1st Military Region.





Legion of Honor
Gabriel was posthumously named a Knight of the Legion of Honor by decree on November 7, 1958, recorded in the Official Journal on December 3, 1958. He is listed as a second lieutenant in the Resistance, under the Ministry of Land. The certificate was issued on December 16, 1958.



EXTRAIT

du DÉCRET en date du 7 Novembre 1958
publié au J. O. du 3 Décembre 1958

portant nominations dans la Légion d'Honneur

ARTICLE 1er Sont nommés dans l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur :

AU GRADE DE CHEVALIER
A TITRE POSTHUME

BACHET Gabriel - Sous-Lieutenant -

" Résistant de la première heure. Chef de dépôt " et d'équipe de terrain de parachutage, qui a fait preuve en maintes " circonstances de courage et d'audace. Arrêté et torturé par la Ges- " tapo a été déporté en Allemagne le 15 Août 1944, et porté disparu."

Ces nominations comportent l'attribution de la Croix de Guerre avec Palme, à titre posthume, elles annulent les citations accordées antérieurement pour les mêmes faits.
Elles ne comportent pas l'attribution de la Médaille de la Résistance, à titre posthume, les intéressés étant déjà titulaires de cette décoration.

Signé : René COTY

Par le Président de la République
LE PRESIDENT DU CONSEIL DES MINISTRES
Signé : Charles de GAULLE

LE MINISTRE DES ARMEES,
Signé : Pierre GUILLAUMAT

POUR AMPLIATION
L'Administrateur Civil
de 1ère Classe SOMMAIRE
Chef du Bureau des Décorations
P.O., le Capitaine MONTAZEAUD

Resistance Medal
It was awarded to him on March 25, 1960.





Recognition by the municipality

By decision of the Municipal Council on June 21, 1947, the municipality named the street where he lived after Gabriel BACHET. A commemorative plaque has been placed on the wall of the house located at No. 2 on the former Rue de Milly.

The BACHET family was also involved in the Jewish question.

A little Jewish girl was present at Albert BACHET's house at Jean DUVIGOUREUX's wedding on April 17, 1944. This little girl played with Nicole Bachet, who was about the same age. The identity of the little girl and the exact period during which she stayed with Gabriel's parents are unknown.



The Jewish girl and Nicole



Learn more about the B.O.A. (Bureau des Opérations Aériennes, or Air Operations Office)
The BOA (Air Operations Office) was led by André DEWAVRIN (alias Passy), a graduate of the École Polytechnique, in the northern zone under the influence of the Gaullist networks of the BCRA (Bureau Central de Renseignement et d'Action, or Central Bureau of Intelligence and Action, created in 1941). Originally from northern France, alias "Passy," also known as "Brumaire," André was one of Charles De Gaulle's first companions. André made contact with Pierre Brossolette, alias "Arquebuse."
On February 9, 1943, General De Gaulle signed Arquebuse's mission order in the northern region to publicize the guidelines to be followed in the occupied zone in collaboration with Brumaire and Rex (Jean Moulin) in the southern region. The two resistance fighters, Brumaire and Arquebuse, decided to set up an air operations office.
It was officially established on April 24, 1943, with four operational blocks (north, west, east, and center). It was a centralized service under the authority of the National Committee's delegate in France. In order to carry out operations, the BOA had to be provided with adequate means of communication and technicians.
On February 3, 1944, Pierre Brossolette was arrested in Brittany near Audierne, then transferred to Rennes, and finally to Paris to Gestapo headquarters on March 19. There, he was tortured but did not talk.
On March 22, after yet another violent interrogation, his guard momentarily left him unattended. Although his hands were tied, he managed to climb over the window sill, jump onto the fourth-floor balcony, and then climb over the balcony to fall onto the courtyard pavement.
He died on the evening of March 22, much to the despair of the Germans, who had hoped to make him talk. The only thing he said, over and over again, was, "It will be better on Tuesday." What important event was to take place on the following Tuesday? The Normandy landings took place on Tuesday, June 6, 1944. Did he know the date in advance?
The BROSSOLETTE family owns a house in Recloses.


André DEWAVRIN


Pierre BROSSOLETTE (alias Arquebuse)

THE RESISTANCE FIGHTERS OF VILLIERS
THE FRENCH FORCES OF THE INTERIOR

The Villiers Resistance

After Gabriel BACHET was arrested, Captain GAILLARDON, mayor of Souppes-sur-Loing and leader of the V.P.O. (Volontaires Paysans Ouvriers) resistance movement in the southern part of Seine-et-Marne, appointed Maurice DUROS as head of the Villiers resistance group.
Realizing that the Americans were getting closer and closer to their region, the Villiers resistance fighters went underground, leaving their homes and taking refuge in the woods near the village. They went underground on August 17, 1944. They slept in a cabin in Les Grouettes or in the woods. Local residents brought them food.

Claudine NEVEU recounts: On the way to Chatillon, my father and I heard a radio. The guys from the resistance group were sitting in a circle, their guns piled up, eating and listening to Radio London. Gisèle POIRIER and I would bring them food every day in a basket, at the bottom of Chatillon. "

Raymond CHAMPION recalls: "Jacques CHARPENTIER and I used to take soup and wine to the resistance fighters at Maurice HUREAU's house. We delivered it with a wheelbarrow. The resistance fighters were also in the huts on Les Grouettes."

The actions of the Villiers resistance fighters

Together with Gabriel BACHET, they all took part in the parachute drops in February 1944 an June 1944 in Villiers. They hid weapons and ammunition while waiting for them to be distribute among the resistance networks; they joined the maquis on August 17, 1944; they captured fou militiamen, guided Allied troops to the Loing River on August 23, 1944, and, in conjunction wit American forces, carried out operations to clear the Villiers-sous-Grez region and the Fontainebleau Forest. They returned home on September 1, 1944. From 1948 onwards, they all received certificate of membership of the FFI (French Forces of the Interior) for services validated from Jun 1, 1944, to August 31, 1944.

Who are Villiers' FFI?



Marcel BOISSEAU

Marcel est né le 26 mai 1913 à Recloses, il épouse Jeanne SOUMIER de Villiers, January 7, 1936. They had three children.
Mobilized in September 1939, Marcel was taken prisoner in May 1940 and detained in the Ardennes. In August 1941, his wife Jeanne traveled by train to the Ardennes with two bicycles. Marcel managed to escape from the camp and they returned by bicycle, in hiding. When he arrived in Villiers, he hid at the home of Marc PAMPIN, his wife's brother-in-law, at 24 rue René Lefebvre. During the day, Marcel worked in the nearby woods and returned in the evening to sleep at his sister-in-law Louise's house.
On July 5, 1944, he acted as a liaison in Brunoy. On August 24, 1944, Marcel BOISSEAU arrested three other militiamen and a lieutenant of the LVF (Legion of French Volunteers Against Bolshevism) who were pro-German.
He participates in various police operations and patrols the forest of Fontainebleau. Jeanne, his wife, carried hidden messages in her bicycle.

Louis SOUMIER



Born on July 28, 1905, in Villiers-sous-Grez, he married Suzanne NAUDET on December 16, 1930. They had two children. Louis was a butter and cheese merchant who lived at 31 Rue de Milly (now Rue Gabriel Bachet).

Théodule COMBE dit Théo



Born on March 29, 1913, in Villiers, Théo was first a farmer and then a truck driver. He married Andrée HUREAU on November 20, 1934. They had two children. Théo spoke little about this period of his life, even to his close family. As evidence of his involvement in the Resistance, a box of machine gun bullets was found hidden in the wall of Théo's garden, discovered by chance when the wall collapsed due to freezing and thawing.

René LEFEBVRE



He was born on October 18, 1911, in Le Mée-sur-Seine. He married Madeleine MEURIER de Villiers on December 23, 1933. They had three children. He was a farmer. Mobilized in 1939, he was taken prisoner and sent to Germany, from where he managed to escape. He returned to Villiers and hid in a friend's house at 8 rue de l'Eglise. He had a fierce hatred of the Germans. He joined the BOA (Bureau des Opérations Aériennes) group in Villiers, took part in all the group's activities, and also in the sabotage of the underground telephone cable near Nemours. He was killed by the Germans on August 18, 1944, in a street in Villiers.

Maurice DUROS



Born on October 7, 1907, in Paris, Maurice, alias "Daguet" or "Paco," lived in Ury, where he worked as a painting contractor. From late February 1943 to June 1944, he was a member of the BOA group in Villiers.
After Gabriel BACHET was arrested by the Germans, Captain GAILLARDON of the VPO movement in the southern sector of Seine-et-Marne appointed him leader of the BOA group in Villiers. He collected weapons and recruited men from June 7, 1944, to August 31, 1944. He returned home on October 1, 1944.

Fernand LAURENT



Born on February 12, 1911, in Villiers-sous-Grez, residing in Larchant, he married and had two children. He joined the Resistance on January 10, 1943. As a railroad employee, he worked at the Bourron-Marlotte station. In addition to the group's activities, he participated in sabotaging the junction of the Bourron to Malesherbes railway line.

Marcel NARCY



Born on October 2, 1913, in Paris, he lived in Ury, where he worked as a woodcutter for the Fontainebleau Water and Forestry Department.
He was arrested on June 9, 1943, by the state police for possession of weapons. He was interned at the Romainville camp, then at Compiègne, and was deported to Baden Baden, from where he escaped on October 27, 1943. He returned from Germany and was welcomed by Mr. HARRET at the Restaurant du Roi de Pique in Fontainebleau, then joined Villiers' BOA group.



Without being recognized as FFI, they helped the resistance.

Pierre LAVAU, a railway employee, rescued the American airman who had crashed in the woods, thus participating in the actions of the BOA represented in Villiers by Gabriel BACHET. Pierre LAVAU was commended by the SNCF for his brave conduct in December 1942. The commendation and decoration were awarded to him in July 1945.
Raymond MICHAUT, Angelo CAMPIGOTTO, and Robert GRENET also helped the BOA group in Villiers.

Speaking of her brother Angelo, Joséphine CAMPIGOTTO recalls: " During the war, Angelo lived with Denise at Le Petit Nice. There were weapons for the Resistance hidden under the floorboards of the house. Whenever a car drove by, Angelo would hide in the woods behind the house. Angelo was involved in the Resistance with René LEFEBVRE's group. His mother Marguerite was very worried about him."

A member of the Free French Forces (FFL)

Pierre LIBERMANN, known as Jean MERCURE

Pierre was born on March 27, 1909, in Paris. Pierre and his wife Jacqueline JEANNEROT had a home in Paris but often lived in Villiers at 23 Rue René LEFEBVRE. They were both theater actors.



He was mobilized on August 22, 1939, in the 4th Hussar Regiment and demobilized on July 28, 1940, in Buzançais (Indre). He first went to Lyon, worked to earn money, then crossed the Spanish border on November 12, 1942. He was arrested and interned at the Miranda camp for a short period. He left Spain by boat and arrived in England on June 6, 1943. He voluntarily enlisted for the duration of the war with the Free French Forces in London on July 21, 1943, and was assigned to the ground forces. He landed at Bayeux on August 1, 1944, and participated in military administrative liaison missions in France, Normandy, Brittany, Paris, and Strasbourg. He was demobilized on July 30, 1945.

He was awarded the commemorative medal for voluntary service in the Free French Forces on November 28, 1990.



FORCES FRANÇAISES LIBRES

ACTE D'ENGAGEMENT

No. de l'engagement 5311 D

Par devant nous, (1) Commandant Pons suppléant légal de l'Intendant Militaire représentant le Général de Gaulle, Commandant en Chef les Forces Françaises Libres, a comparu M. (2) LIBERMANN Pierre dit Jean MERCURE

M. (2) LIBERMANN Pierre dit Jean MERCURE a déclaré :

—avoir pris connaissance du statut du personnel des Forces Françaises Libres ;

—s'engager à servir avec Honneur, Fidélité et Discipline dans les Forces Françaises Libres pour la durée de la guerre actuellement en cours plus trois mois.

Le présent engagement est définitif sous réserve :

1° du résultat favorable de l'examen médical ;

2° de l'accord de l'Etat Major Particulier du Général de Gaulle ;

lesquels devront être obtenus dans un délai maximum de 42 jours.

A Londres le 21 juillet 194 3

vingt et un juillet mille neuf cent quarante trois

Le (4) Le suppléant légal de l'Intendant Militaire

Lu et approuvé (3)

Lu et approuvé

L'engagé

Signature de deux témoins

Le présent contrat est devenu définitif à la date du

L'INTENDANT MILITAIRE

(1) nom de l'Intendant Militaire ou de l'Officier en faisant fonction.
(2) nom et prénoms de l'engagé.
(3) mention à porter en toutes lettres de la main de l'engagé.
(4) Grade et nom de l'Intendant ou de l'Officier en faisant fonction.
L'acte d'engagement est établi en deux exemplaires :
L'exemplaire blanc est à conserver par le Bureau des Effectifs.
L'exemplaire bleu est à remettre à l'engagé.

(28887) Wt.P.1918/119 10,000 (2 sorte) 3/43 A.& E.W.Ltd. Gp.685

THE LIBERATION

FINALLY, LIBERATION!

The FFI of Villiers, led by Maurice DUROS, alias "Daguet," went underground on August 17, 1944, and took refuge in the woods near the village, heading toward the La Chapelle plateau. Local residents brought them food.
The fighters of the Liberation Responding to General De Gaulle's second appeal, dated August 7, 1944, calling on the French people, wherever they were, to fight with all the means at their disposal, to help the Allies and to support the Americans in their advance across France, two young men, André Surget and his friend Henri Simonin, joined Villiers' FFI and went into hiding. They stayed in the Marquis' cabin on the Grouettes plateau, watched the battle of August 22 at La Chapelle-la-Reine from a distance, and helped the Americans reach Grez-sur-Loing.

American reconnaissance missions.

On August 17, 1944, several American vehicles, including one GMC truck and several small cars, entered the area still occupied by the Germans on a reconnaissance mission. They first passed through Achères, then Ury, Recloses, and Bourron. In Bourron, American soldiers took two German soldiers prisoner who were shopping at the cheese shop.

