

FOCUS

PORTRAITS OF WOMEN IN THE RESISTANCE IN CHARENTE AND CHARENTE LIMOUSINE



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A former primary school teacher and history professor, she is now involved in retirement with the Friends of the Resistance Foundation, for which she is the departmental delegate. She has also been president of the Charente delegation from 2015 to 2025 and national vice-president since 2021. Through her participation in national research and the establishment in Charente in 2019 of the « *Petits Chercheurs en Histoire* » workshops for schoolchildren, she makes the public aware of the fates of the deportees and those shot in Charente.

VILLES
& PAYS
D'ART &
D'HISTOIRE

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Jacques Bloch-Morhange alias
« Texier » (1921-1989), FTP
company Commander,
exchanging with three liaison
agents near La Péruse in
February 1944.
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Graphic design
DES SIGNES studio
Muchir Desclouds 2015

Printing
IGE Edigraphic

EDITORIAL

The history of the Resistance was written for a long time from a male perspective, at a time when the country, undergoing reconstruction, needed an idealized vision of the Resistance as well as heroes who upheld its principles. This masculine narrative had the effect of obscuring the actions of women within the resistance movements. Yet they played an important role, whether in sabotage missions, hiding illegal immigrants, or infiltrating Nazi or militia forces. This narrative bias has been challenged for several years in the wake of feminist movements and a less gendered view of history.

The Charente Limousine Community of Communes is working at its level to restore this balance and, in recent years, has undertaken a project to preserve the memory of the unknown stories of women who contributed to the resistance in Charente Limousine. This work is being carried out by the *Pays d'art et d'histoire du Confolentais* in close partnership with the Charente section of the Friends of the Foundation for the Memory of Deportation (AFMD) and its president Michèle Soult.

By cross-referencing the various archives and testimonies available, the project brings these women, forgotten by history, out of the shadows. It thus makes it possible to give substance to their commitment, to make it known and recognised. It also offers the opportunity to exonerate some of them who were unjustly denigrated. Thanks to this work, it is possible to raise awareness of the history of these heroines among the inhabitants of the region and also among people outside it.

The results of this research are intended to be widely disseminated in a variety of ways. One such method is the publication of documents, and in this brochure Michèle Soult reveals the lives of some of these women who worked in Charente Limousine and more broadly in Charente.

An exhibition was also produced by the Charente County Council, in collaboration with several organisations including the AFMD and the *Pays d'art et d'histoire du Confolentais*.

There is still a long way to go, but it is a worthwhile endeavour because, in these troubled times, younger generations will find inspiration in these women.

**Benoît Savy
President of the Charente Limousine Community of Communes**



Opposite
Photo of Marie Vigneron in
1944.
© Family collections.

MARIE MONIQUE LAGORCE FORMERLY VIGNERON NUMBER 51474 IN RAVENSBRÜCK

Marie Vigneron, known as Monique, was born on 14 April 1913, on the Route de Tournepiche in Montembœuf (Charente), a rural commune in Charente Limousine, 34 km east of Angoulême, whose nurseries were among the largest in south-western France at the beginning of the 20th century.

It was in these nurseries that « Monique's » parents, Pierre Vigneron (1878) and Marguerite Boulestin (1884), worked.

The fourth of seven children, she enjoyed a happy childhood. After leaving school, she stayed in Montembœuf to help her father, who had become a seed-grower and nursery owner. Her youth was a joyous one, with a kind fiancé and a group of friends with whom she went dancing in Angoulême and swimming in Royan. The achievements of the *Front Populaire* allowed the Charente petty bourgeoisie to go on holiday for a few days, sometimes by car, often thanks to the « *Petit Mairat* ». This inexpensive railway line crossed the two Charentes, from the livestock farms of the north to the wine-growing hillsides of the Atlantic coast.

But the 1930s were also marked by the rise of Nazism and the fear of a return to the trenches : the tragic memory of the « war to end all wars » haunted everyone's mind.

1940 sounded the death knell for carefree living : war, defeat, the armistice, the shame that went with it, and a partially invaded Charente. The enemy entered Angoulême victoriously on 24 June 1940, after parading down the Champs-Élysées on 17 June 1940.

Monique saw the rolled-up sleeves, the green

helmets marked with black swastikas, the shiny boots, the haughty looks.

She saw defeat.

She did not accept it.

With her friends, she learned of General de Gaulle's Appeal and, without hesitation, they decided to join the resistance, following the directives of this little-known man who called for the salvation of France. Resist, but how ? Monique contacted the BCRA (Central Intelligence and Action Bureau, the second office of General de Gaulle's General Staff, created on 1 July 1940), probably in late 1940 or early 1941. Her village, Montembœuf, was located in the unoccupied zone until November 1942.

There was no shortage of missions. Thus, she escorted Jewish families seeking to flee the occupied zone subject to anti-Jewish laws, downed airmen, or even young people wanting to join de Gaulle's Free France, as her younger brother Camille would do. With her « passengers », she stopped at the family home. Her mother hid her daughter's « *protégés* » in the attic. Then she accompanied them to Mauléon, to the hotel in the centre, which was the rallying point from where they reached England via Spain and North Africa. Sometimes, her missions also took her to Switzerland.

One day, on the train, while she was escorting an English airman to Mauléon, two elderly Basque gentlemen boarded their carriage, talking loudly, explaining that the Gestapo was at the hotel in the centre, that the hotel owners had just been shot, and that the Germans had surrounded the station, probably waiting for « big game ». She



understood the danger and decided to jump off the train with her travelling companion. They only escaped by fleeing through the mountains, in the snow. Just one anecdote among others, but one that, at the time, could land you in the hands of a zealous Feldwebel¹. Being caught was bound to lead to torture, for sure, and a fear shared by all the comrades : that of talking and bringing down their entire network.

