

Texts translated from the French by David L. Rosenberg to accompany his exhibit “Who is a Jew? Amiens, France 1940-1945” first presented at Temple Emanuel of the South Hills, Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania , March 2018

Marc Adler explains how he found out about the requirement for Jews to register. (See Fiche # 2)

Amiens 18 October 1940

Office for the Census of Jews

Monsieur,

I read in the paper that Jews must come and inscribe themselves, prior to 20 October [1940], on a special register maintained at the Prefecture. Since I am ailing and not able to move about, I take the liberty of making my declaration in writing. I give you below the indications regarding my identity:

Surname: Adler

First name: Marc

Birthplace: Esch/Elzette (Luxembourg)

Date of Birth: 7-8-[19]11

Profession: Engineer with the public works department

Residence: 120, rue Lemerchier, Amiens

Family status – Not married

Cordially yours,

Marc Adler

Source: AJ38 5073/2968

Letter denouncing Doctor Benjamin Wajnberg of Rosières-en-Santerre (Department of the Somme), 13 November 1940 (See Fiche # 38)

Rosières, the 13th of November 1940

Monsieur,

I take the liberty of writing to call your attention to the fact that Doctor Wajnberg, a foreign citizen, is a Jew and that he continues his visits, despite the prohibitions on foreign doctors to practice their profession.

Sincerely yours,

[signature difficult to decipher]

Source: AJ 38/5073/2969

Samuel Obeler asks to be removed from the register of Jews on which he was recently inscribed (see Fiche # 20)

Amiens, 15 December 1940

Monsieur le Préfet,

This past October 15, to respond to the decree of 27 September 1940 ordering a census of all the Jews, I had myself inscribed on the register, which is being maintained by the Prefecture of the Somme.

At the time of my inscription, I had indicated that only my paternal grandparents were Jews and that my maternal grandparents were non-Jews, but it was impossible at that time to furnish the proof, not knowing the date of my mother's death. This explains why I preferred to have myself inscribed, in order to conform to the regulation and in case I was unable to furnish the needed justification.

After considerable research I was able to reconstruct the date of my mother's death, and I join herewith an obituary list from the Mairie of the 13th arrondissement of Paris. By consulting this list, you will see, Monsieur le Préfet, that my maternal grandparents were non-Jews (underlined in the text). I add, moreover, that as a young child, I had always heard at home that my father had been driven out by his parents for having married a non-Jewish woman. I am ready to attest

under oath the truth of what I have written.

I would be very much obliged, Monsieur le Préfet, if you would kindly remove my name from the register of inscriptions of Jews which you maintain. I should add that my wife is Catholic, as are my children who were baptized in the Church of St. Jacques in Amiens in 1913.

Respectfully yours,

Samuel Obeler  
13, rue Camille Saint Saens  
Amiens

Source: AJ 38/5073/2834

Gaston Villar from Ault in the northern part of the Department of the Somme asks permission to attend a family wedding in Paris, 10 October 1941 (See Fiche # 36)

Monsieur le Préfet

Since, on account of my Jewish ancestry, I fall under the new prescriptions concerning residency, I write to ask if I am free, in the following circumstances, to travel to Paris at my discretion? If not, then I would like to request authorization to be able to travel to Paris from the 22nd to the 28th of October.

Reason [underlined in text] I previously promised to attend as a witness the marriage of my niece (a ceremony moreover entirely Catholic). Furthermore, I have an uncle, who has suffered a serious injury (decapiter humerus) in a fall and whom I desire to go and see.

Respectfully,

Villar, Gaston  
8 rue de Paris at Ault

“born in Lille the 12th of December 1878”

“My wife is to accompany me, but she is an Aryan.”

AJ 38/5075

Abraham Lewenberg writes to the Prefect of the Somme, in July 1941, to ask permission to continue his work as a hairdresser's assistant notwithstanding the provision in the German ordinance of 26 April 1941, prohibiting Jews from exercising "professions having contact with the public." (See Fiche # 16)

Monsieur le Préfet

The police have just informed me of the text of the German ordinance of 26 April 1941, regarding the prohibition on the exercise of certain professions.

