

Interviewee: HARTZ, Ruth (Renee) K. ¹

Date: February 28, 1982

Interviewer: Nora Levin

No. of Audiotapes: 2 English

No restrictions

Transcript: 1 v. (unpaged)

SUMMARY

Ruth (Renee) Hartz, nee Kapp, born in Palestine of German-Jewish parents in 1937, moved with her family to Paris in 1938. Although the family had affidavits for the United States, their emigration was disrupted by the American consulate. After the invasion of France in 1940, they were sent with other non-French to Colombers, a sports stadium outside of Paris. Her father avoided deportation by joining the French Foreign Legion in Morocco. With the help of the Resistances, Ruth and her mother fled to Normandy, with false papers, hiding on a farm, then to Toulouse and Arthes near Albi in the French Free Zone, where father joined them in 1942. She describes the kindness of people in the small towns toward the persecuted, their decency and political thinking but also the willingness of the French police and bureaucracy to collaborate with the Nazis she describes flight, hunger and painful separation from her parents when she was hidden in a Sorēze convent in Sortčze. After one year, the family reunited and was helped with food and hiding by two generations of a Catholic family, with whom they remain in contact. After the war, the family moved to Paris. Ruth experienced antisemitism in school and later at the Sorbonne and found protection hiding her Jewishness as she had during the war. Joining the Jewish scouts (Les Éclaireurs) and WIZO reinforced her Jewish identity. She emigrated to the United States in 1958.

Ruth's biography Your Name is Renee by Stacy Oretzmeyer was published in 1994 by Biddle Publishing Co.

¹Ruth discusses her two names in her interview. At the time of the interview, she did in fact go by the name Renee. She was born Ruth Hartz and currently goes by that name.