

**RG-50.146.0034**

**Summary of Oral History Interview with Charles Baron—ENGLISH**

**Charles Baron**, born in 1926 in the 20th arrondissement in Paris; 13 years old at the beginning of the war, and in the country with his grandparents; his family not that religious, but celebrating Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur; not knowing anti-Semitism before the war; his grandparents still living in Paris in 1941—working a little and living in the 19th arrondissement; his grandparents not really worrying—unlike Jews in the 11th arrondissement; his family unable to leave Paris due to lack of money; the first shock for Charles Baron was having to wear the yellow star, and the indifference of those around him; his parents being warned by a French policeman that there was to be a round-up on July 14th, 1942—since nothing happened on that date, his parents returned home and were taken on July 16th, 1942; his parents never came back; Charles was in the country at this point; being arrested in the train station several weeks later, and being sent to Drancy by a French policeman because he was 16 years old and two months; recalling the difficult trip in cattle cars; knowing much later that the train had stopped 150 km from Auschwitz, and able-bodied men were selected for work detail—of which he was chosen; receiving authorization to take his bags and being loaded into a tractor bed; passing several villages, and finally arriving in a camp, which was clean—as it was intended for German use; working at different construction areas; being guarded by volunteers, not the SS; after a sabotage attempt, being sent to a punishment camp for three weeks, where the conditions were much harsher—guarded by Volksdeutsche; after returning to the original camp, being sent to work at the I.G. Farben factory for 18 months—very difficult conditions; working inside-out of the elements—saved his life; insufficient nourishment caused oedema (edema); after another sabotage attempt, being sent to Auschwitz—passing 'selection', and being chosen for a detail where there was enough food; in October, 1944—being sent to another camp which was a part of Dachau; compared to Auschwitz, this camp was 'hell'; unable to walk any further in the state that he was in—29 kg for his 1 m 60 frame; continued on by courage; somehow, Charles Baron survived; in March, 1945—receiving packages from the Red Cross; recalling the evacuation of the camp under Allied and American bombings; surviving along with a friend near a forest; arriving in a small village; knocking on the door and finding shelter with a German peasant; having moments where accepting of death; experiencing atrocious conditions as one would see in a film—rain, storms, mud; recalling the time in the small home; looking for shelter with a priest; asking for a glass of milk at a farm; peasant asking Charles to come in for something to eat; Charles Baron in need of a doctor; Americans arriving on April 28, 1945; Americans moving on, and retreating SS coming; awaiting again the Americans' return; being housed in a hotel; being in a frail state; staying in hospital for months; recuperating near Lake Constance; returning several months later to France—had been three years; his parents no longer there, but finding his grandfather; no one had denounced his grandfather....

**images of Charles Baron and his family; image of Charles and his grandparents taken seven months after Liberation in October, 1945; images of concentration camps—Landsberger and Dachau (taken by American army)**