Testimony of Raymond MORTIER: Around August 20, an American courier on a motorcycle, coming from theLarchant road, turned around at the three lime trees and headed back toward Larchant.

Testimony of André SURGET: "On August 17, 1944, several American vehicles, including one GMC and some small cars, came into the area still occupied by the Germans on a reconnaissance mission. They first passed through Achères, then Ury, Recloses, and Bourron."

The Battle of La Chapelle-la-Reine, August 22, 1944

In order for German troops to cross the Seine at the Valvins bridge and advance towards eastern France, the Germans decided to launch an attack in Butteaux, a hamlet of La Chapelle-la-Reine, against American troops coming from Malesherbes and following the national road.
51. On August 21, the Germans of the 1010th Regiment of the Wehrmacht gave instructions to the inhabitants for the following day, asking them to stay at home in their cellars and open their windows. The FFI (French Forces of the Interior) of La Chapelle tried in vain to warn the Americans of the ambush by radio.
For a long time, the Americans of the XX Corps commanded by General Patton, 5th Infantry Division, 10th Infantry Regiment, had been advancing without encountering German resistance.
Three German Tiger tanks hidden under trees, supported by two large cannons, 12 small cannons, and numerous machine guns behind haystacks, waited with 400 soldiers for the first American vehicles to pass through the Butteaux level crossing. Around 8 a.m., the head of the American convoy, consisting of a jeep carrying two officers and two tanks, was destroyed and its occupants killed. The Americans immediately retaliated, firing high-explosive shells, percussion shells, and incendiary bullets at the German soldiers hidden behind the haystacks and straw piles. The fighting ceased around 6 p.m.

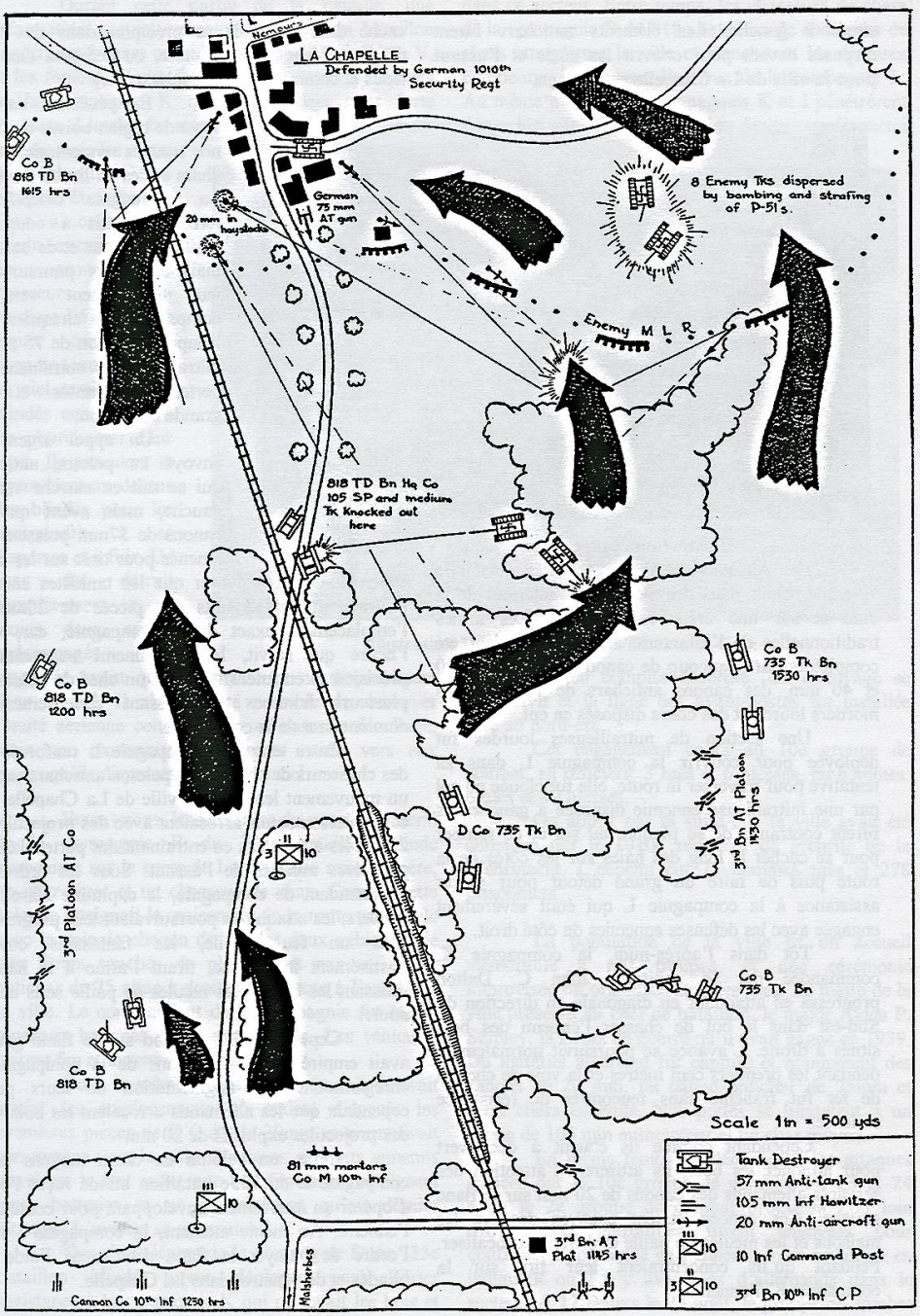
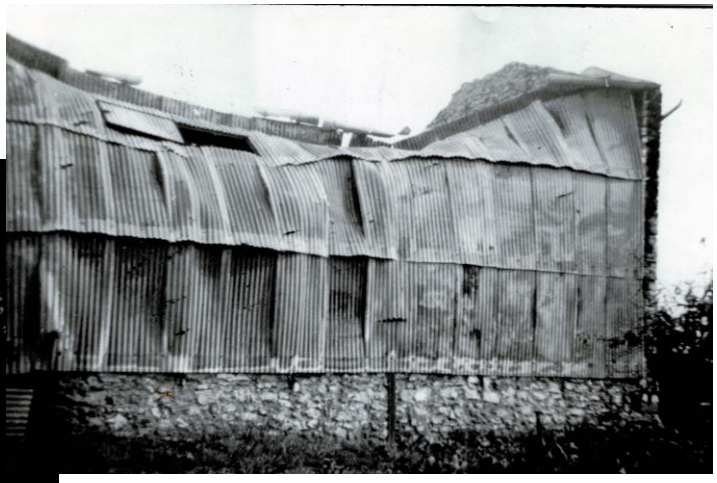


Illustration 1: Plan de la bataille de La Chapelle-la-Reine.

Results for the chaplains:
1 resident of La Chapelle killed, 3 slightly wounded, almost all the roofs in Butteaux destroyed. Burned down: three barns, a sheepfold and its sheep, and 17 haystacks.
For the Americans: 9 dead and 46 wounded
For the Germans: 75 dead, wounded, and 277 prisoners



The destroyed barn on the farm in VINCENT



American tank overturned at the Butteaux railroad crossing

The noise of the battle, which lasts all day, can be heard from Villiers, Ury, Recloses, and Achères.

René AMIOT: "On August 22, 1944, we could hear American armored cars advancing from Villiers and firing at the Germans in La Chapelle."

Raymond MORTIER recounts: "On August 22, we could hear the cannon fire on La Chapelle. All the Germans who were in the park at DUMESNIl in Larchant fled in their trucks, which crashed into each other. On the evening of the 22nd, in the street, Father FANICHET gave the Boches directions on how to get back to Germany."

Gérard PASMANT also talks about August 22: "It was now night, and coming from the road to Larchant, the defeated shock troops arrived at the Place de Villiers. The equipment was covered in dust, the men were disheveled, tired, bewildered by the day's cannon fire. Where was the beautiful victorious army that I had seen marching down the Rue de Rivoli? What a decline! All the vehicles were moving slowly, somewhat disorderly, as if mutilated: trucks, cannons, and half-tracks gave off the smell of gunpowder. The caravan of cripples turned at the crossroads, heading towards Bourron-Marlotte. Four Panther or Tiger tanks, looking in poor shape, tried to keep up. When they arrived at the square, I noticed that one of them had broken down and that one of its brothers was pulling it with great difficulty. They took the turn cautiously and hesitantly. Once on the straight, they disappeared into the night, and that was the last time we saw our occupants."

The arrival of the Americans on August 23, 1944

After spending the night of the 22nd in La Chapelle, American troops headed for Villiers on the morning of the 23rd to cross the Loing River at Grez.

Jean PRZYBYLSKI recounts: "On the morning of August 23, Villiers is sunny. An observation plane circles above the village. At the entrance to the village on the road to La Chapelle-la-Reine, a group of armed resistance fighters unfurl a large tricolor flag. Three jeeps loaded with soldiers race down the hill from La Chapelle, entering the village without slowing down, forcing the villagers to move out of the way. Much later, I learn that they stopped in the square, picked up two or three resistance fighters, and then sped off toward Grez-sur-Loing, where the Loing bridge had been cut off."

A few moments later, soldiers appeared at the foot of La Chapelle hill, marching in single file. They did not use the road or the Milly path, but descended between the vineyards (at that time, the entire area was planted with vines, and the trail they left behind remained visible until the spring of 1945). Father DEBARD was the first to see the Americans coming down the La Chapelle hill from the high window of his attic, and he shouted, "That's it, the Americans are coming!"
The infantry then crossed the village, cheered on by the Villarons. Then convoys of vehicles of all kinds, some loaded with soldiers, crossed Villiers, stopping frequently, which allowed the Villarons to look at them, touch them, try to talk to them, and of course serve them generous drinks!
A column of Sherman tanks also crossed the village, stopping for a long break. The soldiers "had a bite to eat." One of them hands me his canteen, and it tastes so good! It's water with a little packet of orange powder added. And then, we happily discover the K ration boxes (canned food, chewing gum, candy, powdered drinks, and blond cigarettes, which we teenagers quickly try!!!)."

Photos of the liberation of Villiers-sous-Grez











André SURGET: "On August 23, 1944, the guys from the Villiers resistance joined the Americans at La Chapelle. In the morning, we were heading towards Villiers when we saw Jacqueline PELLETIER arriving on her bike to get the latest news and Tintin (Jules BEAUVAIS) with his horse- drawn carriage. The American jeeps carrying the resistance fighters raced through Villiers and stopped at Grez, where the bridge had been blown up.When they arrived in Villiers, flags were hanging from the windows and the residents were waiting for the soldiers with bottles."

Raymond MORTIER: "On the 23rd, jeeps and men on foot passed by, along with the Resistance on the jeeps with the Americans, including André SURGET, Robert SOUMIER, and others, a few trucks, and then the tanks. The infantrymen crossed the country on foot, they took water, they filled their canteens with water and left the wine, theys house. We bit into green apples on the hillside of La Chapelle. The American officers had drinks at Camille PLÉ'had never seen tanks before."



Photo montage

American tanks drive through fields, leaving tracks visible for several years at La Mare Assieuse. The tanks regroup to cross the village by road.
The village decked out in flags American tanks drive through fields, leaving tracks visible for several years at La Mare Assieuse. The tanks regroup to cross the village by road.

The village decked out in flags

After the Americans arrived, some people put flags on their doors or windows. Armand CHARPENTIER, René FAUVET, and Marcel LOISEAU raised a flag inside the bell tower. Raymond MORTIER, aged nine and a half, held by Armand, hung the flag on the bell tower above the clock near the trapdoor. FAUVET's beret rolled off the roof and fell to the ground. Inside the bell tower, there were half-rotten ladders and lots of bundles of sticks. The men lit Bengal fires for light. It's a miracle that the bell tower didn't catch fire.

Unexpected consequences of the Liberation

There is great joy among all the inhabitants; the village is liberated without fighting or violence. Marcel PLÉ, who has been very ill for a long time and feels he is dying, asks Joséphine, who works for him, to look at the noisy vehicles passing in the street. Joséphine tells him, "They're Americans." He replies, "I'm happy, I can die." And indeed, he died peacefully the next day, August 29.
Shortly after the liberation, an American man showed up at René MILANDRE's house claiming to be his distant cousin. How did this American man discover this family connection with the inhabitants of a village in the Gâtinais region?

The American army settles in the village

Depots for equipment and ammunition

Raymond Mortier: "All along the Busseau road, the La Chapelle road, the Bourron road through the fields, at the Bûchette cross, there were cannon shells everywhere. The ammunition depots advanced as the equipment advanced."

René Amiot recounts: After liberation, American cannons were placed near Michel FRAIX's shed at the tip along the fence. A dozen 105 and 155 cannons were in Les Rouillères to fire on Valvins, and then the Americans took them away as soon as the battle of Valvins was over. The Germans did not fire on Villiers.
A lot of soil from Le Murger was brought into the village and as far as Les Sables, transported by the wheels of the convoys.There were many convoys at the end of August. On August 25 or 26, there was a heavy storm, followed by continuous rain for several days, leaving 10 cm of mud in the village with trucks driving through it. An American tank got stuck, leaving numerous ruts in one of our fields on the plateau.
There was American ammunition in our field along the road to La Chapelle after the crossroads on the right, in the field .below, and on the Chemin de la chasse."



American troops in the woods of Villiers-sous-Grez

People from the village had collected ammunition, which they then disposed of: a bomb placed on a rock at the first bend in the road to Larchant, shells near the cemetery wall. The children looked for parachute flares. They rolled the parachute into a ball and shot it with a slingshot, and it lit up as it burned. Of course, their parents didn't know about this.

Raymond MORTIER recounts: "The American army was stationed on Chemin de Milly (des Noirs) and on Larry, then the 2nd Armored Division on Larry. They practiced throwing knives at trees. American tents were pitched on Chemin de Milly and at the top of the Ury hill on the left. A sentry box set up on the square, where the signs are, served as a telephone exchange. The sentry box remained on the square for about a month. I brought tomatoes to the soldiers, and in return I received chocolate, chewing gum, cigarettes, fruit jellies, etc."