A hairdresser's assistant for the past 25 years, I am evidently in contact with the public and consequently I fall within the scope of these prohibitions and will therefore be forced to quit my employment.

.....

This is the only trade I know and my health does not permit me to undertake jobs requiring manual strength – I have stomach ulcers and am under a doctor's care.

I have a son aged 9 ½ born in France who will require treatment as well.

I appeal to you to intercede with the German authorities to allow me to exercise my trade at Mr. Rossigny's until improvements in my health will permit me to exercise another trade.

Very respectfully yours,  
A Lewenberg  
23 rue des Majots

Source: AJ 38/5075/4282

Jeanine Coinon writes to the Prefect on 22 October 1941 asking to have her name removed from the register of Jews. (See Fiche # 8, photo absent)

Monsieur le Préfet,

Answering your letter of October 18th [1941] replying to my letter of October 13 in which I asked to have my name expunged from the list of Jews, I regret to inform you that I cannot furnish the certificates of baptism of my grandparents, because, unfortunately for me, they were Jews.

The only claim that I hope may justify my request is that I am a native Frenchwoman, daughter of a veteran of the War of 1914-1918.

If this claim doesn't suffice, I ask that the obligations of control be relaxed in my case, given that I am married to an Aryan for 12 years and mother of two children, and I call your attention in particular to the situation which exists currently in Germany and which doesn't impose the same restraints on the Jews.

Hoping that you will transmit my request to the German military command with a favorable recommendation.

Very respectfully yours,

Jeanine Coinon

Source: AJ 38



Rosa Doubchak writes to the Prefect of the Somme on 2 July 1941, arguing that her husband was wrongly arrested on 22 June 1941 and asking the Prefect to intercede on his behalf (See Fiche # 9)

Monsieur le Préfet

I ask your support with the German authorities in hopes of obtaining the liberation of my husband who was arrested the 22nd of June 1941 and sent to the internment camp at Compiègne [north of Paris]

My husband, Leib Doubchak, 40 years old, is a White Russian and a refugee [apatride] in France since 1905. Given that he is a White Russian I believe he must have been arrested by mistake.

Therefore I appeal to you to help obtain his freedom, even if it must be a supervised release with requirement to report periodically if ordered by the German authorities.

Very respectfully yours,

Mme Lev Doubchak  
30, rue Contrescarpe  
Amiens

source: AJ 38/5072/1777-18

Robert Szentgyorgyi submits the information required of Jews by the law of June 2, 1941. (See Fiche # 35)

To the Prefect of the Somme

Monsieur le Préfet

I, the undersigned, Robert Szentgyorgyi, born the 25th of January 1900 in Budapest, nationality Hungarian, residing in Amiens, 79 Boulevard Pont Noyelles, married in Villers-Cotterets (Aisne) the 24th of December 1928 to a French woman (une française) and having 2 French children (enfants français), exercising the profession of building contractor (chef de chantier en bâtiment), declare that in respect to the Law of 2 June 1941 I am a Jew (je suis israélite).

I have been in France for 20 years and I do not possess in France or elsewhere, any property or money, living rather from the earnings of my employment.

Respectfully yours,

Robert Szentgyorgyi  
Amiens the 30th of June 1941

Source: AJ 38/5075/4497, handwritten in author's hand

1941 Who is a Jew? Shifting definitions.

Third Ordinance involving measures against the Jews, 26 April 1941

“For purposes of this ordinance you are considered a Jew if you have at least three grandparents who are purely racially Jewish. A purely racially Jewish grandparent is one who has belonged to (appartenait) the Jewish religious community.”

“You are also considered to be a Jew if you are descended from two Jewish grandparents, if, at the time of publication of this ordinance, you are a member of the Jewish religious community or if you subsequently join it; or, if, at the time of the publication of this ordinance, you are married to a Jew or subsequently marry one.”