Alternating adrenaline and fatigue, to be carried on frail shoulders barely out of adolescence.

No matter, duty prevailed. In 1942, the organization asked her to move to Paris. She made herself available to the BCRA as a liaison officer during this period. She lived at 6 rue Dulong in the 17th arrondissement. In September 1943, she joined the Super NAP (Infiltration of Public Administrations) network as a liaison and intelligence officer alongside Maurice Nègre². On 15 February 1944, she joined the ROY OSS Lenoir mission network, created in 1941 by seminarian Georges Lapouge (1914-2013)³. She carried out numerous missions in Vichy, where Georges Bidault gave her documents for the Allies. It was at this time that she met Louis Lagorce, her future husband. He belonged to the Paris firefighters' resistance network.

Providing information on German repressive forces, manufacturing false identity documents and smuggling resistance fighters out of occupied territory were the young woman's main activities.

Monique often narrowly avoided disaster. Many of her comrades were bundled into one of the Gestapo's terrifying black trucks, or were

murdered on a street corner. She knew she might have to take her own life one day, seconds before being handcuffed.

She knew it.

Following the arrest of a young German commander assigned to troop movements in Paris who was providing her with police intelligence, she was arrested on 18 June 1944, at her Paris home.

On 18 June, a twist of irony, such as history can conjure up.

At 7:00 a.m., two Gestapo agents accompanied by militiamen took her to Rue des Saussaies for interrogation. She then endured torture, beatings, mistreatment, and humiliation. Simone Gonichon, arrested in the same case, suffered the same fate. Monique was forced to witness the execution of her informant : he was shot before her eyes in the courtyard of the central Rue des Saussaies. She was then interrogated by an elderly Wehrmacht officer who kept her in his office, fed her, and allowed her to rest after the interrogation.

Monique was then imprisoned in Fresnes Prison, in an overcrowded cell where she met those who would remain her « sisters of the heart » until their deaths.

On 27 July 1944, she was transferred to Fort Romainville, a German camp for arrested women, where she was registered under the number 6582. She was deported from the Gare de l'Est on 3 August 1944, in a convoy of 68 women headed to the Saarbrücken Neue-Bremme transit camp, near the border with France. The treatment inflicted on the women in

1. View of the entrance to the Romainville fort in the commune of Les Lilas (93), from the early 20th century.

© Image taken from the website www.geneanet.org.

2 and 3. Photos of Marie Vignerot in the 1940s.

© Family collections.



this camp was intended to break them.

An understatement.

After ten days there, she was sent to the Ravensbrück concentration camp, near Berlin, where she was assigned number 51474 on 14 August 1944. She was quickly assigned to the Gartenfeld Kommando, which was administratively part of KL Sachsenhausen and employed concentration camp inmates for the Siemens firm. She worked in lacquer workshops for submarine cables and, in the evening, returned to the small Gartenfeld camp in a block that the French women shared with Italian women. Different languages and cultures, identical suffering : hunger, cold, poor hygiene, illness, beatings, and backbreaking labour. They had to hold on. Believe in it.

On 28 March 1945, the camp barracks were completely destroyed by an Allied bombing raid. At this time, the strategy of recapture was launched, resulting in targeted bombings of Nazi structures. Another irony of fate : how many times had she and her comrades dreamed of seeing Allied bombers drop their bombs on Nazi factories ? But strikes were rarely surgical at 3,000 m altitude.

Monique, nicknamed « Farfadet », and three comrades managed to get several women out of the *revier*, an infirmary devoid of medicines that was more like a death camp than a place of healing. Many of them died there.

With the camp completely destroyed, the prisoners were sent back to the large Sachsenhausen camp until 20 April. Due to the advance of the Soviet army near Berlin, the

inmates were subjected to a « death march » that began at 2:00 a.m. on 22 April 1945. It was bitterly cold, and they were escorted by armed SS men who pressed them along the road, without really knowing the purpose. Germany was still fighting, the battles raged. They had to march at night, hide during the day. The Russian armies were approaching, the last Germans of the Volkssturm were then left to their own devices. The prisoners, too.

Monique and her unfortunate sisters stayed together. Her best friend Georgette Fradin, who was a doctor, found a cart and an old horse in an abandoned farm. She put the sickest in it and the small convoy set off again. Joined by French prisoners who had escaped from their stalag, they were liberated on 3 May 1945, by a unit composed of Mongolians from the Red Army. Taken into care by the Swedish Red Cross on the banks of the Elbe, Monique, whose health was precarious, was hospitalized for a few days in Boichold.

She was repatriated on 19 May by the reception centre at the Hôtel Lutetia in Paris. She was reunited with Louis Lagorce, whom she married on 26 August 1946, at the town hall of the 17th arrondissement of Paris and from this union a daughter, Marie-Martine, was born.

She was awarded the title of « Deported Resistance Fighter » on 27 April 1954. She received the *Croix de Guerre*, the *Médaille de la Résistance*, the *Médaille militaire*, and was made a *Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur*. The couple settled in Asnières (Hauts-de-Seine), and for a time, Monique ran a dry cleaner's. But she quickly



1 and 2. Photos of Marie Vigneron Lagorce towards the end of her life.

© Family collections.

became involved in deportee associations, including the Amicale de Sachsenhausen and the ANCVR (National Association of Voluntary Resistance Fighters) in Asnières, of which she would become president.