Rolande FLEUREAU: "Mom sent Denise and me to work in the vineyard on Route d'Ury. Ther were Black Americans on both sides of the road, and my sister and I worked in the vineyar without looking up or looking at them. Mom didn't care if we were scared; she sent us to work The black soldiers were looking for women. They were also looking for gout, but we didn't give the any.“

Gérard PASMANT: ”Around Villiers, all the roads had become giant campsites where the fresh troops arriving from the west lived, slept, and trained. We had taken in a few soldiers and cooked them some fried potatoes. They enjoyed it and didn't know how to thank us because they only had canned rations to eat. “

Jacqueline PELLETIER : "On September 9, 1944, Arthémise NAUDET was struck and killed on Place de Villiers, in front of Camille PLÉ's house, by an American truck that reversed and did not see Arthémise with her wheelbarrow. It was lunchtime and, as was often the case, Arthémise was returning with her wheelbarrow loaded with grass for her rabbits. In the accident, the wheelbarrow was also knocked over and the peaches hidden under the rabbit grass rolled into the gutter. Arthémise died instantly." She was 68 years old.

Unexpected testimony from March 30, 2025, by Alix TARDIEU (born in 1938), daughter of Jean TARDIEU, collected by Isa MERCURE:



As for me, as a little girl, I spent a winter in Villiers, and I think it must have been in 1941, perhaps because I was going to school. So I was at least five years old, I went to school in Villiers, the local school, and there was a teacher who was very well known because he was very strict and would hit us on the fingers with a ruler, which was common practice at the time. He wasn't nice at all. I didn't like him at all. My family taught me how to make sticks, at least that's what it was, right? And then, well, the years went by.I went back to Paris to live with my parents and went to school. In 1944, they announced the arrival of the saviors and also a lot of dangerous things in the city. The two grandmothers and the little girl were confined in Villiers during the spring and summer of 1944.

The house was located on the small square with three lime trees. They had a clear view of all the streets that passed by, and they saw the Germans leave on the right-hand side, so to speak. and it all happened in the space of one night. By morning, it was the Americans, it was the Americans. My grandmother had up to 40 chickens. In Villiers, I traded eggs for things that the Americans brought us. It was fruit jellies, and I also remember instant coffee and chocolate,



a kind of chocolate, things like that, and it was wonderful for us.
My parents had bought, which was quite something, a sublime 202 Peugeot. It was a small car but it had four seats and ran very well, so he hid it in a barn that my grandmother had next to her house, which was on Rue de l'Église. That car stayed there throughout the war, and when the Germans left on that famous night, they blew up the barn door and tried to drive the car away. They didn't succeed. So my parents got their car back after the liberation and kept it for years. We even went to Italy in it."

It is not known when the American troops left the village.

THE GERMAN DEBACLE

News of the Allied troops landing on the beaches of Normandy on June 6, 1944, spread quickly throughout occupied France despite the ban on listening to foreign radio stations.





General PATTON talks with American paratroopers

So, on June 7, 1944, around 4 p.m., Armand RAPINE, the father of the village mayor, announced the American landing in Normandy to Aimé MORTIER, who was in the VOCELLE passageway on Rue de Milly. Father FANICHET also heard the news of the landings on his old radio and the next morning he informed the AMIOT family when he went to fetch his milk from the farm.

In June and August 1944, American troops under General Patton's command advanced slowly through Normandy, the Loire Valley, and the Beauce region. German troops retreated towards eastern France, fighting strategic battles to blow up bridges over rivers.

The Germans recovered cars to flee

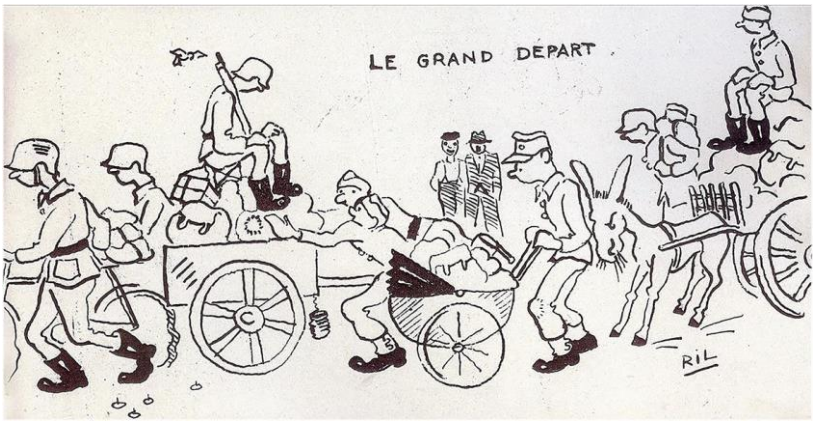
Some German soldiers obeyed orders and fought to the end; others, realizing that defeat was imminent, chose to surrender, hide, or flee. To save themselves, German soldiers stole bicycles, cars, and horse-drawn carts.

Christian MILANDRE: "My father, who was working in the fields near the village, saw a horse-drawn cart carrying German soldiers fleeing."

Testimony of Raymond MORTIER: "On the evening of August 22, the Germans passed through the country with motorized equipment as they fled. They took Lucien DUVIGOUREUX and Pierre FRAIX's car. Pierre had removed the wheels from his car, but the Germans forced him to put them back on and drove off with his car. Fortunately, Pierre was able to recover his car some time later."

The car was probably abandoned after running out of gas.

Testimony of Joseph PRYZBYLSKI: "Henri BOUREILLE had a car that Raymond COLIN, a former mechanic, was repairing in the passageway on Rue de la Chapelle, in front of his forge. The Germans were hot on BOUREILLE's heels,intent on confiscating his car and driving off with it. Henri arrived and started his car at full speed, with Raymond COLIN clinging to the running board and one hand in the engine. BOUREILLE drove at full speed into Edmond HUGUET's haystack on Route de La Chapelle, where the shed in the fields now stands. The car was hidden, and the two friends emerged from the haystack a little later and walked back to the village whistling..."



The German army hides in the village

In mid-August 1944, the Germans were retreating. They moved at night to avoid detection and hid during the day to sleep. Villiers was chosen as a stopping point for the German army.

Gérard PASMANT recounts: "One morning around German soldiers and all their military equipment invaded the village. The bell on our the courtyard rang, waking up the whole family. When we went to open the door, all was shouting in German. The village was overwhelmed by the noise of engines. I there were lots of German soldiers and their military equipment, trucks, cannons, an the street. There were tanks everywhere. As they didn't want Allied planes to spot the broad daylight, they emptied all the barns, sheds, etc. of the agricultural equipment th order to hide their military vehicles... Then the soldiers went to attics or other quiet down and sleep. The day passed quietly, but we didn't know how long they would be there.
In the evening, after some movement of men in uniform, the German shouting grew louder. Night was falling, the engines were purring again in the village, everything was vibrating. The vehicles began to move slowly, the sound of the tracks distinguishable among the others. The huge convoy disappeared into the evening, heading towards Bourron-Marlotte to drive through the night. Villiers was very relieved! "

Testimony of Jacqueline PELLETIER: "During the German retreat in August 1944 around 4 a.m., Germans banged violently on the gate. Dad went to open it, and wanted to enter the farm. They came in with horses and cannons, which they woodshed and under the barn. They quickly hid their equipment with the bales of oat been brought in. Then they lay down on the piles of bales and slept all day. We did but we were very nervous... The soldiers and their equipment left in the evening as fell."

The death of René LEFEBVRE

On August 18, 1944, four resistance fighters, including René, armed with rifles and revolvers, returned from Bourron in a requisitioned car. Hearing a German car approaching behind them, the resistance fighters' car turned into the passageway at 6 Rue Brûlée. René wanted to shoot at the Germans, but his comrades tried to dissuade him. He did not listen to them. He went out into the street and fired his revolver at the German car as it passed by. The Germans immediately returned fire, and René was shot in the heart. The occupants of the German car, driving towards La Chapelle, then fired at all the doors and gates, fearing another ambush. René's companions carry his body on a ladder through the gardens to his home. That evening, fearing reprisals from the Germans, many people fled the village and went to sleep in the woods of Golet or Chatillon. The next day, it was learned that the German car had been shot down by a small American plane on the road between Villiers and La Chapelle-la-Reine. There was general relief, as the inhabitants feared another Oradour!
On August 21, René was buried in the cemetery in the presence of his family and schoolchildren. The resistance fighters hid in the woods around the cemetery during the funeral. On August 23, the Americans paid their respects by firing a 21-gun salute.

Testimony of Réjane AMIOT: "When René LEFEVRE died, I was at Yvonne's house (Réjane's sister who lived at 2 Rue de Milly). We heard the sound of gunfire and saw a German car drive by. Henri AMIOT was with Lolo (Charles NORET) on the hillside of La Chapelle in a vineyard where the POULAIN park is now, and he saw a German car pass by with the German machine gunner lying on top of it."

René had therefore wounded or killed someone in the German car.





Passage where René LEFEBVRE fell

THE PURGE

After the departure of the German army and the arrival of American troops, the political atmosphere changed. As proof of this, many newspapers disappeared, such as L'Informateur de Fontainebleau, and their editors were arrested. On the other hand, new newspapers appeared, such as Le Parisien Libéré, which was created on August 22, 1944.
Due to a shortage of paper, the newspaper La République de Seine-et-Marne ceased publication from June 3, 1942, to October 4, 1944.


"Nous savons de quels abîmes nous émergeons et vers quels destins nous luttons. Nous sommes tous unis dans la même volonté : celle de la grandeur française".
Charles de GAULLE
Président du gouvernement provisoire de la République française
(Déclaration devant l'hôtel de ville de Cherbourg, le 20 août 1944.)

PREMIERE ANNEE - N° 1

Le Parisien Libéré

MARDI 22 AOUT 1944

LE NUMÉRO : 2 FRANCS

Dans la liberté reconquise ce journal continue le combat mené sous l'oppression par
O. C. M.
(Organisation Civile et Militaire)
et par ses revues ou journaux : Cahiers - Études pour une nouvelle révolution française ; l'Avenir ; l'Essor.

La victoire de Paris est en marche !

A spirit of retribution took hold. All those who had in any way supported the Vichy regime or collaborated with the Germans were sought out and punished by popular outrage; all those who had joined pro-Nazi political groups or parties or who had denounced members of the Resistance. Between 30,000 and 40,000 executions without trial took place. Collaborators were tried by a court and sentenced.

Women with their heads shaved

After the Liberation, between 18,000 and 20,000 women throughout France had their heads shaved, either for being accused of romantic collaboration with German soldiers or for denouncing members of the Resistance. Some gave birth to "Boche children." Several thousand children were born to French mothers and German soldiers.
Although there were no Boche children in Villiers, two women had their heads shaved in the square in front of the Café PLÉ. A third woman fled to Bourron and saved her hair.

Raymond MORTIER recounts: "I was with Yvonne COMBE and Néné (René AMIOT) digging potatoes in the sand.
With Gisèle (COMBE), I went back to get some potato sacks from Julo (Jules COMBE) and we came across X mowing two women on the square. The women were sitting on a chair under the window of Camille's house. Then they put a kerchief on their heads."

Some men also had their hair, mustaches, and beards shaved off for denouncing members of the Resistance. No villagers were shaved.

Collaborators

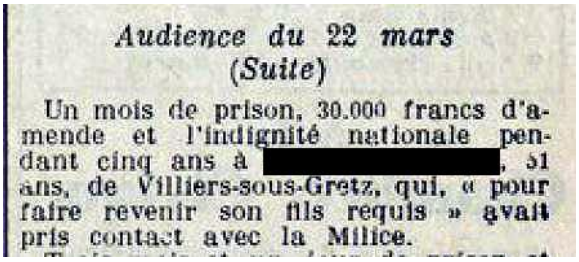
In France, there were approximately 100,000 collaborators. Some were subjected to summary purges carried out by uncertified individuals, while others underwent legal purges with a trial.

Four residents of Villiers accused of collaboration were arrested by the village resistance fighters and locked in a cellar before being handed over to the gendarmerie. Swastikas were painted on certain doors to identify the collaborators.

> Raymond MORTIER testifies: "X is accused of collaboration. He is locked up in SIMONIN's cellar and then taken to Fontainebleau because he was hosting Germans at his home. In fact, the German officers were leaving his house to go hunting."

The Germans also parked their cars in the large farmyard of X to go to the nearby MATHEZ café.

The newspaper La République de Seine-et-Marne of March 28, 1945 reports that a residen of Villiers-sous-Grez was sentenced to one month in prison, a fine of 30,000 francs, and nationa indignity for five years.



Audience du 22 mars
(Suite)

Un mois de prison, 30.000 francs d'amende et l'indignité nationale pendant cinq ans à [redacted], 51 ans, de Villiers-sous-Gretz, qui, « pour faire revenir son fils requis » avait pris contact avec la Milice.

The Militia

The Militia was created in January 1943 by the French government to fight terrorism, but in reality it spread propaganda for the Vichy government. In general, militia members were sought after from July 1944 onwards, but especially after the Liberation. In Villiers, a family of militiamen was housed in a passageway on Rue de l'Eglise. The father was disabled, with a wooden leg, and was in a wheelchair. The two boys, aged 17 and 24, had been involved in the black market. They were arrested by the police and given the choice between six months in prison or joining the militia. At the Liberation, the father and the two boys, dressed in navy blue with Basque berets, were arrested at the end of the passageway, hands in their pockets, by members of the Villiers Resistance. The two brothers were taken by car to Busseau to the FRAIX farm and guarded by a member of the Resistance before being handed over to the Nemours police.

The two boys were tried and sentenced in October 1945 to eight years of hard labor for the younger brother and five years for the older brother, as well as the confiscation of their property and national degradation.



L'an mil neuf cent quarante-cinq, le 11 mai, la Cour de Justice de Seine-et-Marne, séant à MELUN, a condamné [redacted], à Villiers-sur-Gretz, à la peine de huit ans de travaux forcés pour atteintes à la sûreté de l'Etat, l'a en outre déclaré en état d'indignité nationale, et a prononcé la confiscation de ses biens présents ou à venir divis ou indivis.

Melun, le 23 mai 1945.

Le Commissaire du Gouvernement,
CALLAUD.

