

Historical Society of Tourrettes

Pont-du-Loup Volume I

**N°15
July 2017**





The SHT would be pleased to receive your comments and suggestions.

Likewise, any testimony would be welcome.

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Excerpts from this journal, as well as the list of topics covered by theme are available on the SHT website.

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Le Pont du Loup

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Commemorative plaque placed at the entrance of the Cornes Cascade tunnel.



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Annexation of Pont-Loup to Tourrettes

Editorial

It seemed natural to us that the team at SHT should delve into the history of the Hamlet of Pont du Loup.

Its history is recent but very rich as it is part of both the national and local history.

Nationally, the development of the Pataras neighborhood is linked to the annexation of the County of Nice to France when Napoleon III launches an ambitious plan for communication routes, especially the road from Grasse to Vence. The end of the 19th century sees the arrival of the train, tourists, and the construction of hotels for them. The Second World War, with the destruction of the viaduct, marks the beginning of a new era.

On the local level, the shared identity of the inhabitants on both banks of the Loup River makes the residents of Pont-du-Loup a community deeply attached to their territory. Thus, tensions with the Tourrettan municipality have punctuated communal life. However, for Tourrettes, Pont du Loup is an integral part of its territory.

The SHT, through this series of bulletins on the Pont-du-Loup neighborhood, confirms this reality.

The board of the S.H.T.



The Origins

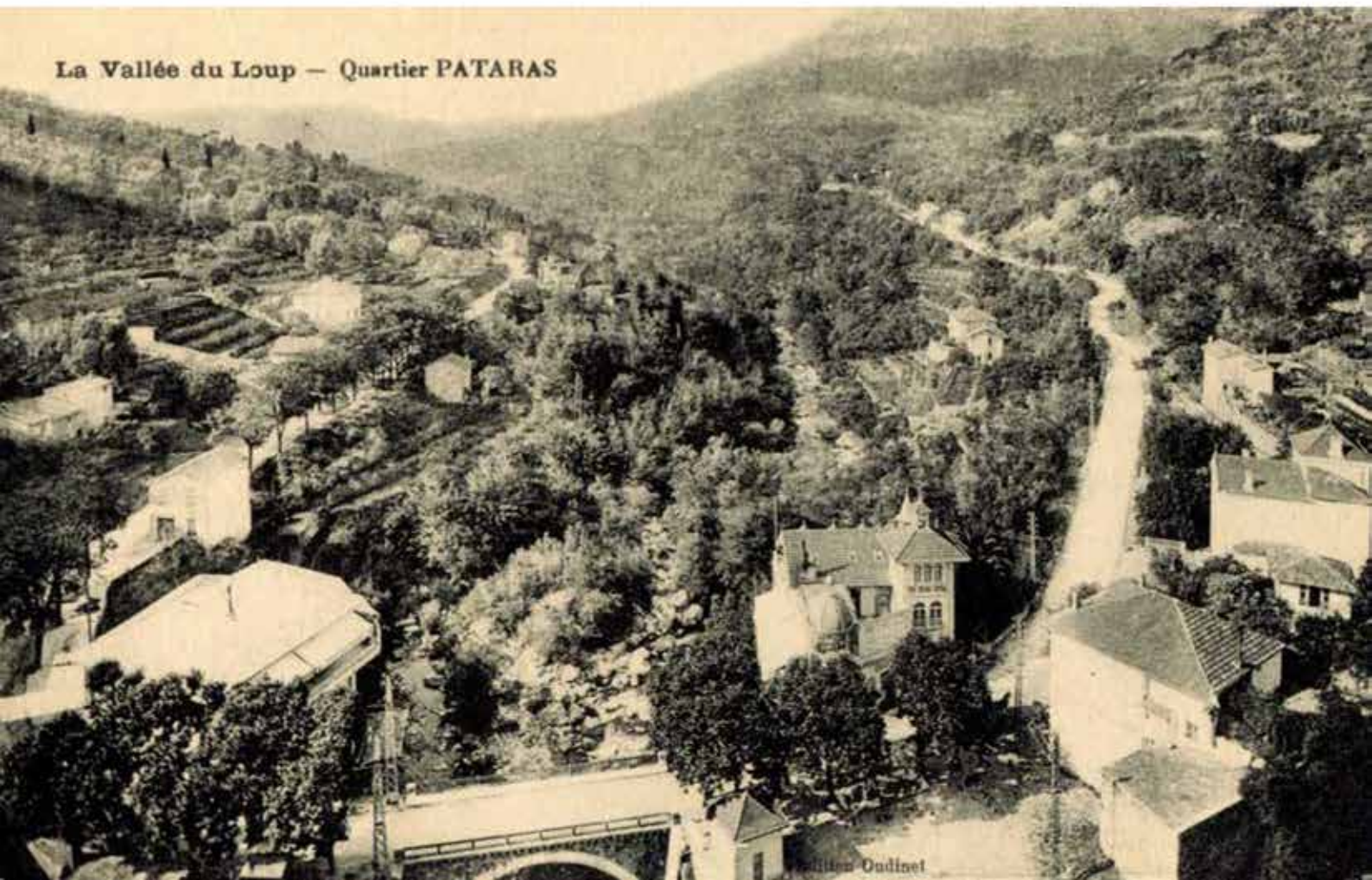
The Loup is a small coastal river that marks the boundary of the territory of Tourrettes and serves as a border with its neighbors. A bridge spans it at the exit of the gorges. Around this bridge, houses have been built to form a hamlet disputed by the three neighboring municipalities: Le Bar-sur-Loup, Gourdon, and Tourrettes. Peace was established by considering the eastern part, on this side of the river, belonging to Tourrettes, while the western part is shared between the other two communities.