A whole new life of activism began for Monique within these deportee associations. Monique worked with her husband to the very end in remembrance associations to defend the ideas of France's greatness so that this period of history would never be forgotten.

Her husband, Louis, deputy mayor of Asnières, died in 2000. Monique died on 31 January 2005, in Clamart (Hauts-de-Seine), aged 91. A life of courage.

Michèle Soult and Laurent Thiery



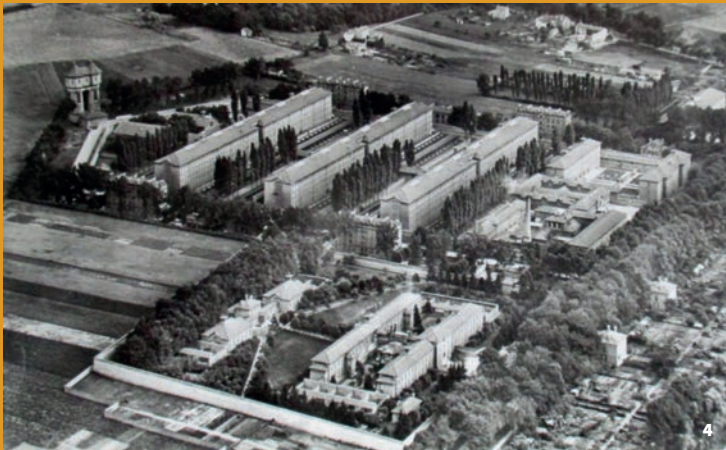
3. View of the building that housed the restaurant run by Marie Vigeron's parents.
© Michèle Soult.

4. Aerial view of Fresnes prison in the Val de Marne (94), in the 1950s.

© Image taken from the website www.delcampe.net.

5. External view of the barracks at Ravensbrück concentration camp.

© Image taken from the article « Ravensbrück », on the website encyclopedia.ushmm.org.



Opposite

Henriette Régeon is made
Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur
in the courtyard of the Invalides.
© Charente County Archives.



HENRIETTE AND THÉRÈSE RÉGEON NUMBERS 44754 AND 44755 IN RAVENSBRÜCK

Thérèse and Henriette were the daughters of Henri, Sincère, Régeon born on 16 August 1876 in Ruffec (Charente) and Marguerite Moreau born on 23 November 1880 in Ruffec, married on 27 July 1903 and residing at 7, rue Piolet in Ruffec. Mr. Régeon was a waggoner - in other words, a cart driver - a difficult, physically demanding job, common for the time but whose definition escapes us today. Let us not forget that in this first third of the century, there were few tarred roads in Charente and motor cars were still rare. In this family context where arduous work was the norm, Thérèse was born on 26 December 1905, two years before her sister Henriette who was born on 15 February 1908 in Ruffec, just like her elder sister.

This is important.

The vagaries of life led Henriette to the North of France, where she was described as « *a woman of action who imposed herself by her stature, her determination, her numerous connections and her great popularity* »¹. Before the hostilities, as indicated in her demobilization form completed in Lille (Nord), she lived at 106 boulevard Sainte Beuve in Boulogne-sur-Mer (Pas-de-Calais) and declared that she worked as a tradeswoman. Presumably, in the face of the advancing enemy, she took refuge with her parents in Ruffec. The debacle, the exodus, the French on the roads. The North coming to the South, once again, as in 1914. A catastrophe recounted by the « refugees » as they were called : in 1939, there were few radios, no television, so it was around the table, orally, that the news was spread, sometimes weeks late.

In 1940, Thérèse worked for her parents, who owned a fuel and building materials sales company. She managed the company's secretarial and accounting duties. She declared herself a building materials salesperson. She lived at 5 rue Piolet in Ruffec. She was described by her cousin Michel as « *a discreet woman, an efficient accomplice of her sister Henriette* »².

In the aftermath of the Armistice, Henriette, like her family, refused to accept defeat. She listened to Radio-Londres and decided not to submit to either the Vichy government or the demands of the occupier. From the moment the demarcation line was established on 25 June 1940, assisted by her sister Thérèse, she helped escaped prisoners of war and then all French citizens who wished to do so to cross into the unoccupied zone to escape enemy reprisals. Fighting fascism and Vichy ideas was a family affair for the Régeons. This was not without risk, as the two sisters well knew.

To ensure the company's material deliveries, Henriette personally drove the vans, a fairly rare occurrence at the time ! But after all, wasn't transportation a family tradition ? As part of her job, she easily obtained *Ausweis*, the passes allowing her to move freely, if freedom could be called that in 1940. It was only natural, responding, she says, « *to General de Gaulle's request* » that she transported mail across the demarcation line as well as escaped prisoners of war. She quickly « smuggled » any young Frenchman wishing to escape to the unoccupied zone : the General's appeal had inspired many,



1. The birthplace of Henriette and Thérèse Régeon, at 7 rue Piolet in Ruffec.

© Michèle Soult.

2. Photo of Thérèse Régeon.

© Charente County Archives.

3. Example of a 1930s small truck.

© Image taken from the website www.pinterest.fr,

© Renault communication / photographer unknown.

and many wanted to leave France to join the FFL. This was not without danger for those being transported and for the driver.