“In case of doubt, you are considered a Jew if you belonged or belong to the Jewish [religious?] community”

The Prefect of the Somme writes to another French government official concerning the situation of Nadine Kasmine, August 7, 1942 (See Fiche # 11)

To Monsieur J. P. Plichon, Depute of the Department of the Nord, First Assistant Mayor of Bailleul, 7 aout 1942

Monsieur le Deputé,

In calling my attention to Mme Nadine KASMINE, born SOBOL, residing at 131, rue Delpech in Amiens, you have communicated the concerns that you have -- if new measures are undertaken against foreign Jews -- about the fate that may await her.

I am able to inform you that the person in question, albeit of Polish origin, has been classified by my offices as a Jew with French nationality, in consequence of her marriage to an Aryan, naturalized Frenchman.

Resultantly, Madame KASMINE does not come under the prescriptions of the German authorities with regard to the deportation of foreigners.

Cordially yours,

The Prefect of the Somme

Source: AJ38/5075/4241

Armand Dreyfus, owner of a general goods store in Cayeux-sur-Mer, on the Picardy coast, writes to the Prefect of the Somme, asking that his wife and he be able to stay in their lodgings contiguous to their business even though the business itself was being "aryanized." (See Fiche # 3 and # 4)

Note: Cayeux sur Mer is a town on the English Channel at the northern limit of the Department of the Somme.

Monsieur le Préfet,

I wish to call to your attention a measure which impacts me and of which I have been advised today, March 11 [1942], by Mister Bourdelique, Provisional Administrator, who has obtained a ruling against me to quit my lodgings within the next two months.

In explaining my situation I am hopeful that you can intercede in order to annul this measure, which seems to me exceedingly harsh.

I am 70 years old, French and doubly French in so far as I am Alsatian with parents and grandparents also Alsations.

Mobilized during 52 months myself between 1914 and 1919, I have a son who is currently a prisoner of war in Germany.

For 30 years I have been the sole tenant and proprietor of this building and have never rented it.

My stock has been entirely liquidated by Mr. Bourdelique, Provisional Administrator, and my business is now terminated. (1)

I dare to hope that you will take my request under careful consideration.

Respectfully yours,

A. Dreyfus, 195 Rue du Marechal Foch – Cayeux sur Mer

(1) Mr. Dreyfus owned the Nouvelles Galeries Modernes, see photo in last panel of the exhibit.

Source: AJ38/5084/0119

Margaret Louria writes to the Prefect of the Somme on 28 June 1942 asking him to intercede on behalf of her husband Leon Louria, president of the Jewish community, arrested for not displaying his yellow star in the prescribed manner (See Fiche # 17 and # 18)

Monsieur le Préfet

My husband Leon Louria, who came to France in 1898, voluntarily served in the French army during the War of 1914-18, received a medical discharge for pulmonary emphysema and obtained French citizenship in 1922, is, like me, of the Jewish religion. In fact he is president of the Jewish community of Amiens and the department of the Somme.

This past June 17 [1942], my husband was apprehended in Admiral Courbet street by members of the army of Occupation who immediately had him locked up in the jail in Amiens after having pointed out to him that the badge imposed on the Jews [i.e. the yellow star] was not sewn on his jacket and wasn't displayed in the way prescribed by the regulations.

The following Monday the municipal police of Amiens came to search our domicile at no. 17 rue des Augustins. Since that time my husband remains in the jail where he is awaiting the decision of the German authorities.

I wish respectfully to point out to you that the state of his health, already impaired for some time now, will likely be aggravated if his stay in

jail is prolonged.

My husband is 61 years old. He suffers from a bronchial infection, which requires constant care and precautions to avoid being exposed to chills.

I have no doubt that the information that you can gather about him will show him to be an exemplary Frenchman, one who always scrupulously observed the laws of his adopted country.

If the business he directs has prospered greatly, it is owing solely to his dogged work, his integrity in business dealings and the excellent cooperation that he has secured from his employees because of his loyalty and his understanding of the needs of the workers. The majority of his employees have worked for his company for at least 15 years, and at no time was there a strike. The president of the textile employees union Mr. Aude Lefevre will himself attest to the accuracy of these facts.