In fact, the hamlet of Pont-du-Loup truly exists only since the construction of the railway and road completed at the end of the 19th century. What was there before?

The Hamlet of Patarast.

Once upon a time, there were a few houses clustered there under the name Patarast, on the flank of the Gourdon hill, near the river. This curious name of Patarast might have been the surname of a family residing in that place. However, some old residents of Tourrettes believe it referred to the rustic expression “pas Tarasque,” meaning: there is no tarasque. In the Middle Ages, the tarasque was a formidable dragon that terrified the people of Provence. Saint Martha, the sister of Mary Magdalene, had already driven away the monster that wreaked havoc on the banks of the Rhône in Tarascon. This creature, no one had really seen it, but it had been vaguely glimpsed in the marshes along the river. A large lizard slithered through the reeds, covered in scales, with an imposing head and a huge mouth that devoured animals and humans, preferably women and children, with tender flesh. According to legend, its teeth were like swords and as large as horns. Its legs were short, its tail very developed. A kind of voluminous crocodile, unknown in the region, the animal had taken enormous proportions through the play of imagination and the terror it inspired. Some claimed to have seen it spitting flames...

This tarasque, very much alive in the memory of the Provencals, could have hidden in the deep and noisy gorges of the alpine torrent. The name of the hamlet reassured the local people...



The Legend of the Loup (Wolf).

Another source of concern at the exit of the rocky gorge is the name of the river, the Loup (Wolf). A beautiful legend dates back to Roman times. Venus, the splendid goddess born from the sea, cheated on her husband Vulcan, the god of fire and forges, with the handsome Adonis, a superb adolescent symbolizing masculine beauty. From this love, a male child, strong as a wolf, was born and named Lupus by his parents. Venus entrusted the child to Katos, an honest and devoted shepherd, a friend of Adonis. Lupus grew up to be a gentle and magnificent young man who loved rural life. He played the flute wonderfully and led the herds to pasture to the sound of his instrument. One day, Venus decided to visit him. She found him resting under a tree and began to speak to him. However, her jealous husband followed the goddess and thought the young man was her lover. Desperate, Venus called on Jupiter, the god of Olympus, for help. "When he feels in danger, let Lupus invoke me, and I will transform him into water. He will regain his human form by invoking me again," the god of gods told her.

While Vulcan pursued Lupus, the young man found himself at the seashore. He begged Jupiter to save him and felt his body liquefy and flow into the salty expanse. He was carried by the sea current to the foot of the walls of Antipolis. In the distance, he saw the mountains rising high in the sky, and he rushed to hide there, leaving behind a liquid trace that flowed toward the sea.