Contacted in 1941 by Colonel Degua, representative of the escape networks and the Civil and Military Organization (OCM) movement, she became his agent. On 1 July 1943, she joined the « Marie-Odile » escape network, created in Nancy by Pauline Gabriel Gaillard, widow of Barré de Saint-Venant, alias « Marie-Odile Laroche ». Henriette, under the pseudonym of Yvette, along with her sister Thérèse, who joined her as indicated in the certificate issued by JR Helluy, head of the « Marie-Odile » network, provided accommodation for Allied paratroopers who had landed on French soil and their transport to England. Many of them, English, Canadian, American, crashed aboard their bombers, on the way to or from perilous missions³. Taking in these soldiers was considered sabotage and punishable by death. The difficulties in the ordeal were numerous : language barrier, night travel, food, dressing wounds, etc. Henriette even managed to escort them to the Spanish border ! Thus, she declared in her file that she « *had 24 (paratroopers) to her credit, who had crossed and returned to England* ». She added : « *The paratroopers came from everywhere, I would go and pick them up at the station and bring them home or take them from the indicated farms and, following an agreed word, take them down to the border* ». Henriette, alias Yvette, was not afraid of anything. Of course, she did not

act alone, but she took the lead. A group of people from Ruffec formed around the young woman : Fernand Lavaud (1901-1971), René Pinaud (1908-1991), Pierre Cottu (1906-1982), Edmond Méningeaud (1891-1945), Roger Rouillon (1887-1974) and his wife Germaine (1893-1945). The latter two were arrested and deported, and Germaine never returned. In addition to this rescue work, she also provided « logistical » transport, supplying the local resistance with weapons and ammunition. In January 1944, Henriette felt threatened. This was a pivotal year when the Nazis committed the greatest atrocities on French soil : they were on the retreat everywhere, in difficulty, and under attack from the « Terrorist Partisans » as they called them. They responded violently, for example, out of revenge, out of fanaticism. The prisons were filling up, interrogations and summary executions were increasing, including in Charente.

Henriette left for about a month to join a resistance group near Limoges. She returned to Ruffec in March and resumed her activities. The two sisters were probably denounced, as stated in their files, like Mary Lindell of the « Marie-Claire » network (a network intended to smuggle British airmen shot down in France to England) and arrested a few months earlier. They were arrested, along with their father Henri (quickly released), at their home on 23 May 1944, at 4 a.m. The Rouillon couple, Mrs Sabelle (1907-1945) and Mrs Denivelle (1900-1944), were also arrested. They were imprisoned at La Pierre



Levée prison in Poitiers (Vienne) until 22 June ; Henriette was subjected to « harsh » interrogations : she was beaten and then held in solitary confinement for six days without revealing any information.

She was then held incommunicado until her departure for Fort de Romainville on 22 June with Thérèse. Henriette was registered there under prisoner number 6064 and Thérèse under 6065. Deported with around a hundred women from Paris Gare de l'Est on 30 June to the Saarbrücken Neue-Bremme transit camp, they were quickly transferred to KL Ravensbrück, where they were registered on 7 July under the numbers 44754 and 44755. As the daughters of a waggoner, Henriette herself a driver, they found themselves numbered like ordinary vehicle chassis... but was this dehumanization not part of the concentration camp method ?

In the summer of 1944, they were assigned to the Leipsig-Schöenfeld Kommando and identified under the numbers 1932 and 1933⁴. Henriette worked on the left wings of Messerschmitt 109s in the paint station. Despite the mistreatment the two sisters endured and the severe lack of food, they survived. Henriette was said to have been liberated by the Russian army on 2 June 1945, and Thérèse was said to have regained her freedom at the end of May. The latter was repatriated on 3 June via the Nancy centre. As for her younger sister, she set foot in her beloved homeland again on 5 June in Lille. The two sisters returned to Ruffec and were reunited with their parents. Why were the

two sisters separated ? There is nothing in their files to shed light on this mystery.

After the war, deeply affected by the deportation, Thérèse resumed her life in Ruffec. She returned to the family business, in which she worked hard until it ceased to exist. She lived at 29 rue du Général Leclerc. She became an *Officer of the Légion d'Honneur*. Decorated with the *Croix de Guerre* 1939-1945 with Palm, she received The Medal of Freedom and, on 3 August 1946, the Medal of the Resistance.

She died on 5 January 1987, at the age of 81, in her home at 15 rue de l'Hôpital in Ruffec. Henriette, always ready to act for the well-being of her country, became involved in politics alongside Mathilde Mir (1896-1958), campaigning for the major themes of the National Council of the Resistance and the advancement of women in administrative and political life. Despite her popularity, she was defeated. Henriette asserted herself, more than ever, as a free woman, resolutely ahead of her time. Could her political commitment and her lifestyle, which did not conform to family customs, be the cause of her estrangement with her parents and sister? When she was approached by the British Research Section, she was hired, in recognition of her services, from late 1945 until June 1946 to record the Helpers and the assistance provided to Allied airmen.

She received several decorations, including the *Croix de Guerre* 1939 1945 with Palm, the Freedom Medal, and, on 3 August 1946, the Resistance Medal. She was made a *Chevalier*



1. Former hospital where Thérèse Régeon died, at 15 rue de l'hôpital in Ruffec.

© Michèle Soult.

of the *Légion d'Honneur* by the decree of 13 July 1961, and was then promoted to *Officier of the Légion d'Honneur* by the decree of 30 October 1963.

At the end of 1948, she moved back to Boulognesur-Mer, and in 1953, she moved to Avenue de Clichy in the 17th arrondissement of Paris, where she worked as a caretaker.

Henriette died on 3 January 1992, in her home at 30, rue du Général Leclerc in Ruffec, at the age of 84.

In 2011, the esplanade of the Lycée Louise Michel in Ruffec was renamed the « *esplanade des Sœurs Régeon* », honouring the memory of these two committed women from Ruffec.

