

**Arlette de Long**

**Tape 1 Side A**

**May 23, 1997**

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### **Abstract**

Arlette de Long was born Arlette Wagmann on June 15, 1937 in Brocourt, France. Her parents met at medical school in Paris and moved to the village of Brocourt where her father was the sole physician. She, along with her parents, was baptized, went to church and was never denounced. At first she attended a Catholic school in the village. Her only difficulty with the War was the lack of sugar and candy was rationed. Also she would hear bombs and shooting and did not know how close they were. The Germans first occupied the house next door before they occupied hers. When she was 10, after the War, she went to live with her grandparents in the Parisian suburbs to receive a better education. She learned a little about Judaism after the War but did not discuss it until her own daughter was 16 and she taught her. Arlette came to the US in 1963 where she met her husband and had two children. She got divorced, remarried and is now separated.

### **Summary**

00:00 Arlette de Long was born Arlette Wagmann on June 15, 1937 in Brocourt, France in the Department of Somme in the North. Her parents were not French. Her mother was from Siberia and after living in China, came in 1918 to Paris to study medicine. Her father was born in Chernovtsy (?), Romania (Russia?) and also came to Paris to study medicine where they met. They married and in 1935 moved to Brocourt, a village with no physician. They lived in a house. The residents of the village saved their lives as knew Wagmann was a foreign name. Her aunt came from China in 1939 to live with them. Her father was never officially denounced. Arlette has papers indicating that she was baptized. Only the priest knew that she was Jewish. No one made a concerted effort to remove them. Arlette has little knowledge of the grandparents on her father's side. Her grandfather died during the War and her grandmother died soon after.

05:00 Arlette was eight years old when her grandmother died. At age 10, Arlette moved to the Parisian suburbs to live with her maternal grandparents and her parents arrived later. Her father joined the synagogue. She was not told much about Judaism. She did not know if she believed in G-d or not but she started believing anyway as she went to the church in the village. She remembers when she was about 2 and ½ or 3, her grandmother held onto her shoulders when she wanted to go under the table. Her father voluntarily joined the French Army. Her mother and her grandparents drove from the village to Grand Pere in Normandy and returned to the village after the War though her mother wanted to leave France. Arlette remembers the village. She was not troubled by the War except for the

lack of sugar. Her best friend owned the grocery store and she looked at their merchandise every day. She merely looked at the candy and the chocolate as they were rationed.

- 10:00 She wore wooden shoes. She recalls an American or Swede arriving by parachute and the villagers used the parachute to make a jacket and appliqué. She played with some of the villagers. Her family had a large brick house with indoor plumbing and the house was joined to another house where an old lady lived and had a beautiful garden. The Germans took that house. Arlette's house also had a garden but it was not as nice. When the soldiers were in the garden, Arlette would join them. She knew they had a secret but did not know it was because they were Jewish. She felt that maybe they were bad as had done something wrong. No bombs fell on them but fell far from her house. A V8 fell 20 kilometers from her house. Her parents were anxious. Her father spoke German.
- 15:00 Arlette spoke Russian with her grandparents and her mother and spoke French with her father. She did not know what it meant to be Jewish. She received no education at that time. She knew something was bad. There was killing and bombing and they hoped to leave. They were privileged as her father was a doctor and was respected and well-liked as he was devoted to the people. He used a bicycle, a motorcycle or a car to visit his patients. If the people did not have money, he gave them food as it was available. Arlette felt special being his daughter. She was 7 or 8 when the War ended early one summer day. By then, they had moved as the Germans needed their house. They lived in the village where her grandmother was afraid when she heard shooting and would run outside and hide in the chicken coop. She recalls the Germans separated the men, women and children as something happened; perhaps food was stolen.
- 20:00 Arlette stood in the garden with the old lady in her nightgown, the teacher and children. There was a very pregnant lady who was crying. Arlette started crying when she saw the other children crying. The priest removed the people. Her first school was the Catholic School where the teacher made them sing songs. They planted a garden next to the church. Arlette attended another school before school was stopped where there was one teacher for 14 boys and girls in the same room. The teacher was screaming and Arlette had to sit alone in front of the teacher. Most of Arlette's memories are from after the War. The restrictions they had were to darken the windows and stop butchering.
- 25:00 Arlette attended church so did not learn about Judaism. Her parents did not attend church. Her mother was very unhappy. To this day when something bad happens, the Jews are blamed. If you missed church, the villagers would think you a Communist. Marcelle (?) was converted and they were all Catholic but her mother did not attend church. Everyone was baptized. Small children do not take communion. Her family did not observe Christmas or Easter.

- 30:00 The Villagers did not know about Jews and thought their name and dark hair suggested they were Communists. Ten years ago Arlette had to leave and it was secret. Arlette's father was friendly with Francois, a neighbor's wife, and sent her a car. Her husband laughed and they are still friends. The relationship between Arlette's father and Francois is a taboo subject. It was never mentioned as her father is a doctor. She would like to ask questions about their relationship. She has little memory of France.
- 35:00 She remembers at 10 she was happy in the village despite the War. It was a loss when her grandpa died when she was eight years old. Between 8 and 10, Arlette has few memories. She recalls at the end of the War, she was standing in front of their house with her family and an American. The Germans put their hands up in the air and their weapons fell down. The American gave them a gun. She thought the spinster across the street was ancient and was interested in the soldiers. **Tape 1, Side 2.** The woman's head was shaved as she had slept with a German soldier. Her family moved to the suburbs as she needed a better education. At first she was a boarder and went home on weekends. Her father did not want to leave the village but her mother did.
- 40:00 She was introduced to Judaism for the first time. She was 11 years old and felt negative about it. Until then, her parents had not explained about Jews. Arlette returned to church, this time a Protestant one. She was ashamed of the way the Jews looked. She did not know that they were survivors. They looked awful compared to the healthy-looking Catholics. Arlette wanted to make communion like the other girls. She did not hate the Christians as her mother did. She had to sit upstairs with her mother and the other women in the Synagogue. She had no siblings so felt alone there. Her mother talked with the other women. Arlette missed the quiet atmosphere of the church. She looked downstairs and saw the men in dark suits. Arlette did not believe in G-d at that time. When she learned what happened to the Jews, she did not hate them but did not identify with them. Arlette did not want to move. When her daughter was 16, she asked what "kosher" was so started to teach her. She took her to the Holocaust Museum.
- 45:00 Arlette's parents did not search for anyone. Her grandmother was one of 12 siblings but never searched for them. Her father was one of four siblings with one brother living in Munich. People do not consider Arlette Jewish as she did not have a Jewish home. Once she was in a car with a man and a woman who did not know that she was Jewish. The woman said, "Oh, that's a Jew, they're so pushy." Then Arlette announced that she was Jewish. Occasionally, people make remarks such as, "Jewish head." She came to the US in 1963 for education and stayed a year to learn the language. She met her husband and they had two children. They divorced and she remarried and is separated.
- 50:00 Her parents are still married. During the War, when she heard planes in the night she did not know if they were coming close. She heard machine gun fire. Lasting effects of the War was her sense of identity, sense of guilt and sense of insecurity.

55:00 She believes that all children suffered from the War. Her career in the US gave her a sense of life. She works with adults as she wishes to help. Arlette has a feeling of exile as she did not want to leave Paris. She feels that she survived better than others because her family was with her. In 1953 or 1955 her parents changed their names. Although her mother attended Medical School, she stayed home and was mostly a homemaker but some patients came to her house.

60:00 It was hard for Arlette to think about the War. She feels it is a story of hope as some people were turned in by the French but she was not turned in (and killed) so it shows compassion.

62:00