

RG-50.498.0015

Summary of Oral History Interview with Jean Fonteray—ENGLISH

Jean Fonteray, born in 1923 in Cluny; parents were farmers—75–100 acres; an only child; schooling in Cluny; age of 15—working the farm; age of 16—Declaration of war; "Phoney War" (drôle de guerre); May–June 1940—German invasion; Pétain; the Battle of Verdun—First World War; intellectual resistance; the Armistice after 1943; obligatory work in Germany—departing from Mâcon; the Maquis; 1943—unoccupied zone; false papers; Jean Fonteray hiding in a farmhouse; leaving with Maquis to La Vineuse—attacking convoys; between 1943–1945—roundups; deportations; Jewish families; Bertie Albrecht—Combat movement; resistance networks of François Mitterrand—his family from Cluny; Mr. Gouze—Danielle Mitterrand's father—was a member of Combat movement; February 14, 1944—75 people rounded up; Jean Fonteray near Creusot—35 miles from Cluny; 1942—Cluny was surrounded; Mr. Pernot of Cormatin was deported in place of his father; Mr. Berdain, Mrs. Dufy; Jews deported while townspeople attending mass; prohibitions against Jews and Freemasons; demarcation line; occupied zone —industrial; so-called free zone; his cousin in Bray; 1942—Jews crossing the demarcation line—Germans with dogs patrolling along the line to stop them; those smuggling Jews across the line; the underground; August 11, 1944—Germans attacking the resistance at Col du Bois Clair—battle of August 11; Jean Fonteray a member of Maquis; Mr. Gouze; Jean Moulin; the railroads; La Vineuse; walking on foot; the Gestapo—end of 1943/beginning of 1944—Germans coming for the roundups—trucks taking people from Cluny to Lyon for deportation; Cluny was a hotbed of resistance—Resistance fighters in the surrounding forests; Blanot—people shot by Germans; escape route—Mâcon—Charolles—Nevers; Brother Roger; German patrols on the trains; denunciations in Cluny; Mr. Giraud—from the beginning, he was considered a collaborator; French combat legion; the Militia; the Northern Café; punishment for women accused of being involved with the Germans; Mr. Gueritain was arrested—died during deportation—a road in Cluny named after him; Jacques Gueritain Road; arrest of the mayor; another mayor installed by Vichy government; 14 people arrested in roundups—principal objective wasn't Jews, but those in the Resistance; Pernot family—deportation to Germany or Poland; difficult times for people; Jean Fonteray leaving for his uncle's—between Blanzay and Le Creusot—Pierre Fonteray; awaiting false papers; leaving in June for the Maquis; September 1944—upon liberation, leaving for the 5th Dragoon Regiment—in Beaufortain in the Alps; recalling a snowstorm; the retreat of German forces to Austria; the moment of the Armistice—May 8, 1945—being in Chambéry; agricultural permission; returning home in August; Taizé—Brother Roger, Brother Pierre and Brother Alain; the song—Maréchal, nous voilà ! ; the trains bringing people to Auschwitz; "We didn't really know what exactly was happening....."