Learn more about the Militia

Les miliciens

Seulement un dixième des membres du SOL acceptent d'entrer dans la Milice. Joseph DARNAND doit alors enrôler dans la Milice des marginaux, des repris de justice, des jeunes dépourvus de formation et d'emploi, etc. pour gonfler ses troupes.

Les jeunes gens sont enrôlés dans les « francs-gardes ». Les avant-gardistes groupent les moins de 18 ans. La Milice n'aurait jamais rassemblé plus de 7 000 hommes en même temps.

Le but premier des miliciens est la lutte contre le terrorisme. Le 10 février 1944, DARNAND déclare *« Toutes les fois que l'on a affaire à des individus armés, c'est par les armes qu'il faut répondre. Tous les suspects doivent être arrêtés. »* L'autre activité des miliciens est la propagande de la politique du gouvernement de Vichy. La Milice est anticapitaliste, antisémite, antimaçonnique, et antigaulliste.

Le symbole est « gamma » symbole d'énergie et de renouveau, en argent sur fond bleu pour le milicien ordinaire, en blanc sur fond noir pour le « franc-garde ». Les miliciens sont en chemise kaki comme l'armée française en 1940 et en pantalon marine.

La milice est organisée en zones, régions et départements. Elle coopère avec la Gestapo et les SS et a aussi ses propres exactions.



Militia parade in Bordeaux

In June, July, and August 1944, the Free Guard was mobilized to defend the territory against "invaders" who were, of course, not German. By mid-August, DARNAND and French militiamen were approaching the eastern border of France with all the money they could steal and using every means of transportation possible to flee to Germany.

The assassination of Georges MANDEL

Georges MANDEL, former Minister of Post and Telecommunications and then Minister of Colonies, who opposed the Vichy regime, was shot 16 times by militiamen on July 7, 1944, in the forest of Fontainebleau along Route Départementale 607, near the junction with the road leading to Recloses. A memorial was erected at this site and inaugurated two years later on July 7, 1946. Flowers are placed at this memorial every year on May 8 and November 11.





Collaborationist political groups

There were many groups that failed to unite into a single collaborationist movement, which would have been more effective. They had the same organization as the army. It is likely that 40,000 French people formed these groups, which are to be distinguished from the 130,000 "malgré-nous" (against our will) from Alsace and Moselle. The best-known groups are:

The RNP (Rassemblement National Populaire), formed by Marcel DEAT in February 1941.

The PPF (Parti Populaire Français), created by Jacques DORIO in September 1941. "I want to create a totalitarian party, I want to create a fascist party."

The LVF (Légion des Volontaires Français contre le bolchevisme) was created by Eugène DELONCLE in July 1941 following the invasion of Russia by Hitler's troops on June 21, 1941. In response, the French communists

threw themselves into the resistance against the Germans.

The leaders of the main collaborationist parties in Paris joined the LVF, which did not, however, achieve the hoped-for success. Despite the LVF recruitment offices, only 13,000 men came forward.

Only 6,000 men were deemed fit for service by German doctors. The first LVF contingent took up arms on August 17, 1941, at the Vélodrome d'Hiver in Paris.

The LVF fighters wore German uniforms adorned with a tricolor cockade, as they were not allowed to wear French uniforms because France had not declared war on Russia. Between 3,000 and 4,000 additional men joined the LVF in 1942. The LVF lost many men in Belarus during the winter of 1943-1944. Finally, the LVF was disbanded in July 1944.

Waffen SS and Charlemagne Division

During the summer of 1943, the Vichy government authorized French citizens to enlist in the Waffen SS. Waffen means "weapon," and SS is short for Schutzstaffel, meaning "security personnel." In France, 7,000 men enlisted in the Waffen SS between the summer of 1943 and December 1944.
After the LVF was disbanded on German orders, General Edgar PUAUD gathered 1,200 survivors of the former LVF and Joseph DARNAND's 2,000 militiamen to form the 7th Assault Brigade, which was actually commanded by German General Gustav KRUKENBERG.

All these men were then assigned to the 33rd Waffen SS Division. The division lost many men in combat against the Russians in Pomerania. On April 24, 1945, the survivors from Pomerania left their barracks in Neustrelitz by truck, but shortly afterwards the trucks broke down and the Russians were not far away. KRUKENBERG ordered the soldiers to continue on foot to

Berlin. The French SS formed the 7th Assault Brigade under the command of General PUAUD.



From April 26 to May 2, 1945, the 300 French SS soldiers reconstituted the Charlemagne Division and fiercely defended Hitler's bunker in Berlin under the command of Henri FENET. The fifty or so survivors of the Charlemagne Division surrendered to the Russians. They were imprisoned, but most were released around 1950 and finally granted amnesty by General De Gaulle in 1959.

A member of the Charlemagne Division lived in Villiers for five years

According to the article in the newspaper Télé 7 jours, program of May 7, 1975, for the show "The Battle of Berlin," which has the subtitle "The Last Defenders of Berlin Were French," the FENET family lived in Villiers. They stayed in a house located to the right of No. 29 on Route d'Ury, the current bypass. The FENET children attended school in Villiers from April 1967 to June 30, 1972. Upon learning that he was once again being sought, Henri and his family hurriedly left Villiers at night for an unknown destination.



Henri FENET was born in 1920. In 1939, he was 20 years old and preparing for the Ecole Normale Supérieure. He had little interest in politics, but his sympathies lay with Action Française. He enlisted for the duration of the war, deeply shocked by what he saw. He was wounded, evacuated, and healed, but still committed, he remained in the army. He was not tempted to join the Free French. He admired and revered Pétain. In Aix-en-Provence, he witnessed the arrival of the Germans in the southern zone. Demobilized and disoriented, he was recruited by the Militia for a few weeks. Refusing to be drawn into a "miserable civil war," he joined the SS, a decision he made alone, much to his father's despair. "I considered Bolshevism to be the number one enemy and believed in Europe. By following the Marshal, we felt we were starting afresh." In 1941, he was sent to Syria with his unit and did not go beyond Thessaloniki after crossing Germany and Austria. There, he did not find the chaos that reigned in the free zone.
In 1945, he commanded an elite battalion of the French SS in Berlin.

The battles fought by the Charlemagne Division, commanded by KRUKENBERG, to defend Berlin against Russian tanks lasted from April 26 to May 2, 1945. Wounded in Berlin, FENET was evacuated to a civilian hospital. A Russian officer let him know that he could escape. Which he did.

Views of Berlin in ruins



Upon arriving in France, he was immediately arrested and sentenced to 20 years in prison in 1946. His sentence was later reduced to 8 years. He was released in 1949. He served 4 years in prison and regained his voter registration card.
In 1975, FENET was the only Frenchman still alive who had been awarded the German Iron Cross. He married, had five children, and ran a small real estate development company in a small town near Paris. Suffering from Alzheimer's disease, he died on September 14, 2002. His ashes were placed on the grave of his brother, who "died for France" in May 1940 and was buried in the cemetery of his birthplace: Ceyzériat in the Ain department.

André SURGET testifies: "Henri FENET was a Frenchman who joined the SS in the Charlemagne Division. He was anti-communist and never took part in any activities in France. He defended Hitler's bunker just before his suicide. That day, he blew up six Russian tanks and was wounded in the foot. He was taken prisoner by the Russians. His other comrades in the Charlemagne Division walked to Russia. FENET, who was wounded, was treated in hospital.
He later returned to Paris but was recognized by the French. His trial lasted six months, and he was convicted but only served five or six years in prison. He then set up as a real estate agent in Fontainebleau and lived in a house in Villiers on the bypass. He left Villiers and is believed to have returned to Germany, where he died."

FROM LIBERATION TO SURRENDER

The Government of France

The official government of France is that of the French State, headed by Marshal Pétain. However, at the same time, the National Liberation Committee formed by General De Gaulle on June 23, 1940, transformed on August 9, 1940, into the National Committee of Free France, then into the French National Council on September 24, 1941, ensuring the provisional exercise of public powers, was gradually recognized by the Allies on August 26, 1943, as a provisional government of France. On October 27, 1943,
De Gaulle became the head of the provisional government of the French Republic and on September 9, 1944, he formed a government of national unity. With the advance of Allied troops and General Leclerc's 2nd Armored Division, the “great Charles,” instigator of Free France, increasingly established himself as the sole leader of France.
The High Court of Justice was established on November 18, 1944, to try senior officials of the Vichy regime. The nationalization of several large industrial companies followed.

The war continued in eastern France

The Germans had left the Paris region, but the war continued in eastern France. The city of Strasbourg was liberated on November 23, 1944, followed shortly thereafter by the city of Mulhouse, but the Germans still held the Colmar pocket. People hoped for a quick peace throughout France. The families of prisoners wondered when their men would return and in what condition.
On a daily basis, the village regained some of its vitality despite the many restrictions still in place.

Popular dances

Young people wanted to have as much fun as possible after five years of suffering and organized dances in the large rooms of cafés. Young people traveled from village to village to go dancing. These dances were accompanied by the “Loup-phoque-jazz” orchestra. It is composed of Jean BOUGLÉ, conductor
, Frédo REBOUT, first accordionist, René ASSIERE, accordionist, Robert BOUGLÉ, banjoist, Laurent JOUVE, violinist and guitarist, and Jean BOUVIER, jazz singer. It is a very local orchestra, as Robert, Jean, and Frédo live in Villiers.
With the mayor's permission, Rolande Fleureau and Jacqueline Pelletier organized a dance in the ballroom of the Saint Etienne hotel. The proceeds were given to the mayor to send parcels to prisoners.

The tragic dance



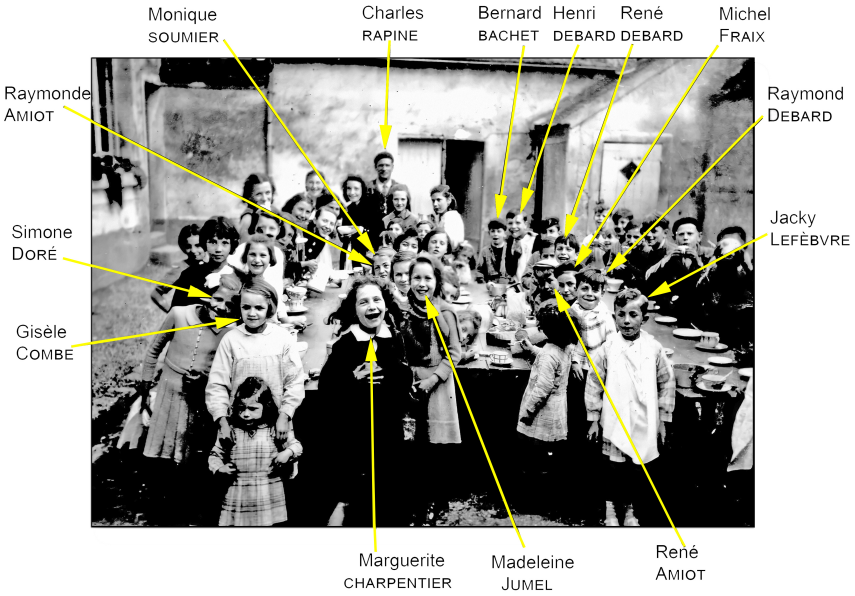
After the Liberation, André SURGET and his friends organized a dance in the large hall at Camille PLÉ's house. A young girl named PETIT from Recloses first danced with a black American soldier and then with another white American soldier. When the dance ended, the white soldier walked the girl from Recloses home. They were followed by the black soldier. After the level crossing, at a place called La Grosse Haie, the rejected dancer shot at the couple with a gun, wounding his compatriot in the arm, but the young girl died from her injuries. In memory of this, a bouquet of flowers was hung on a tree at La Grosse Haie for several years.

A letter from the prefect to the mayor dated May 17, 1945, indicates that freedom to dance has been restored, but owners of cafés, restaurants, and bars must request an exemption from the mayor to the provisions of the prefectural decree of September 2, 1939, setting the closing time for establishments.

November 11, 1944 celebration and children's snack

On November 3, 1944, the council decided to purchase French and Allied flags for November 11, 1944, and to offer cakes to the children. The snack was much appreciated by the children, judging by their happy faces.





The Surrender

On May 8, 1945, the German surrender was signed in Berlin. General DELATTRE DETASSIGNY signed for France and General KEITEL for Germany.
Paris was celebrating. At noon, all the bells in Paris and all the sirens blared the news for half an hour.

Raymond MORTIER: "On May 8, 1945, the bells of Villiers church began to ring out loudly, announcing the signing of the armistice."

Spontaneous celebration of the surrender on May 8, 1945

To celebrate the surrender on May 8, 1945, Hitler's defeat, and the end of the war, the young people of Villiers improvised with whatever they had at hand.

Jacqueline PELLETIER recounts: "On the evening of May 8, we made a straw effigy, dressed it in old clothes, and dragged it on a roller through the village streets on the evenings of May 8 and 9, 1945. The effigy represented HITLER. On the 9th, at the beginning of the night, we burned the effigy on a bonfire at Larry's. "

The iron agricultural roller pulled by a horse over the cobblestones of the streets, plus the young people shouting and laughing—it must have been quite a racket! The young people probably danced in a circle around the bonfire, as was customary for Saint John's Day celebrations.

THE REPATRIATES

The Repatriated

In April 1945, prisoner camps were liberated by Allied or Russian troops and prisoners began returning to France. They arrived in Paris by train and were taken to the Lutétia Hotel to be registered with their name, date of repatriation, repatriation file number, and allocation of 1,000 francs. Once the formalities were completed, they returned to their homes after choosing whether or not to have their families notified of their arrival.On June 1, 1945, the 1,000,000th repatriate returned to France.

The Return of Prisoners of War

Raymond MORTIER: "I remember very well Marc PAMPIN returning from captivity with his coat marked KG on the back."

Robert FLEUREAU described his return to France:
"On May 27, 1945, we left Stralsund for Paris in passenger cars, if you please. We passed through Holland and Belgium, stopping in Brussels during the night. Then we set off again, this time for France. We arrived in Hazebrouck at dawn. It was May 28. After a quick inspection, everyone walked naked in single file between two majors, arms raised, to flush out the SS soldiers, who were all tattooed under their arms. They were trying to sneak back in. There were two in our group.