Michèle Soult



2. Facade of the former Hôtel de France, run by the Rouillon couple in Ruffec.
© Michèle Soult.

3 and 4. View of the esplanade des sœurs Régeon in Ruffec, with its plaque.
© Michèle Soult.





Opposite

Photo of Marcelle Nadaud taken
before the war.

© Charente County Archives.

MARCELLE NADAUD ALIAS JEANNETTE LAPEDA NUMBER 43088 IN RAVENSBRÜCK

Marcelle Nadaud's story is rooted in the limestone soil of the Cognac region. She was the daughter of Louis, Paul Nadaud, 31, a sales clerk, and Jeanne, Marie, and Joséphine Bouhier, 28. Marcelle was born on 3 June 1911, in La Rochelle (Charente-Maritime), at 56 bis rue de la pépinière. She was the second of three siblings: Jacques was 5 years her senior and Henri her younger brother.

Studious and intelligent, she entered the *École Normale d'Institutrices* (Teacher Training College) in Angoulême and became a teacher. The « EN » as it was nicknamed by the young girls destined for the Charente schools, was a true « patriotic relay »: dictations, morals, and readings were all tools used to instil in children a love of their homeland. Upon graduation, Marcelle, like her classmates, was proud to be part of the « Hussars of the Republic ».

In 1940, she found herself working at the primary school in Bonneuil, in the wine-growing hillsides in the heart of the Cognac region. The Germans were there, in Châteauneuf, where they requisitioned wheat, wine, and horses, and in Segonzac, where they moved into bourgeois homes. They were seen on the roads, in the cafes, directing, giving orders, replacing road signs, parading, drinking, eating, sleeping in people's houses, and imposing a curfew. They were secretly called « *doryphores* » (Colorado beetles), those potato-eating insects that are a nuisance in gardens...

She met Jules Noblet, Mayor of Bonneuil, who, rallying to the ideas of General de Gaulle, joined the Resistance with his wife Berthe. Like the

Noblets, Marcelle rejected defeat, the yoke of the enemy and the collaborationist policy of the Vichy regime.

She enlisted and joined the resistance. She looked after escaped prisoners and organised the local arms cache with René Chabasse (Born on 9 April 1921 in Echourgnac in the Dordogne, killed in action on 21 February 1944 in Angoulême; a physical education instructor; BOA - BCRA resistance fighter). In 1941, she was transferred to the nursery school in Châteauneuf-sur-Charente. A particularly active and effective agent, she took the pseudonym « Jeannette Lapéda » (short for « the pedagogue »). Recruited by Charles Franc (known as « le Pointu » ou « Clovis »: Born 18 March 1921 in Malaville in Charente), a winegrower in Malaville, she became a member of the Air Operations Office (BOA), a group responsible, among other things, for receiving parachute drops of men and equipment coming from England.

Mathilde Mir, director of the *École Normale d'Institutrices* in Angoulême, inspector of Primary Education in Cognac (1941), herself engaged with the BOA, was interested in Marcelle's profile. She contacted her in 1941. Marcelle became a liaison agent between Mathilde Mir, René Chabasse, Commissioner Oswald, Pierre-André Rix, the Sub-Prefect of Cognac, alias « Commandant des Sablons » for the BOA and « François 1^{er} » for the BCRA, Monsieur Poirier, commander of the Cognac gendarmerie and the deputy of the gendarmerie in Châteauneuf-sur-Charente. She therefore worked for both the BOA, the Special Sabotage Section (SSS), and the Civil

Formal 101
 MINISTÈRE DES ARMÉES COMBATTANTES
 ET VICTIMES DE GUERRE
 Direction de l'Etat-Civil Paris, 24 NOV 1946
 et des Recherches
 Bureau de l'Etat-Civil Déportés
 83, avenue Foch
 le DIRECTEUR DE L'ETAT CIVIL
 ET DES RECHERCHES
 Réf: E.C.D./2 CD.MA
 Monsieur le PRÉSIDENT
 de la PRÉFECTURE des
 REPARTES ET INTERES
 PATRIOTIQUES Rue Leroux
 Ayant à statuer sur une demande
 d'inscription de la mention "mort pour la
 France" sur l'acte de décès de
 M^{me} NADAUD Marcelle, Marie, Marguerite
 née le 3 Juin 1911 LA ROCHELLE
 domiciliée à CHATEAUNEUF S/ CHARENTE
 (Charente)
 déportée le 8 Juin 1944 à
 décédée le 26 Avril 1945 RAVENSBROCK
 (Allemagne)
 j'ai l'honneur de vous demander de bien vou-
 loir porter à ma connaissance, au dos de la
 présente et dans le moindre délai possible,
 les renseignements que vous pourriez possé-
 der concernant l'attitude de l'intéressée au
 point de vue national avant et pendant sa
 déportation.
 Je le Directeur de l'Etat Civil
 et des Recherches,
 le Chef du Bureau de l'Etat
 Civil Déportés.