I will add that the acts of generosity shown by my husband towards all who have sought his assistance have earned him the respect of numerous persons not connected with the Jewish community.

We have three children, two daughters and a son who attended the schools of Amiens.

I beg, Monsieur le Préfet, to call your particular attention to the character relatively minor of the infraction which is being charged against my husband.



Perhaps you will agree, in consideration of his record of fairness and just dealing, to intervene with the Occupying authorities, in order to put a limit on his confinement, which, given his impaired health, he cannot long support.

If the Occupying authorities need guarantees with respect to my husband, it would be easy for them to establish his solvency, as it is well known.

I should also point out that my husband has never been politically involved.

Please act so that my husband can resume his place in hearth and home among our children and myself.

Very respectfully yours,  
Margaret Louria

Source: AJ38/5072/2723-25

Letter of a member of the Catholic clergy, the Abbé Loridan on behalf of the Rakhowitz family of Bouquemaison (Somme), 27 August 1942 (See Fiche # 24 – 27)

Diocese of Amiens, Parish of Bouquemaison, 27 August 1942

Monsieur le Directeur,

Driven to distraction by a summons issued by the prefecture of Paris concerning their daughter, the Rakhowitz family has sought my advice and I am taking the liberty of responding myself.

By a permission dated 13 January 1942, the entire family was authorized to come and live in Bouquemaison, hence their 19 year old daughter could not respond to the summons of authorities in Paris. What then was to be done? I wrote to bureau 93 that it was impossible, and that I was informing you of the situation. I hope that you can help them avoid any catastrophe. It is unacceptable that veterans of the military, wounded twice over and cited [for their service], should be persecuted to this point. The young lady, today, is demoralized.

I am sorry to importune you but please accept my respectful best wishes,

Abbé LORIDAN

Source: AJ 38

The sub-prefect of the arrondissement of Peronne (Somme) certifies that Shlomo Rubin, the only known Jew in his territory, has received his allotment of three yellow stars and has surrendered in exchange a coupon from his textile ration book, 11 June 1942 (See Fiche # 29)

Monsieur le Préfet

In reply to your letter of the first of June, concerning the assignment to the Jews of their special badge, I beg to make known that...three examples of the badge were given on 4 June 1942 to the Jewish refugee from Russia, Shlomo Rubin, chemist, living at Epanancourt.

Please find, enclosed, the textile coupon which the individual in question has surrendered in exchange for the badges, as well as 6 unused badges, since no other Jew has come forward in the subprefecture during the allotted time.

The Subprefect,

R Febvre.

Source: AJ 38/5072/1185

Raymond Schulhof thanks the Prefect in a letter of 14 September 1942 for his efforts in obtaining the eventual liberation of two of Schulhof's children from the Pithiviers concentration camp (See Fiche # 34 and # 31)

Monsieur le Préfet,

I would like to express our profound acknowledgment and gratitude to you and your colleagues for the generous initiatives you undertook, which led to the liberation of our children, Pierre and Jacqueline, from the Pithiviers concentration camp on the 12th of September.

We will never forget the sympathy that all of you brought to our painful situation and your unhesitating assistance to us in every way.

Respectfully yours,

R. Schulhof  
14, rue Alberic de Calonne  
Amiens

Source: AJ 38/5075/4379

The Prefect of Police in Paris writes to the Prefect of the Somme telling him to inform Madame Wolff that her husband has been deported (See Fiche # 42 and 43)

12 December 1942

Monsieur le Préfet

“I beg you to advise Madame WOLFF, villa “Les Cytises” at Onival (Somme), that her husband, Georges Lucien, interned at Drancy, was deported on 10 November 1942.

signed, for the Prefect of Police,  
the General secretary

Source: AJ 38 5072/4516

On order of the Prefect of the Somme, members of the French police (Gendarmerie nationale) arrest Israel Pilcer, a Polish Jewish agricultural worker living in Quevauviller (Somme). (See Fiche # 21 and # 23)