On the evening of the 28th, we headed to Paris Gare du Nord, arriving in the early hours of the 29th. We boarded buses bound for the REX cinema, where we were given a small allowance of 1,000 francs, as it was then. In the afternoon, they offered to notify our families of our arrival. We could send a telegram, but I didn't want to because if there was a change of plans and we had to leave again, my family would have been worried when they didn't see me. Not knowing this, they would have been surprised.
We left the Gare de Lyon at 6 p.m. for Montargis, stopping at the Bourron-Marlotte station around 8 p.m. and then walking to Villiers. Once we crossed Route 7, I was stopped and asked if I was a repatriated prisoner and if I was going to Villiers. I said YES. I turned around to go to Bourron station and told the stationmaster, who called a taxi in Villiers. It was Robert Jourdain who provided this service. My mother and sister Rolande came to the station in the taxi, and after tears of joy, the taxi took us to Villiers. After more than five years away, when I arrived at my parents' house, it was full of neighbors and friends who had come to welcome me back.

The return of STO workers and voluntary laborers

Voluntary laborers (both men and women) and STO deportees began returning to France in April 1945. Among the returning men, some spotted volunteers who were in disguise. The real deportees demanded justice. All these deportees had long dreamed of returning home, being welcomed by their families, and enjoying a good meal. They said, "When I get home, I want my mother or my wife (as the case may be) to cook a nice chicken just for me!" This remark shows that they were far from having enough to eat in Germany.

The return of Fortuné CAMPIGOTTO, a forced labor deportee:

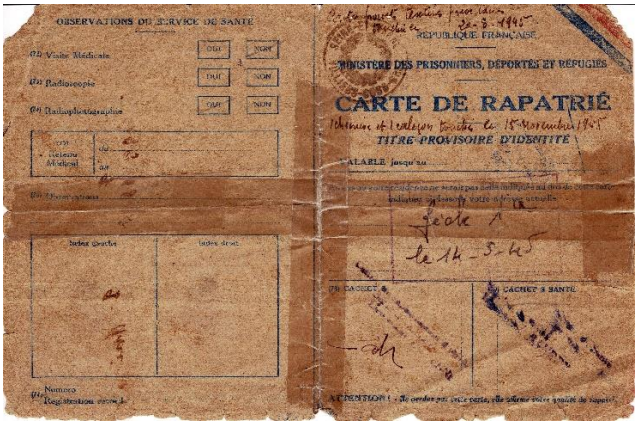
One day, an American jeep entered the camp where Fortuné was staying. A man from their barracks immediately jumped out of the window and threw himself into the arms of those driving the jeep, speaking to them in English. This roommate was in fact a spy who had been tasked with passing on information.
The camp was liberated by the Americans, who then organized the repatriation to France. Fortuné left Oschersleben on May 1 by train, but the tracks were often cut off due to bombing. He passed through Hamburg in ruins, where he saw only five houses still standing. He then crossed Holland and Belgium, spending most of the time lying on the roof of the wagon so he could see what was going on and get some fresh air. He arrived in Paris on May 9 and was asked if he wanted to notify his family of his return. He replied, "There's no need, only my parents are waiting for me." " He arrived in Villiers in the early hours of May 10. He knocked on the gate of his house, when he saw the shutters of the bedroom open slightly and the barrel of a rifle point at him. He shouted, "Don't be stupid, it's me, Fortuné! "
Not a very friendly welcome from his brother Berthelo, two days before the armistice! Berthelo , still half asleep, thought he was a German! Berthelo was sick with remorse afterwards, saying, "I could have killed him."

REPATRIATED PRISONERS

Last name, first name	Age in 1945	Place of deportation	Date of repatriation	Repatriation file number
BORDEREAU Paul	43		28-avr-45	303385
BOUGLÉ Robert	42		25-mai-45	561734
CHAMAUX Fernand	30	Stalag II D	24-juin-45	2049316
COMBE Jules	38	Frontstalag 212 Metz puis Stalag XII F	30-mars-45	sans numéro
FAUVET Raymond	26		05-juin-45	1453304
FLEUREAU Marcel	37	Stalag VI F	15-mars-45	sans numéro
FLEUREAU Robert	26	Stalag XII A près de Limbourg puis stalag IIC en Poméranie	28-mai-45	1106345
HUGUET Paul	32		28-avr-45	589269
HUREAU Jean Charles	36			1463385
PAMPIN Marc	41		16-mai-45	1161403
PELLETIER Gabriel	44	Frontstalag 203 Le Mans puis Stalag non précisé	05-juin-45	1159023
POIRIER Roger	40	Frontstalag 125 Melun puis Stalag non précisé	16-avr-45	1601
REBOUT Alfred	25		27-mai-45	1567836
SCHMIDT Armand	27		19-mai-45	1086217
SOUMIER Jean	34	Frontstalag 125 Melun puis Stalag non précisé	28-mai-45	1483190

REPATRIATED LABOR DEPORTEES

CAMPIGOTTO Fortuné	27	Oschers-Lebeb puis Hadmersleben près de Magdebourg	09-mai-45	341338
LOISEAU Marcel	23	Walsrode près de Hambourg et Hanovre	03-mai-45	242159
MERCIER Jean	23	Walsrode près de Hambourg et Hanovre	07-mai-45	753179
ZEGADEN Emile	24		19-mai-45	1909996



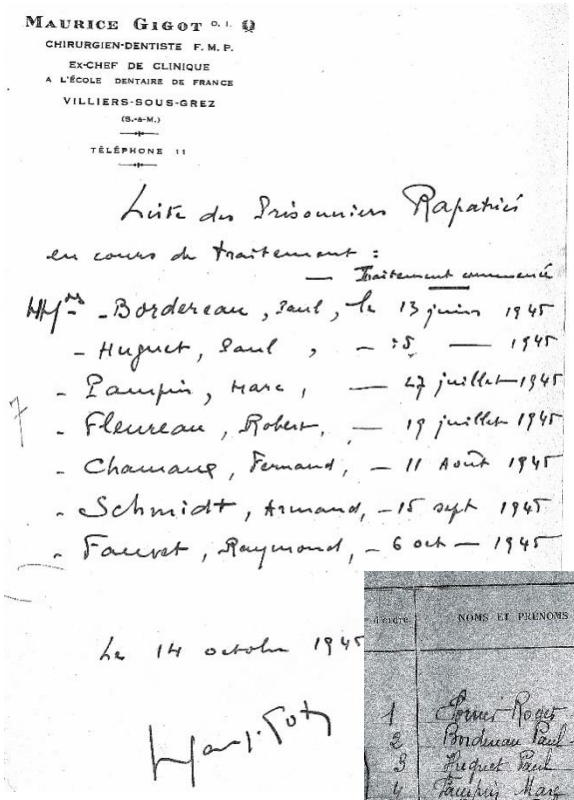


The return to pre-war life

Once they returned home, repatriates had to register at the town hall to obtain their food card, food ration tickets, tobacco card, and textile card to obtain clothing and shoes.
The government gave each returnee a voucher to obtain a prisoner's uniform, which was a three-piece suit with barbed wire embroidered on the jacket's buttonhole.

A family member recounts that Fortuné CAMPIGOTTO, at the town hall in Villiers, was unable to obtain the voucher for his repatriate's suit. So he cycled to the prefecture in Melun, found the relevant office, and explained his request to the secretary, who was painting her nails. No response. Fortuné repeated his request, but to no avail; she was too absorbed in her work! So Fortuné lifted both feet off the desk and knocked everything on it to the floor, including the precious nail polish. Suddenly brought back to reality, the secretary immediately issued him the requested voucher without asking for any details. Fortuné wore this suit for a long time. He wore it out completely, but it must be said that the fabric was of “war quality” and not very sturdy.

Medical assistance for returnees



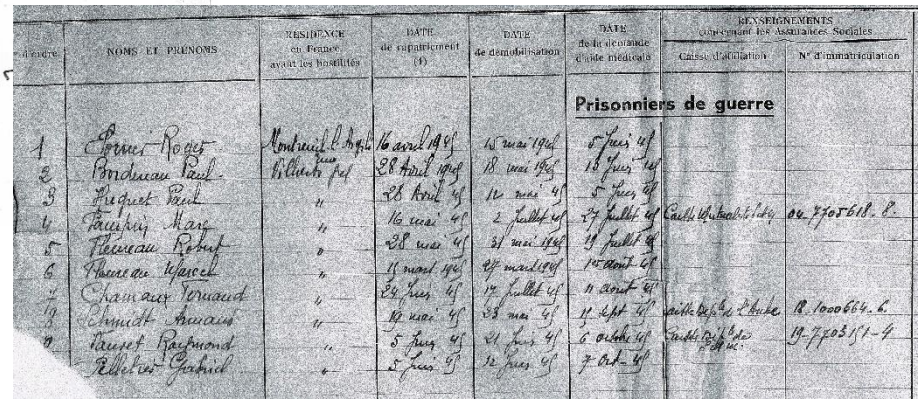
MAURICE GIGOT O. I. Q
CHIRURGIEN-DENTISTE F. M. P.
EX-CHEF DE CLINIQUE
A L'ÉCOLE DENTAIRE DE FRANCE
VILLIERS-SOUS-GREZ
(S.-&-M.)
TÉLÉPHONE 11

Liste des Prisonniers Rapatriés
en cours de traitement :
— Traitement commencé
Mlle - Bordereau, Paul, le 13 juin 1945
- Huguet, Paul, — 25 — 1945
- Paupin, Marc, — 27 juillet 1945
- Fleureau, Robert, — 19 juillet 1945
- Chamaux, Fernand, — 11 Août 1945
- Schmidt, Armand, — 15 sept 1945
- Faucet, Raymond, — 6 oct — 1945

Le 14 octobre 1945

They suffered from cold, fatigue, malnutrition, overcrowding, depression, and other conditions, and are in need of care.
The dentist from Villiers, Maurice GIGOT, treated seven repatriated prisoners in October 1945.
Medical assistance was requested for 15 prisoners between July and November 1945.
A list of repatriates requiring medical examination was drawn up on September 5, 1945, containing 19 names.

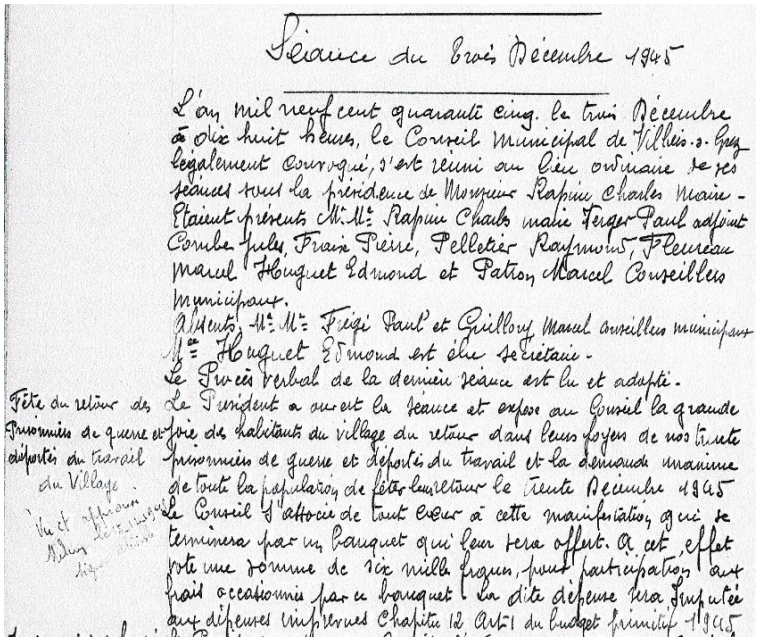
Medical assistance for returnees



Ordre	NOMS ET PRÉNOMS	RÉSIDENCE en France avant les hostilités	DATE de rapatriement (1)	DATE de démobilisation	DATE de la demande d'aide médicale	RENSEIGNEMENTS concernant les Assurances Sociales	
						Caisse d'affiliation	N° d'immatriculation
					Prisonniers de guerre		
1	Ferrer Roger	Montreuil (Seine)	16 avril 1945	15 mai 1945	5 juin 45		
2	Bordeau Paul	Villiers sur Grez	28 Avril 1945	18 mai 1945	15 juin 45		
3	Huguet Paul	"	28 Avril 45	12 mai 45	5 juin 45		
4	Paupin Marc	"	16 mai 45	2 juillet 45	27 juillet 45	Caisse Mutuelle Loiret	04 7705618. E.
5	Fleureau Robert	"	28 mai 45	21 mai 1945	19 juillet 45		
6	Fleureau Marcel	"	11 mars 1945	27 mars 1945	1er août 45		
7	Chamaux Fernand	"	24 juin 45	17 juillet 45	11 août 45		
8	Schmidt Armand	"	10 mai 45	23 mai 45	1er Sept 45	Caisse de la Loire	R. 1000664. E
9	Faucet Raymond	"	5 juin 45	21 juin 45	6 octobre 45	Caisse Régionale de Sécurité Sociale	19-7703151-4
10	Pelletier Gabriel	"	5 juin 45	12 juin 45	7 Oct. 45		

The repatriates' celebration

On December 3, 1945, the municipal council decided to organize a big celebration to mark the return of prisoners and deportees from forced labor. This celebration took place on Sunday, December 30, 1945, and ended with a banquet.



Séance du trois Décembre 1945

L'an mil neuf cent quarante cinq, le trois Décembre à dix huit heures, le Conseil municipal de Villiers-s.-Grez légalement convoqué, s'est réuni au lieu ordinaire de ses séances sous la présidence de Monsieur Paupin Charles Maire - Etaient présents MM. Paupin Charles maire, Fenger Paul adjoint, Combe Jules, Frais Pierre, Pelletier Raymond, Fleureau Marcel, Huguet Edmond et Patron Marcel Conseillers municipaux.
Absents MM. Feigi Paul et Guillon Marcel conseillers municipaux
M. Huguet Edmond est élu secrétaire.
Le Procès verbal de la dernière séance est lu et adopté.
Fête du retour des prisonniers de guerre et déportés du travail du Village.
Le Président a ouvert la séance et expose au Conseil la grande joie des habitants du village du retour dans leurs foyers de nos tant prisonniers de guerre et déportés du travail et la demande manifestée de toute la population de fêter dignement le Trente Décembre 1945
Le Conseil s'associe de tout cœur à cette manifestation, qui se terminera par un banquet qui leur sera offert. A cet effet vote une somme de six mille francs, pour participation aux frais occasionnés par ce banquet. La dite dépense sera imputée aux dépenses imprévues Chapitre 12 Art. 1 du budget primitif 1945

REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF WAR

Inscription on the war memorial

On November 3, 1944, the municipal council decided to inscribe the names of those who died in the 1939-1945 war on the war memorial and to have the stone cleaned.