Ministère des Armées B.O.A. Région B
 Cabinet Militaire
 Délégation Générale F.P.C.I.
 Cserme de la Popinière
 Rue de Laborde
 Paris (8ème)
 Reference 2ème direction
 3485/D/C.V
 Dossier pour délégation de solde.
 ATTESTATION.
 Le Général BONNEAU délégué Général F.P.C.I. certifie que M^{lle}
 M^{lle} NADAUD Marcelle est liée au service en vertu du décret 366 qui elle
 appartient aux Forces Françaises Combattantes en qualité de chargé de Mission
 de 3ème classe
 grade d'assimilation correspondant Sous-Lieutenant
 Destinataires Arrêtée le Paris le
 L'intéressée 4-7-44 8-7-46
 Personnel F.C. Signature
 (Pour insertion au dossier Illisible
 de l'intéressée)
 Copie certifiée conforme à l'original
 Angoulême le 4-12-46

and Military Organization (OCM). This group, the SSS, was created thanks to Captain Jacques Nancy, deputy to Claude Bonnier, DMR of Region B, both of whom came from London and arrived on a mission in Charente on 14 November 1943, to reorganize the Resistance. As for the OCM, it was a large French internal resistance movement operating in the occupied zone that was born in Paris in December 1940. There was no shortage of work, the Lysanders flew silently over the limestone plateaus : no radars, no GPS, navigating by moonlight, looking for light signals on the ground. They had to move quickly : recover the Type C containers, hide them, and leave the area clear. Sten guns, magazines, radios, were all rare and hard-won treasures that had to be redistributed to the armed groups. Marcelle, taking advantage of the cover afforded her by her teaching position, carried out numerous vital missions. Thus, as Pierre-André Rix attested in his nomination for the *Croix de Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur*, Marcelle was an active, efficient, and more than fearless young woman. From 1940-1941, she served as a liaison between the gendarmerie and the saboteurs, those who were to receive parachute drops or dispatch mail from London. She regularly went to Angoulême to pick up downed English or American airmen on the 4:00 a.m. train and brought them to Châteauneuf. She hid them, fed them, provided them with clothing, and provided them with alternative shelter before boarding. She did not hesitate to shelter, along with their impressive equipment, seven

important leaders nicknamed the « Seven Aces » of the SSS on a mission and a woman going to Algiers, all actively sought by the Gestapo. She provided them with clothing, a taxi, bicycles, maps, lamps, and supplies. Resourceful, she stopped at nothing ! Furthermore, she continually received visits from Resistance fighters and resisters in the region : Chabasse, Dautun, Franc, Berger, Boucherie, La Guêpe, Bill, and Labrande, who put her in danger. Every day, Chabasse handed over resisters and fugitives to whom she provided work permits, fake identity cards, and food supplies. As a liaison agent under the orders of the Sub-prefect of Cognac, Pierre-André Rix, she cycled every Thursday between Cognac and Angoulême to transport documents : these included copies of secret instructions from Vichy, police operation plans, various authorizations signed in blank by the Sub-prefect, impressions of the stamps of the Town Hall, prefectural services and German services and numerous supply cards. For several days, she kept in her home a map of the German airbase at Châteaubernard, stolen by the Sub-Prefect with the complicity of a sympathetic Austrian officer. The Gestapo launched an energetic and ardent search for it. She entrusted these precious documents to the SOE, which made it possible to organize the bombing of the Dunlop factory in Montluçon on the night of 15-16 September 1943, and the bombing of the Angoulême powder factory on 20 March 1944.

1. Letter requesting information on « the person's attitude from a national perspective before and during the deportation » ; homologation file 2.008.05544.

© AFMD.

2. Certificate from General Bonneau on Marcelle Nadaud's membership in the French Forces Combattantes de l'Intérieur ; homologation file 2.008.05544.

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3. Birth certificate of Marcelle Nadaud, homologation file 2.008.05544.

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DEPARTEMENT
DE LA
CHARENTE - MARITIME

MAIRIE
DE
LA ROCHELLE

État Civil

AFMD

EXTRAIT D'ACTE DE NAISSANCE

Nom *Nadaud*

Prénoms *Marcelle Marie Marguerite*

Née à La Rochelle, le *trois juin*
mil neuf cent quarze

rue de *Louis Paul Nadaud*

et de *Jeanne Marie Josephine Bouhier, son épouse*

A la Mairie de La Rochelle, le *deux août* 1945

L'Officier de l'Etat Civil,

PS

Her network exfiltrated resisters and opponents of the Vichy regime and Nazism through the Pyrenees. Identified as a guide or passeuse, she was arrested for the first time in August 1942, during a vacation in Salies-de-Béarn. But she was released due to a lack of evidence.

She witnessed parachute drops and carried out missions in the middle of the night, disguised as a young boy because of her small size. She sabotaged telephone lines and assisted with parachute drops.

She belonged to the « Intelligence » network. She also participated in operations of the « Action » network, including parachute drops and plane landings. She carried out wiretapping operations on telephone lines running from the Cognac old people's home, where the command post of the German anti-aircraft defence system was located, covering the coast from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port to Rochefort, using clandestine connections made near the Esclons station and along the wires directly above the boundary wall of the sub-prefecture. Her home was searched by the Vichy police. Knowing she was being watched, she refused to flee in February 1944 after the death of René Chabasse, fearing that her parents would be arrested instead.

In February 1944, she agreed to take charge of the four members of a mission parachuted from London into the Malaville region. The Gestapo, informed by a denunciation (the informer would be sentenced to death after the war and then pardoned - a man named Brissaud¹⁾) or by undercover agents, arrested Marcelle at her

home on 5 March at 11:00 p.m. They arrested the Noblet couple on the same date.

She was imprisoned in Angoulême prison, where she was harshly interrogated and tortured. She did not talk. Her mother, Jeanne Nadaud, arrested a few days after Marcelle, was also subjected to severe abuse during interrogations. She selflessly endured the torture sessions carried out on her daughter... Her torturers hoped she would reveal the members of the network. She remained silent. Jeanne Nadaud was released on 16 July while her daughter remained in the hands of the Gestapo.