“Today, nineteenth of February, 1943, we, the undersigned “Charles” Vincelet and “Robert” Rety, gendarmes resident at Amiens, Department of the Somme, bearers of a letter of Monsieur the Prefect of the Somme, dated 19 February 1943, ordering to proceed to the arrest, pursuant to an order of internment of one named PILCER Israel, called “Joseph,” born 3 January 1897 at Pelice (Poland), agricultural worker, living in Quevauviller (Somme) proceeded to this locality where the subject was discovered.

Immediately taken into custody, he declared, “The order of internment which you have just read does apply to me.” Read and again approved and signed by him.

Following this, we declared to Pilcer that we arrest him in the name of the Law, to be conveyed to the internment Camp at Drancy.

[His identity card is inspected, along with his ration book. He is found to be in possession of 5,135 francs, and “an old watch in rusted metal.”]

His parents’ names are noted.  
He is said to be “married, no children”

“Pilcer is equipped with two blankets, a spoon, a fork, a quart container, and a change of undergarments and clothing.”

Source: AJ 38/5077/581

A letter regarding the request of Lucien Aaron, a survivor, for a pension, 1966 (See Fiche # 1)

Amiens, the 11th of December 1966, National Federation of Deportees and Internees, Resistors and Patriots, 10 rue Leroux, Paris XV<sup>e</sup>

Dear Comrades,

Following our advertisements in the newspapers announcing the expansion of eligibility for pensions, I was called upon last week, at his request, to visit a comrade internee. This comrade is Jewish. He is very well known in AMIENS. He is a member of the board of A.D.I.R.P. (Association of Deportees, Internees, Resistors and Patriots).

He presented his case to me after appealing in vain to the officials of the A.D.I.R.P. I should add that this comrade is a supporter of unity and that his actions at one moment tipped the scales in its favor. Circumstances are different now. He no longer attends meetings; he is 88 years old.

This comrade AARON, Lucien, born 22 April 1878, was interned as a Jew at the DRANCY camp from January 4, 1944 to February 5, 1944. Inasmuch as he was already elderly at that time and was married to an Aryan (i.e. non-Jewish) woman, a circumstance which he made known at the time, he was transferred from Drancy to the Camp de LAMBLARDIE, 7 rue de Lamblardie, Paris, which as he maintains was an annex of Drancy, from Feb

5, 1944 to 15 June 1944. From 15 June 1944 to 5 September 1944 he was in forced confinement at the Camp des Abondances, 11 rue des Abondances , Bologne-sur-Seine.

[AFTER THE WAR] he made application for an Internee's Card (entitling to certain government benefits), to which however a negative decision was rendered, 8 April 1955. He did not appeal this decision at the time.

The rejection of his application was based on the fact that the comrade had not been interned for three months, the commission only considering as valid the period he spent at Drancy Camp.

He maintains that the Camp de Lamblardie was an annex of Drancy and that convoys of deportees left from this camp.

I pointed out to this comrade that it wasn't possible for him to open up a new dossier since there was a statute of limitations for an appeal and that he should have appealed the case at the time of the initial decision. I nonetheless promised him that I would make inquiries to see how the camp de Lamblardie was regarded from this point of view and if we knew of other comrades in similar situations.

He is a good soul, I remained at his house for two hours and I saw him weep as he recounted the vexations he endured before his arrest and the sufferings and anguish he experienced for his loved ones; he had 4 children whom he succeeded in hiding. I repeat he is very well



known in AMIENS and in the department. At one time he had an important role in the affairs of the Jewish community.

I don't know what we can do for him - -everything no doubt hinges on the question of the camp de Lamblardie. I hope you can make inquiries about this, so I can communicate to him how we might be able to follow up on his case.

With thanks, my dear comrades, respectfully yours,

Source: ADIRP, courtesy of Mme Gisele Cozette, President of Amiens section.