Four names are inscribed on the monument: André POIRIER, René LEFEBVRE FFI, Lieutenant J. THORMOND MARTIN and Gabriel BACHET FFI.

André POIRIER was born in Villiers on February 23, 1904, the son of Alfred and Julia POIRIER He was mobilized and assigned to the 506th Tank Regiment. He died in Paris's 10t arrondissement on February 25, 1940. His death certificate does not bear the words "Died fo France," which suggests that he died of illness or in an accident and not in combat. He is one of th soldiers who died during the Second World War. Although he had not lived in Villiers for more tha ten years, his parents, who spent their entire lives in Villiers, had his name inscribed on the village wa memorial.

Julien THORMOND MARTIN was born on February 18, 1906, aboard three-masted ship off the coast of Norway. His birth was registered in the town o Saint-Mandé (Val-de-Marne), where his parents lived. He died on May 20, 1940, i Urvilliers (Aisne)while piloting a Vought bomber from the merchant navy that wa strafed by a German Messerschmitt fighter. He is buried in the family vault in th cemetery of Tessé Froulay in the Orne department. His parents, who took refuge i Busseau in 1940, had his name and rank inscribed on the municipal war memorial.

René LEFEBVRE was born on October 18, 1911, in Le Mée-sur-Seine. He married Madeleine MEURIER de Villiers on December 23, 1933. He was a farmer. Mobilized in 1939, he was taken prisoner, but escaped from Germany and returned to Villiers. He was a member of the Villiers resistance and was killed by the Germans on August 18, 1944, in a street in Villiers. He is buried in the Villiers cemetery.

Gabriel BACHET was born on December 25, 1905, in Villiers-sous-Grez. He married Fernande LAURENT from Villiers on October 2, 1928. Mobilized in 1939 and assigned to the Villemin Hospital in Angicourt (Oise), he returned home on May 6, 1940. He became leader of the BOA resistance group in Villiers. He was arrested by the Germans on July 3, 1944, and deported to four concentration camps in Germany. He disappeared on March 3, 1945, at the Nordhausen commando.

Ceremony at the war memorial



From left to right: prisoners Gabriel PELLETIER, Jules COMBE, Marc PAMPIN, Charles HUREAU, Fernand CHAMAUX, Robert FLEUREAU holding the wreath, Paul HUGUET

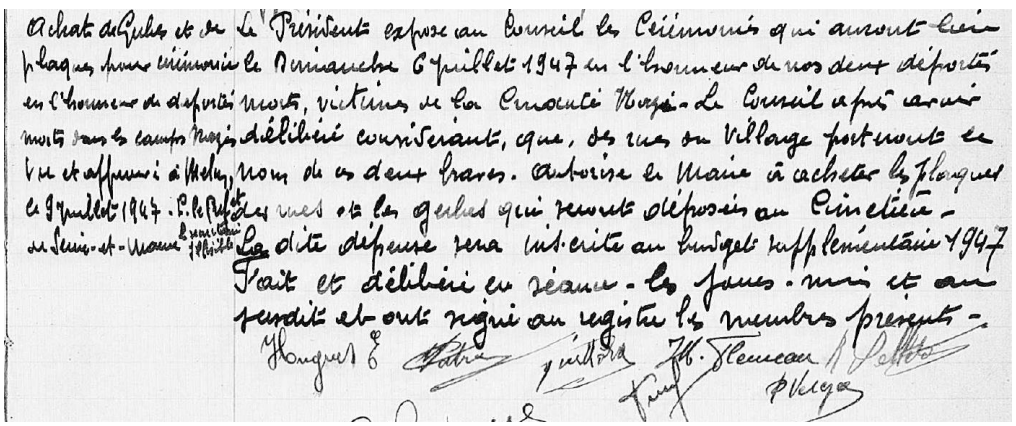
This photo shows prisoners of war from the village laying wreaths at the war memorial. Behind the prisoners are young women from Villiers. The photo is undated, but there are indications that it was taken in 1946, possibly on May 8, 1946.

Street names

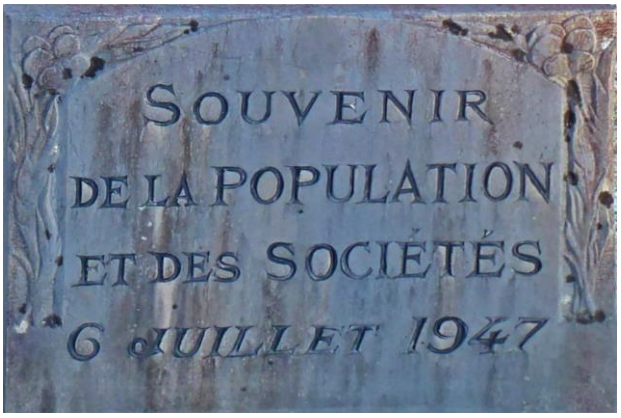
By decision of the Municipal Council on June 21, 1947, the municipality named the street where Gabriel BACHET lived after him and the street where René LEFEBVRE was killed after him.

Tribute to Gabriel Bachet

Nicole BACHET remembers as a child seeing the kitchen table in her house covered with flowers. This was probably the day when the villagers paid tribute to her father Gabriel, who had disappeared in a Nazi camp, when the family was certain that he would never return. These flowers were then placed on her father's grave, as Gabriel has no grave. This took place on July 6, 1947, as attested by a plaque marked "In memory of the people and societies on July 6, 1947," which now stands with other plaques in memory of Gabriel on the grave of his wife Fernande.



Achats de Gerbes et de Le Président expose au Conseil les Cérémonies qui auront lieu
plaques pour cérémonie le Dimanche 6 juillet 1947 en l'honneur de nos deux déportés
en l'honneur du déporté mort, victime de la Barbarie Nazie. Le Conseil après avoir
mûrement dans le camps Nazi, délibéré considérant, que, des rues du Village portement le
Nom et affirmé à Melun, nom de nos deux Frères. autorise le Maire à acheter les Plaques
le 9 juillet 1947. Le Préfet de Les rues et les gerbes qui seront déposées au Cimetière -
de Seine-et-Marne [illegible] La dite dépense sera inscrite au budget supplémentaire 1947
Fait et délibéré en séance - les jours - mois et an
susdits et ont signé au registre les membres présents -



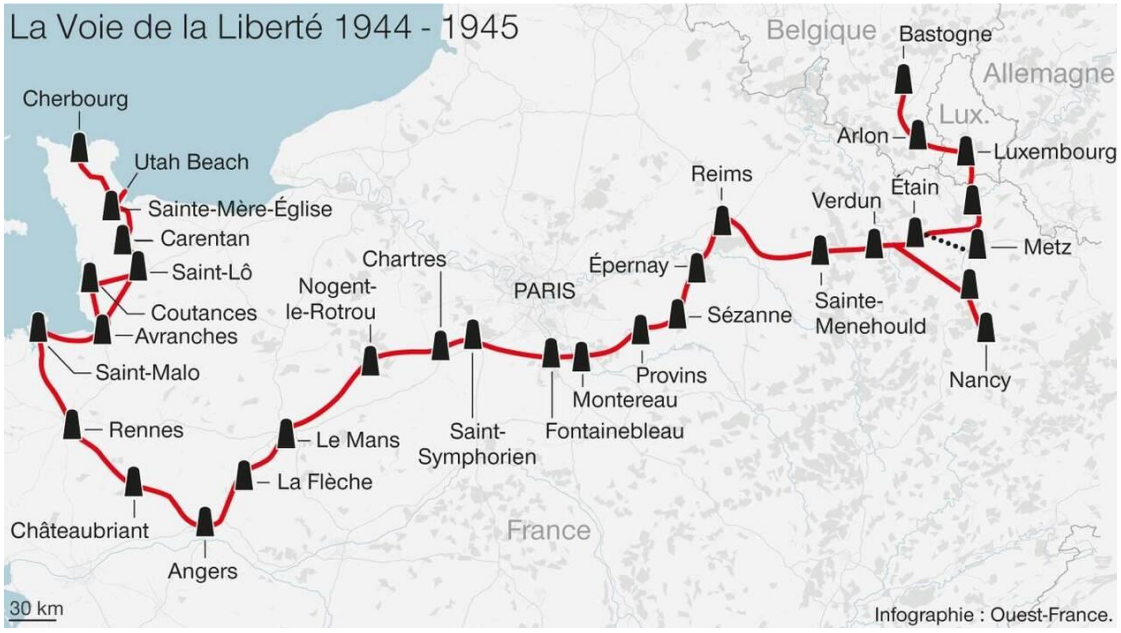
The memory of General Patton's liberation army



The route taken by General Patton's troops, which led to the liberation of a large part of France, is marked by milestones located along major roads, known as “freedom milestones.” Starting from Utah Beach (the area stretching from St Germain-de-Varreville to St Côme-du-Mont in the Manche department to Bastogne in Luxembourg), 1,200 markers line the road to freedom.

This road to freedom was marked by the deaths of American soldiers during battles with German troops who were still fighting.

There are no freedom markers in Villiers, but there are a few nearby: on the D152 between La Chapelle and Ury, in Fontainebleau in front of the town hall, and at the Carrefour de la Libération, also known as the Carrefour de la Fourche.



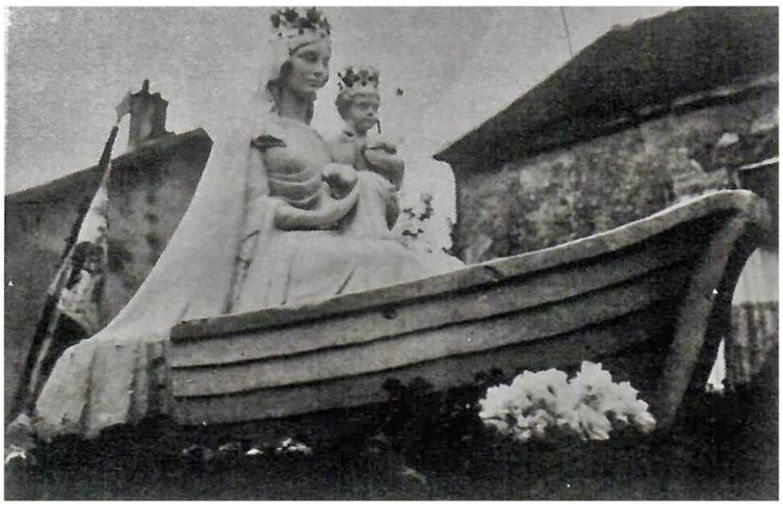
THE RELIGIOUS PROCESSION OF THE VIRGIN OF BOULOGNE

The creation of the religious procession

On March 28, 1943, French bishops dedicated France to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and decided to present four reproductions of Our Lady of Boulogne to the faithful. The statue, depicting the Virgin Mary seated in a boat and holding the baby Jesus in her arms, was placed on a cart pulled by the faithful or on a stretcher carried on their shoulders. These four statues set off from different locations to travel throughout France. The statue entered Seine-et-Marne near Chelles on August 10, 1945. After a long journey through the department, it arrived in Villiers on September 25, 1945, coming from La Chapelle-la-Reine, and left Seine-et-Marne on October 12, 1945, near Pontault.

The passage of the Virgin of Boulogne in Villiers on September 25, 1945

Jacqueline PELLETIER and Rolande FLEUREAU recount: The statue was welcomed and accompanied by the priest and altar boys dressed in red and white. The tall, strong altar boy Raymond MORTIER no longer fit into his red outfit, so he was dressed in a black cassock, which meant that the villagers did not recognize him and asked, 'Who is this new priest? Among the altar boys in red and white robes were René AMIOT, Jean-Paul BOUREILLE, and others.
The priest walked at the head of the procession with the altar boys. The statue was on a stretcher carried by Mr. CHARONNAT, Pierre FRAIX, and other men. The young girls from the village youth club walked alongside the statue, their heads covered with their First Communion veils. (Gisèle Beauvais, Joséphine Campigotto, Rolande Fleureau,Huguette Lebec, Renée Menin, and Jacqueline Pelletier) walked beside the statue and threw rose petals on it.
Other people from the village walked behind the stretcher, some of them even barefoot. It was drizzling that day.
The statue was taken over by the people of Villiers in the morning around 8 The statue was taken over by the people of Villiers in the morning around 8-9 a.m. on the road from Villiers to La Chapelle, at the intersection of the road leading to Busseau and Larchant. There was a procession through the streets of the village and a mass at the church. In the afternoon, we accompanied the statue to give it to the people of Bourron, on the road from Villiers to Bourron, at the intersection of the road from Recloses to Grez.



The Virgin of Boulogne photographed in Bourron on September 25, 1945

L'Eclaireur de Seine-et-Marne, October 12, 1945

LA CHAPELLE-LA-REINE

N.-D. DE BOULOGNE FETEE ET VENEREE

C'est le 24 septembre que La Chapelle reçut Notre-Dame de Boulogne, venant de Nemours par Larchant. Cette réception, préparée par un triduum très pieusement suivi par l'élément le plus fervent de la paroisse fut un véritable triomphe. Les rues de la cité avaient été harmonieusement décorées, arbustes de verdure, guirlandes multicolores donnaient une impression de joie que tous les cœurs chrétiens ressentaient particulièrement. Peu de maisons restèrent indifférentes à cette manifestation de piété.

Un nombreux cortège, enfants tenant chacun un petit étendard aux couleurs de la Sainte Vierge, dames, jeunes filles, hommes et jeunes gens partit accueillir la statue vénérée à mi-chemin de Larchant. Le mauvais temps ne permit pas de donner à ce cortège tout l'éclat prévu, mais ceci ne diminuera nullement l'atmosphère de piété qui présidera durant tout le séjour de Notre-Dame dans la paroisse. Il était 18 heures, quand les cloches annoncèrent l'arrivée de la procession et ce fut le défilé dans les rues du pays.

