

Projet Roumanie en anglais

Hello,

My name is Lisa, I am 17 years old and I come from Ardennes, in the north of France. I came with Noel and Elsa and I'm going to present to you two interviews that I have conducted. I ask questions to my grandmother, whose father lived through the war, and to my great-grandmother, who experienced the war herself.

I will start by telling you my great-grandmother's story:

"My name is Gisèle Reneaux, I am 94 years old, I am from the Ardennes and I lived through the Second World War. When the war started, I was 12 years old, I had just done my communion. Members of my family were called up to fight, my cousins and my uncles more precisely, but fortunately my brothers were too young to be called up.

Then we were driven out of the village by the Germans, it was an order to leave so we fled to Vendée. The town hall offered us accommodation but it was too dangerous, it was in the middle of a lake, with young children, the risk of drowning was too great. We had another accommodation which was actually an unused school. To flee to Vendée was horrible, there were seven of us in a small car, we were very tired. We had to sleep in a mill to take a break, on straw, and it was very cold.

Nobody gave us any money, my mother had to manage, my father still worked in the Ardennes, but for the Germans, without being paid. He ended up fleeing to join us. In Vendée, we had to hide in our cellar all the time. We could hear the

Germans; their boots tapping on the ground, we were always afraid that they would come looking for us. The best memory I have of this war was finally being able to go home. Except that once we got back, everything had been looted from us because the city had become German, so the Germans had looted us, but the French too, because they had nothing left at home either and therefore to live decently, they had to steal from other people.

My mother had to start all over again, we were poor and we lived on ration tickets. Then I went to school and that's it, we tried to have a normal life.

When France was liberated, the Americans came to rid us of the Germans, we saw them leaving in trucks. In France, we welcomed Polish people because they too were invaded by the Germans.”

Now I will tell you what my grandmother told me about her father. What is interesting is that she has Alzheimers disease àbut these memories, she repeats them to us constantly, without ever changing the version, because they are significant memories for her.

” My name is Thérèse Cuvillier, I am 74 years old, I have always lived in the Ardennes. I was not born during the Second World War but my father fought in it and he never wanted to tell us what really happened there. It was very traumatic for him, he was imprisoned by the Germans and managed to escape with several other soldiers. He was so thin when he came back... He had already had to leave on foot, he had no more strength, and he was all shaky. There was a Polish person who had come to live in my

little village, his name was Constant, and he had come from Poland by foot! His descendants still live nearby. »

As a young Ardennes woman, I can say that these testimonies are really interesting and moving because, it doesn't look like the Germans invaded my region years and years ago, it doesn't look like there was war in the city where I grew up. This war seems so far away, but when my grandmothers told me their story, I realized that it was actually not so long ago. I am happy to have been able to share their memories, so that they remain inked, so that we do not forget this period of horror. These testimonies also allows us to learn from this period when reflecting on current global conflicts and crisis. Are there any questions or comments ?