Marcelle was transferred to the Fort de Romainville near Paris, where she was registered under number 5650. There she met Marie Noblet, arrested the same day and registered under number 5651, as well as Andrée Duruisseau, arrested in Angoulême on 15 March and registered under number 5649. She was deported, with her two companions, on 8 June 1944, to the Saarbrücken transit camp, where she remained for two weeks days before being sent to the Ravensbrück camp. There, she became number 43088. Andrée Duruisseau was assigned to the Leipzig-Schönfeld commando on 22 July 1944, while Marcelle and Marie remained based at Ravensbrück.

From the fall of 1944 onward, Marcelle's health declined : she lost a lot of weight, her strength was diminished, and her comrades had to support her so she could attend the endless rollcalls, for anyone who failed to attend was promised certain death !



1



2

1. The monument of the Special Sabotage Section erected at Chêne Vert in Grassac.

© Image taken from the website resistancefrancaise.blogspot.com.

2. Inauguration of the totem dedicated to the life of Marcelle Nadaud in Châteauneuf-sur-Charente, 25 May 2023.

© Michèle Soult.

Still hoping to see France again, her parents, and her beloved students, Marcelle hung on, hoping for victory for weeks, while enduring the horrors of the concentration camps like her comrades. But exhausted by dysentery, Marcelle died on 26 April 1945, just before the Allies arrived.

As Pierre-Henri Rix concluded in his memorandum requesting that Marcelle Nadaud be awarded the *Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur* : « *A magnificent example of feminine heroism, Mademoiselle Nadaud carried out patriotic work of the greatest self-sacrifice in the Resistance, without love of glory, solely out of concern for French honour, which she considered tainted by the Armistice and the shame of defeat and surrender. Her soul was of precious metal, but her body was fragile. She was a weak woman and a great Frenchwoman.* »

Posthumously, Marcelle was made a *Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur* and awarded the Rosette of the Resistance and the *Croix de Guerre*.

The elementary school in Châteauneuf-sur-Charente bears her name, as does the one in Cozes, Charente-Maritime, since 27 April 2011. A totem recounting her career was inaugurated in Châteauneuf-sur-Charente on 25 May 2023. Her name appears on the monument of the Special Sabotage Section erected at Chêne Vert in the commune of Grassac (Charente), alongside those of the Chabasse brothers, the Noblet couple, and many others.

Michèle Soult

READING NOTES / BIBLIOGRAPHY

MARIE MONIQUE FORMERLY VIGNERON

1 - Sergeant in German.

2 - Correspondent for the Havas Agency in Eastern Europe, he was appointed to the Vichy government where he secretly directed the Super-Nap.

3 - A double agent, under the pseudonym Gilbert Lenoir, he was tasked by the Vichy intelligence service with facilitating the passage of military couriers across the demarcation line at Vierzon. He also sought to collect tactical intelligence on the German army through his agents. His prospecting area extended across the entire occupied zone except south of the Loire : it covered Brittany to Nancy and from Vierzon to the Belgian border. The network also extended to Belgium, the southern Netherlands, Luxembourg and Germany.

Sources :

Register of Fort de Romainville

SHD/DAVCC Caen 21p584070

RT «Mémoire Vivante» ; © Arolsen Archives, 2021.

B. LEROUX , C LEVISSE-TOUZÉ et F. MARCOT
« Dictionnaire de la Résistance », Ed. Laffont, 2006
Archives familiales.

https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maurice_N%C3%A8gre

LAGORCE

HENRIETTE AND THÉRÈSE RÉGEON

1 - Extract from the speech by Bernard Charbonneau, Mayor of Ruffec, during the inauguration of the *esplanade des Soeurs Régeon* in September 2011.

2 - <https://www.charentelibre.fr/charente/ruffec/ruffec-l-esplanade-des-soeurs-regeon-inauguree-6462499.php>

3 - Charente also has many steles that bear witness to the courage of these aviators : some never returned, like the crew whose grave is decorated with flowers at the entrance to Châteauneuf-sur-Charente.

4 - The Ravensbrück Kommando, then the Buchenwald Kommando from 1 September 1944, known as the HASAG Kommando, was composed primarily of women of various nationalities. The Kommando's objective was therefore the reconstruction of the factory and the production of Panzerfaust, an anti-tank weapon, and shells. The earthworks and reconstruction were carried out by the first convoy of women, which left Ravensbrück at the end of July 1944.

Subsequently, the prisoners were assigned to military production. All of this work was extremely difficult, particularly given the severe lack of food suffered by the prisoners. Together the French prisoners slowed down the work and sabotaged it as much as possible.

Sources :

Dossiers SHD 16P503268 et 16P503273,
21P649000 et 21P648991.

AFMD 54 « Travail de Mémoire », bulletin 21.



1. The memorial at Ravensbrück 6 site 4.

© Image taken from the website europe remembers.com, mention Waldsiedel via wiki commons.

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« Livre-mémorial » Ed. Tirésias, 2004.

G. HONTARRÈDE, *La Charente dans la Seconde Guerre mondiale*, Le Croît Vif, 2004.

H. GENDREAU, M. RÉGEON, *Ruffec et les Ruffécois dans la guerre : 1938-1945* » Ed. La Péruse, 1994.

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<https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/search/person/130431941?>

<https://fr.wikipedia.org>

[html](http://fusilles-40-44.maitron.fr/spip.php?article176051)

<https://fusilles-40-44.maitron.fr/spip.php?article176051>

<http://memorial16.free.fr/sss.htm>

USEFUL CONTACTS

If you would like information on resistance fighters and deportees from Charente, both men and women :

AFMD - DT16

CSCS Mairie

Place de l'hôtel de ville

16 160 GOND-PONTOUVRE

afmd-dt16@orange.fr

Nationally :

Fondation de la Résistance

30 boulevard des Invalides

75 007 PARIS

contact@fondationresistance.org

MARCELLE NADAUD

1 - See the dossier at SHD-Caen, 21P 519 550.