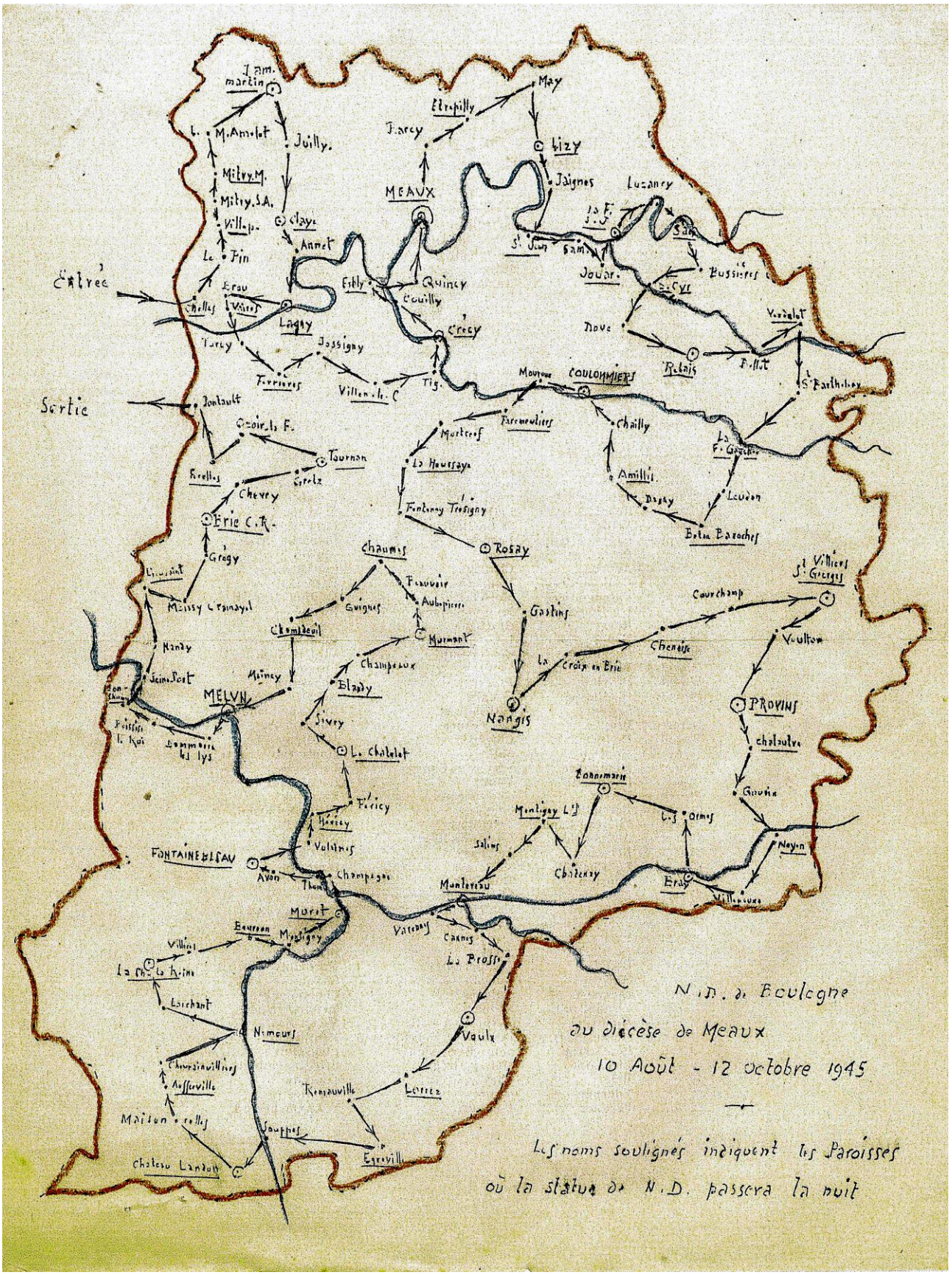
Aux fenêtres, sur les trottoirs, les têtes se découvraient ou s'inclinaient respectueusement et ce fut l'entrée à l'église magnifiquement décorée. Le sanctuaire était tendu de bleu et de blanc, d'une immense couronne de roses suspendue à la voûte du chœur tombaient de gracieux festons de tulle blanc ; écussons et drapeaux achevaient cette décoration du plus bel effet. L'église fut bien vite remplie par ceux qui avaient suivi le cortège et sans tarder commença la veillée de prières. Placée sur un trône délicatement décoré, la Sainte Vierge sera pieusement entourée durant toute la nuit. D'heure en heure, une garde d'honneur se succédera à ses pieds. Même aux heures qui semblaient les moins favorables à la veillée, il y eut toujours au moins deux hommes et jamais moins de quinze personnes la nuit entière dans la méditation.

Une guirlande électrique de plus de 100 lampes illumina durant toute la nuit le clocher qui domine le plateau environnant, invitant ainsi à la prière non seulement les paroissiens de La Chapelle mais aussi ceux des pays voisins qui n'avaient pas pu se déplacer. Après la veillée de prières dirigée par les missionnaires, ce fut la messe de minuit chantée par M. le doyen assisté par les prêtres de la communauté de Larchant, M. le curé de Tousson dirigeant les cérémonies. Du haut de la chaire, un missionnaire commente et explique ce qui se passe à l'autel. Les chants sont exécutés par la maîtrise paroissiale et toute l'assistance.

Sans doute la messe matinale d'actions de grâces ne réunit pas la grande assistance de minuit, mais on se retrouva pour la cérémonie des adieux et le cortège reprit sa marche à travers les rues du pays. Après un court arrêt à Bessonville, petit hameau décoré, lui aussi, comme les rues de La Chapelle, ce fut la marche vers Villiers-sou-Grez. A genoux sur une route dérempée, ce fut le chant du « Monstrate », la bénédiction de la croix et le départ de la statue confiée à la garde de nouveaux fidèles.

LE GRAND RETOUR

Venant de Nemours et Larchant, Notre-Dame de Boulogne a été reçue à la Chapelle-la-Reine, le lundi soir 24 septembre. Une foule nombreuse l'a escortée à travers les rues de notre commune. Après une nuit passée dans l'église, la Vierge a quitté La Chapelle, se rendant à Villiers-sous-Grez. Sur le parcours de la procession, les habitations étaient parées et décorées, chacun, bravant la rafale, ayant tenu à participer à ce pacifique hommage.


Entrée
Sortie
MEAUX
MELUN
FONTAINEBLEAU
PROVINS
Nangis
Rosay
Crecy
Quincy
Lagny
Tournan
Erie C.R.
Mormant
Nemours
Moret
Montereau
Donnemarie
Villiers S. Grezes
N.D. de Boulogne
au diocèse de Meaux
10 Août - 12 octobre 1945
Les noms soulignés indiquent les Paroisses
où la statue de N.D. passera la nuit

WEDDINGS AND BABY BOOM

There is often talk of an increase in marriages and births after the end of the war. What was the situation in Villiers?

Table showing the number of marriages and births from 1935 to 1949:

Year	1935	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49
Number of marriages	1	1	4	2	2	0	0	0	3	1	5	5	2	1	6
Number of births	4	1	8	5	7	8	2	4	6	10	10	9	7	3	2

Table showing averages for marriages and births before, during, and after the war:

Période	De 1935 à 1939	De 1940 à 1944	De 1945 à 1949
Average number of marriages	2 per year	1 per year	4 per year
Average number of births	5 per year	6 per year	6 per year

In the post-war period, the number of marriages increased significantly. Of the 19 marriages celebrated, seven involved repatriates.
The average number of births before, during, and after the war varied little. However, there was an increase in births compared to previous years in 1944 (a year of waiting and hope) and especially in the early post-war years of 1945-1946-1947, when returnees regained some of their health and, like the rest of the population, their joie de vivre. Villiers experienced a slight baby boom!


Jean DUVIGOUREUX et Madeleine BERTRAND


André RODDES et Renée MÈNIN


Gabriel PELLETIER et Lucienne COURTELLEMONT


Fortuné CAMPIGOTTO et Jacqueline PELLETIER


Pierre TOUZALIN et Maria STIMEC


Robert FLEUREAU et Raymonde HUET


Marcel FLEUREAU et Jeannette TURPIN


Emile ROHÉE et Rolande FLEUREAU

POST-WAR AGRICULTURAL LIFE

The evolution of agriculture as a result of the war

Decrease in the number of farms: 45 farmers in 1939 but only 31 in 1946 Decrease in the number of horses: 71 in 1939 but only 48 in 1948, as requisitioned horses did not return to the farms.
Variable wheat production: 1,465 quintals in 1939, sharp decline to 893 quintals in 1944, increase in production to 1,859 quintals in 1946. Agricultural production also varied greatly from year to year depending on weather conditions (frost, hail, drought, excessive rainfall).
Increase in the area cultivated with potatoes and beets: in 1944, there were 25 hectares of potatoes, 36 hectares of sugar beets, and 46 hectares of fodder beets. By comparison, in 1930, there were 20 hectares of potatoes, 3 hectares of sugar beets, and 15 hectares of fodder beets.
Decrease in the area cultivated with vines: 10 hectares in 1939 compared to 5 hectares in 1946. Vine cultivation is labor-intensive and difficult to mechanize.
Like many rural areas, Villiers lacked agricultural labor and machinery.

The Marshall Plan

The war devastated almost all of Europe, and everything had to be rebuilt. During the war, the United States demonstrated its great economic strength. On June 5, 1947, the United States implemented the Marshall Plan in Europe. It was a plan for the reconstruction of Europe. The plan was scheduled to last four years, from 1948 to 1952. The $3 billion plan, consisting of loans and grants, was accepted by France and the countries of Western Europe but rejected by Russia and the Eastern European countries.
France had to produce in order to export the surplus and thus enrich itself. To produce more, farmers had to use agricultural machinery (tractors, combine harvesters, milking machines, etc.), use a lot of fertilizer, and have larger contiguous areas of land thanks to land consolidation.
The United States of America delivered food products (wheat, flour, fats, oilseeds, oils, condensed and powdered milk), seeds, animal feed, nitrogen fertilizers, tractors, oil, and gasoline to France free of charge.

The commune of Villiers received a tractor under the Marshall Plan.

Farmers were asked to contact their regional Crédit Agricole branches (there was already a Crédit Agricole branch in La Chapelle-la-Reine) to benefit from the Marshall Plan. Did any farmers in Villiers do so?

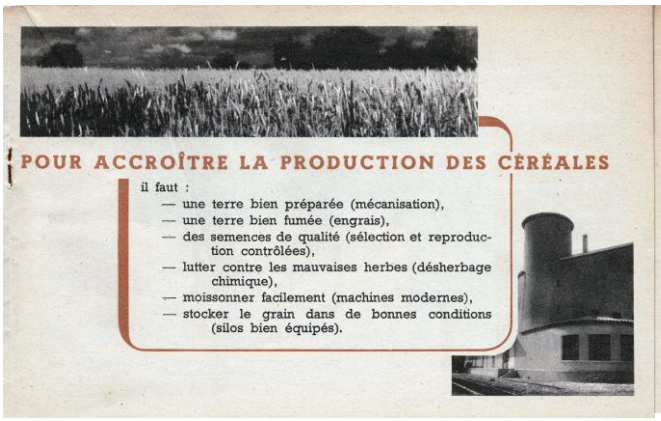


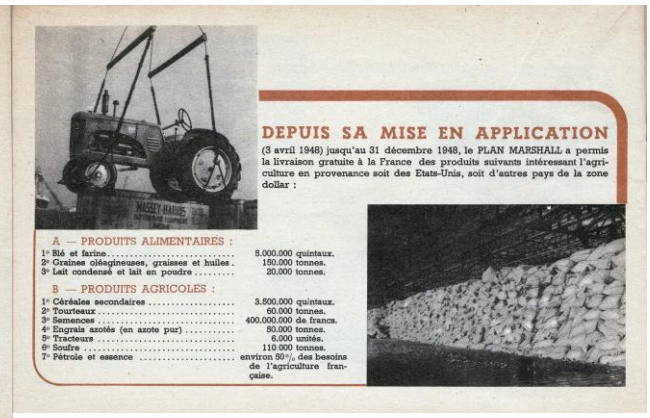
Marshall Plan: towards an agricultural revolution









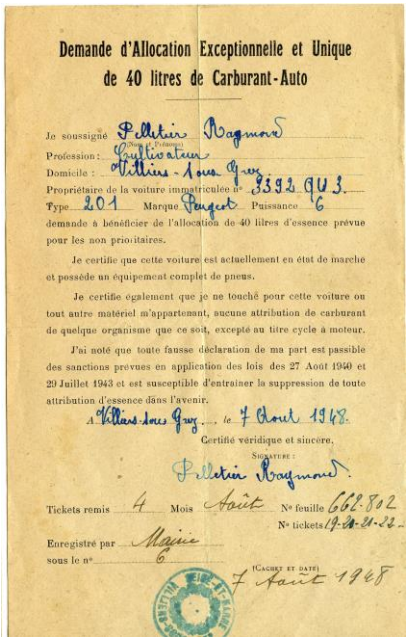




DAILY LIFE AFTER THE WAR

Restrictions on daily life continue.

Cards and tickets are still required for:
-food; bread tickets were used until 1949.
-clothing, fabric, shoes, tobacco
-gasoline, at least until August 1948
-bicycle and car tires, at least until 1949Cars are no longer impounded in garages and can be driven again. A census of private cars was carried out in March 1946. Repairs were often necessary, tire vouchers were required to obtain new tires, and applications had to be filled out to obtain gasoline vouchers for 1 liter of oil and 20 liters of gasoline per month. Cars were only used when absolutely necessary.



Demande d'Allocation Exceptionnelle et Unique
de 40 litres de Carburant-Auto

Je soussigné Pelletier Raymond
Profession : Cultivateur
Domicile : Villiers-sous-Grez
Propriétaire de la voiture immatriculée n° 3392 QU 3.
Type 201 Marque Peugeot Puissance 6
demande à bénéficier de l'allocation de 40 litres d'essence prévue pour les non prioritaires.