Sources :

SHD-Caen 21P 519 550. ; SHD-Vincennes 16P 438 829.

M. LEPROUX, *Nous, les terroristes*, Librairie Bruno Sepulchre, Paris VI^{ème}, 1983.

B. LEROUX, C. LEVISSE-TOUZÉ et F. MARCOT, *Dictionnaire historique de la Résistance*, Ed. Laffont, 2006.

<http://resistancefrancaise.blogspot.com/2019/01/jules-et-berthe-noblet-famille-de>

PORTRAITS OF WOMEN IN THE RESISTANCE IN CHARENTE AND CHARENTE LIMOUSINE

USEFUL SOURCES AND SITES

- Arolsen Archives website

The site provides access to the archive fund managed by the International Center for Documentation on Nazi Persecutions.

<https://arolsen-archives.org/fr/>

- Maitron website

This site includes, in particular, records of those executed by firing squad in France.

<https://maitron.fr/>

- Website of the Musée de la Résistance online

Linked to the Fondation de la Résistance, this site provides access to educational content and events supported by the Foundation.

<https://museedelaresistanceenligne.org/>

- AFMD Website - Charente regional delegation.

<https://afmd.org/fr/delegations.html?code=FR-16>

- Website of the Charente County Archives

<https://lasource.archives.lacharente.fr>

- Website of the Charente County Council's Heritage Department

Under the tab « Espace mémoriel de la Résistance et de la Déportation », a page contains portraits of Charente deportees written by the AFMD - DT16.

<https://patrimoine16.lacharente.fr/sites-du-departement/espace-memorielde-la-resistance-et-de-la-deportation/les-deportes-de-la-charente/>

- Website of the Charente Limousine Community of communes

Under the tab « Pays d'art et d'histoire », a page contains the department's publications, particularly those relating to the theme of remembrance (the demarcation line, war memorials, Gérard Dubois, Maxence Simon).

<https://www.charente-limousine.fr/index.php/fr/pays-art-et-histoire/111-lesbrochures-du-pays-d-art-et-d-histoire>

DISCOVER THE SECOND WORLD WAR IN CHARENTE LIMOUSINE

- Memorial of the Resistance in Chasseneuil-sur-Bonnieure.
- Maison de la Résistance René Michaud in Chasseneuil-sur-Bonnieure.
- The memory trail - history of the maquis Bir Hacheim in Cherves-Châtelars (start in the village Le Châtelars).

Set off in search of the many plaques honouring the members of the Resistance in Chabanais, Exideuil-sur-Vienne, Confolens, Chasseneuil-sur-Bonnieure, Ambernac and Pleuville !

For the children :

Discover the Resistance in Confolens with Zaza Luma (free booklet available from our Tourist Office).

« IN THE RESISTANCE, WOMEN ARE AS HEROIC AS MEN, BUT THEIR FATE IS EVEN WORSE THAN THAT OF MEN. »

Gilles PERAULT, interview excerpt in the article « Giving Women Their Place in the Resistance » by Marion Chastain and Liliane Charrier for TV5monde - Terriennes section, 8 May 2020.

Tales of the Charente Limousine, Land of art and history...

... in the company of guides approved by the Ministry of Culture. They know the area perfectly and give you the keys to understanding a building, a landscape, a town and a village from one district to another.

The Charente Limousine is a member of the national network of Villes et Pays d'art et d'histoire - Towns and Lands of art et history

The Ministry of Culture, General Directorate of Heritage, awards the label « Towns and Lands of art and history » to local authorities that promote their heritage. It guarantees the expertise of the guides, those involved in promoting architecture and heritage and the quality of their actions. From architecture to landscapes, the towns and lands show heritage in all its diversity. Today, a network of 204 towns and lands offers its expertise throughout France.

The Heritage service leads the « Pays d'art et d'histoire » agreement signed between the Charente Limousine Community of Communes and the Ministry of Culture. It organizes various activities to discover and promote the territory's heritage to its inhabitants and visitors. It is at the disposal of the communes and local structures for any project.

Nearby

In the Nouvelle Aquitaine Region : the towns of Bayonne, Bergerac, Bordeaux, Cognac, Dax, La Réole, Limoges, Pau, Périgueux, Rochefort, Royan, Saintes, Sarlat, Thouars ; the lands of GrandAngoulême, Grand Châtelleraut, Grand Poitiers, Grand Villeneuve, Hautes Terres Corréziennes and Ventadour, Île of Ré, Mellois in Poitou, Monts and Barrages, Parthenay-Gâtine, Pyrénées béarnaises, Saint-Jean-de-Luz and Ciboure, Vézère and Ardoise, Vienne and Gartempe.

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Design : Pays d'art et d'histoire, Charente Limousine Community of Communes, 2023 (David Dyson's translation 2025).

Graphic design

DES SIGNES studio
Muchir Descloids 2015

Printing

IGE Edigraphic

This brochure contains the biographical notes written by Michèle Soult. She participated in the national publication « The 9000 deportees from France who passed through Mittelbau-Dora » and « The Norman victims of Nazi barbarism ». Her various works and her involvement in the « *Petits Chercheurs en Histoire* » workshops have made it possible to write and distribute the biographical notes of the deportees and those shot in Charente in the press and on the websites « Heritage » of the Charente County Council and « Musée de la Résistance en ligne ».



RÉGION
Nouvelle-Aquitaine