Je certifie que cette voiture est actuellement en état de marche et possède un équipement complet de pneus.

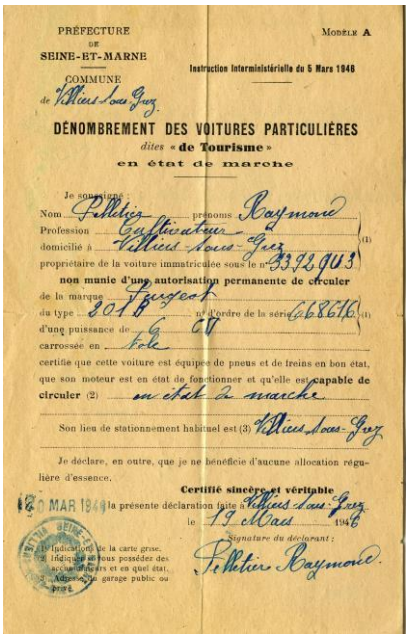
Je certifie également que je ne touché pour cette voiture ou tout autre matériel m'appartenant, aucune attribution de carburant de quelque organisme que ce soit, excepté au titre cycle à moteur.

J'ai noté que toute fausse déclaration de ma part est passible des sanctions prévues en application des lois des 27 Août 1940 et 29 Juillet 1943 et est susceptible d'entraîner la suppression de toute attribution d'essence dans l'avenir.

A Villiers-sous-Grez, le 7 Août 1948.

Certifié véridique et sincère,
Signature :
Pelletier Raymond.

Tickets remis 4 Mois Août N° feuille 662.802
N° tickets 19-20-21-22
Enregistré par Mairie
sous le n° 6
(Cachet et date) 7 Août 1948



PRÉFECTURE DE SEINE-ET-MARNE
Modèle A
Instruction Interministérielle du 5 Mars 1948
COMMUNE de Villiers-sous-Grez

DÉNOMBREMENT DES VOITURES PARTICULIÈRES
dites « de Tourisme »
en état de marche

Je soussigné
Nom Pelletier prénoms Raymond
Profession Cultivateur
domicilié à Villiers-sous-Grez (1)
propriétaire de la voiture immatriculée sous le n° 3392 QU 3
non munie d'une autorisation permanente de circuler
de la marque Peugeot
du type 201 n° d'ordre de la série 668616 (1)
d'une puissance de 6 CV
carrossée en Tole
certifie que cette voiture est équipée de pneus et de freins en bon état, que son moteur est en état de fonctionner et qu'elle est capable de circuler (2) en état de marche

Son lieu de stationnement habituel est (3) Villiers-sous-Grez

Je déclare, en outre, que je ne bénéficie d'aucune allocation régulière d'essence.

Certifié sincère et véritable
la présente déclaration faite à Villiers-sous-Grez
le 19 Mars 1946
Signature du déclarant :
Pelletier Raymond.

(1) Indications de la carte grise.
(2) Indiquer si vous possédez des accumulateurs et en quel état.
(3) Adresse du garage public ou privé.



Le 11 Août touché 1 l. Huile et 2 Litres essence
1946
Le 6 Sept touché 1 Litre Huile et 2 Litres essence
Le 2 Oct touché 1 Litre Huile et 2 Litres essence
Le 29 Nov touché 1 l. Huile et 2 Litres essence
touché 2 Litres essence
le 15 Décembre 1946

To harvest their crops, farmers request bales of binding twine. The threshing machine's locomobile needs coal bricks to operate. These can be purchased by farmers provided they have the appropriate permit issued by the town hall.

For the 1948 harvest, the mayor of Villiers received 610 points of harvest twine in 10-point tickets and 200 points of harvest twine in 50-point tickets. These tickets are to be distributed by the mayor in agreement with the municipal agricultural delegate during a meeting at the town hall.

The presence of American soldiers

Allied troops left the region shortly after liberation. But during the Cold War between Russia and the United States, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) was created in 1952 as a defense system for the countries of the Atlantic Alliance. A NATO military base was set up in Fontainebleau. NATO soldiers were housed in Fontainebleau, but also in Villiers, in empty, attractive houses:

-At 41 Rue de l'Eglise, the PERKINS family of five: Carl, his wife Zolita, his daughters Haren and Carla, and his son Mark
-At 34 Rue de l'Eglise, Bertrand BAKER and his wife
-At 38 Rue René LEFEBVRE, Stanley JURAS, a young single soldier



Famille PERKINS



Stanley JURAS



Famille BAKER

Nelly AMIOT remembers going to a Christmas tree party organized by Americans at 34 Rue de l'Eglise when she was a child. She remembers a large glass door with small panes, an entrance hall with a large decorated Christmas tree, snacks, and colorful hard candies that were very sour and she didn't like.
She also remembers the big American cars driving around the village: Chevrolets, Cadillacs, and Pontiacs. Her father used to refer to these cars as "ocean liners that guzzle a lot of gas." Of course, in comparison, the Villarons only had small, more fuel-efficient cars.

The NATO base was closed in 1967 by order of General De Gaulle, who withdrew French military forces from NATO command. On this occasion, in Fontainebleau, the four military housing blocks on Rue du Canada, Rue des Etats-Unis, Rue de Grande-Bretagne, and Rue de Belgique were tagged with the words "US GO HOME." In Villiers, the departure of the Americans went smoothly.

THE HUMAN AND FINANCIAL COST OF THE WAR IN FRANCE

LE BILAN HUMAIN DE LA GUERRE EN FRANCE

Victims	En France	En Seine-et-Marne	A Villiers-sous-Grez
Military personnel killed or missing	125 310	332	1 MARTIN Julien Thormond
Soldiers of the liberation armies and FFI	20 397	327	1 LEFEBVRE René
Civilian casualties	108 260	392	1 NAUDET Arthémise
Political deportees and resistance fighters	65 000	1 023	1 BACHET Gabriel
Racial deportees	117 000	249	0
STO labor deportees	40 000	6 116	5 CAMPIGOTTO Fortuné, LOISEAU Marcel, MERCIER Jean, PURSEIGLE Raymond, ZEGADEN Emile
Prisoners of war	1 575 000	9 000	26 BORDEREAU Paul, BOUGLE Robert, CHAMAUX Fernand, COMBE Jules, FAUVET Raymond, FLEUREAU Marcel, FLEUREAU Robert, FREGE Paul, HUGUET Edmond, HUGUET Paul, HUREAU Jean Charles, LANERY Marcel, LEFEBVRE René, MENIN Robert, MICHAUT Raymond, MILANDRE René, PAMPIN Marc, PELLETIER Gabriel, PLE Henri, POIRIER Roger, REBOUT Alfred, RENARD Georges, SCHMIDT Armand, SOUMIER Jean, TOUZALIN Roger, VOCELLE Denis

THE FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THE WAR

DÉSIGNATION	EN MILLIARD DE FRANCS
Spoliation (removal, dispossession, war booty, requisitioning, forced transfers)	2 432
Destruction (buildings, furniture, agricultural equipment and land, industry and commerce, railways, ports, merchant marine, other means of transport and communication, war material, eastern departments and Tunisia, preliminary reconstruction costs)	1 832
Other property damage	258
Personal injury	359
Special expenses imposed on the State by the occupation regime and war operations	102
TOTAL	**4 983**

Not to mention 23.5 billion hours of work lost to the French economy (11 billion hours for prisoners and 12 billion hours for the STO).

Photo album of Robert FLEUREAU from 1939 to 1945



In barracks in Brives-la-Gaillarde in 1939



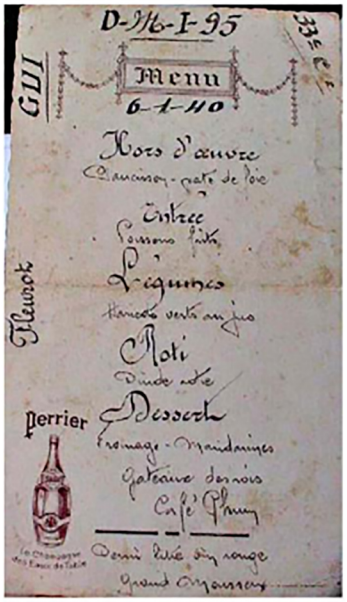
At Stalag IIC in 1942



1943 in Lussöw, Pomerania: a drilling site



With his friends from captivity



Meal on January 6, 1940, for Three Kings Day



Stationed in 1940



In 1945 with Emile ROHEE, fellow prisoner
In 1947, he married Rolande, Robert's sister

Sources

Municipal archives of Villiers-sous-Grez Municipal archives of La Chapelle-la-Reine Registration records of the school in Villiers-sous-Grez
La collaboration 1940-1944 by Michèle Cotta, Armand Colin, 1st quarter 1964
The Black Book of Collaboration 1940-1944 by Philippe Valode, Editions France Loisirs, October 2014
Seine-et-Marne 1939-1945: 4 volumes published by Amattéis, Dammarie-les-Lys, in 1984 and 1985

The Heritage of National Education, Editions Flohic, 1999
Schoolchildren and Their Teachers in France of Yesteryear, Marie-Odile Mergnac, Archives et Culture Paris, 2005
The Visionary of the Resistance Pierre Brossolette by Guy Perrier, Hachette, 1998
Vichy, journal of an opponent from within, Antoine Delenda, Histoire essentielle, May 2010
The book of the 9,000 deportees from France to Mittelbau-Dora, Laurent Thiery, Editions le Cherche Midi, April 2020 French History for Dummies, Jean-Joseph Julaud, First Editions, December 2004
Histoire de la Marseillaise (History of the Marseillaise), Hevé Luxardo, Plon, April 1989
Les amis de Bourron-Marlotte (Friends of Bourron-Marlotte) magazine no. 33, spring and summer 1994, printed by HELIO-SERVICE, 2nd quarter 1994
1944 Guerre en Ile de France (War in the Ile de France), Combats pour Paris (Battles for Paris) vol. 4, 2009
History of France and the French Day by Day, Oppressed and Liberated France 1939-1954, André Castelot and Alain Decaux, Robert Laffont Publishing, Paris 1990
"Virile" France Fabrice Virgili, Payot Publishing, September 2000
Bad Arolsen International Tracing Service
Testimonies from: Réjane Amiot, René Amiot, Raymonde Amiot/Viratel, Bernard Bachet, Nicole Bachet/David, Fortuné Campigotto, Joséphine Campigotto/Fouquin, Nelly Campigotto/Amiot, Raymond Champion, Yvonne Charpentier/Jeandaine, Andrée Debard/Przybylski, Henri Debard, Jean Doré, Rolande Fleureau/ Rohée, Robert Fleureau, Jean Lepage, Isa Mercure/Guillot, Christian Milandre, Raymond Mortier, Claudine Neveu/Campigotto, Gérard Pasmant, Ginette Patron/Guyou, Jacqueline Pelletier/Campigotto, Jean Przybylski, Joseph Przybylski, Raymond Purseigle, Bernard Vocelle, Roland Wouters.
Websites: Mémoire des hommes, Histoires et mémoires de la résistance, Caen and Vincennes Archives Division, Wikipedia, Gallica (L'abeille de Fontainebleau, l'Informateur de Seine-et-Marne), Retronews

Scan the QR code opposite to access:
- Additional information
- The 22 panels of the exhibition
- The film

H&P

Histoire&Patrimoine de Villiers-sous-Grez

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Editor:	Nelly AMIOT.
Layout:	Yves LECHEVALLIER, Bernard LESCHIER, René FLEUREAU
Proofreaders:	Odile LECHEVALLIER, Eveline ANDRIEU, Françoise HUBERT, Nelly AMIOT, Marguerite FLEUREAU et Joël POULAIN.
Panel production:	René FLEUREAU, proofreader Odile LECHEVALLIER, printed by Artnéo (Malesherbes).
The production and editing of the film :	Janis LAPORAL et René FLEUREAU
And for voiceovers:	Nelly AMIOT, René FLEUREAU, Isa MERCURE et Jean PRZYBYLSKI

Crédit Agricole de Brie Picardie as a communication medium.

Villiers-sous-Grez Senior Citizens' Friendship and Leisure Club for their financial support.

Henri POUPART and Nelly AMIOT for lending equipment and objects for the exhibition.

The association Les Amis du Patrimoine des environs de La Chapelle-la-Reine for lending us equipment.

Olivia BOUËT-WILLAUMEZ, graphic designer, for creating the association's logo.

The choir "A Travers Chants" conducted by Bernard LEROY performing the Song of the Partisans.

Françoise BESNARD for translating documents into German

Achevé d'imprimer en avril 2025
Imprimé par Paroi Services à Recloses
ISBN n° 979-10-415-7423-0

L'association Histoire et Patrimoine de Villiers-sous-Grez

Association under the 1901 law – Founded on October 25, 2024

Purpose: *To promote and share the history of our village. To organize events, exhibitions, conferences, and other cultural activities related to the history of the village. To collect, preserve, and disseminate documents, photos, testimonials, and other historical resources. To collaborate with schools, local institutions, and other associations to promote local history. To contribute to the restoration and maintenance of the heritage of Villiers-sous-Grez by implementing any means aimed at raising funds and promoting said heritage. And, in general, any activity that contributes to the main purpose of the association.*

Board of Directors: October 25, 2024:

Executive Committee: René FLEUREAU (President), Marc BLANCHARD (Secretary), Yves LECHEVALLIER (Assistant Secretary), Charlotte VALLAUD-BLANCHARD (Treasurer)

Administrators: Nelly AMIOT, Eveline ANDRIEU, Odile LECHEVALLIER, Bernard LESCHIER, Joël POULAIN

Website : https://hpvilliers-sous-grez.fr

Association projects:

-Archiving and classifying documents used to create the catalog and exhibition

-Maintaining the guided tour (repairing barcodes) and signs in the village

-Creating an accessible archive database allowing everyone to trace their roots

-Writing news articles based on documents published in old newspapers

-Producing audio-visual materials to promote and raise awareness of the history and heritage of Villiers (photos, films).





Après la libération ...





... la vie reprend.





AVEC LE SOUTIEN

BRIE PICARDIE