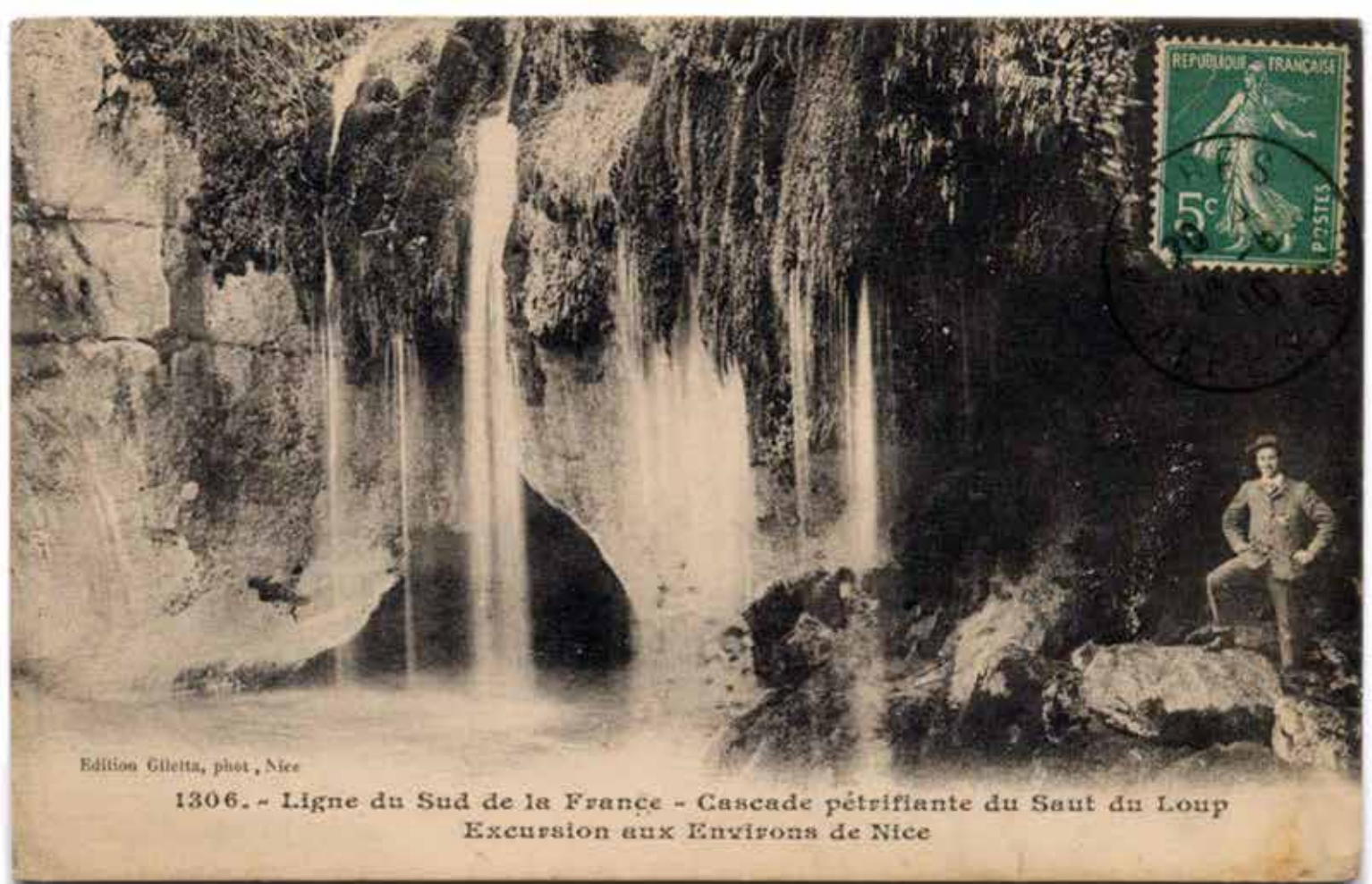
He crossed the gorges and ran up to the foot of a high mountain.

There, exhausted, he fell onto the moss and fell asleep. Since that time, a clear spring has emerged from the ground and follows the trace of the fleeing young man.

About the Loup.

The Loup is a small coastal river that flows between the Siagne and the Var. Like its sister, the Cagnes, it originates in the hinterland of Grasse and irrigates the plains and hills of the French Riviera. At the foot of the Audibergue, in a wooded site, a small spring emerges whose murmur charms the valley that serves as its cradle. That's why it's called "la Source du Rigaou," the nightingale in Provençal. Interestingly, shortly after its birth, the stream is swallowed by the limestone ground. The valley remains dry over a fairly long distance. Near the Pont-du-Loup of Andon, a small stream emerges from the ground and begins to flow in the open air, along the southern slope of the Cheiron barrier. Throughout its course, the young river drinks from the sources of Thorenc that disappear into the porous ground only to reappear in its valley. The torrent is nourished by rainwater absorbed by the high limestone plateaus that surround it and a system of caves and underground sinkholes releases into its bed through powerful resurgences. These are the generous sources of Caussols, Gréolières, and Saint-Pons. The Loup has grown; it has become an adult. The force of the discharged waters has given energy to its current. When its front meets the Puy de Tourrettes and the Pic de Courmettes chain, the now impetuous animal rushes into the impressive fissure of the gorges that it has been sculpting for centuries into giant cauldrons and witch holes. The water finds its way through a chaos of rocks; its calm song turns into a roar. In the cut of the rock, the true face of the terrain is revealed: an alternation of limestone cliffs and ledges where vegetation clings in "hanging gardens."





Le Saut du Loup

At the halfway point, it carved the rock at a peculiar site called the “Saut du Loup” (Wolf’s Leap). There, the owner, Mr. Millo, built a Restaurant and Bar with a terrace where tourists can refresh themselves amid the deafening noise of the water. In the early 20th century, a sign warned customers: *“To visit, one must order a drink or pay 50 cents per person for the maintenance of the footbridge.”* The visit was made on the metal bridge that spanned the torrent and overlooked the basin at the foot of the large rocks. The place is surrounded by petrifying waterfalls descending from limestone mountains.

Further on, the water from the Courmes springs joins in a fine waterfall falling from a height of fifteen meters into a natural basin; this curiosity served as a tourist attraction during the Belle Époque.

Exiting the gorges, the river calms down and spreads out in the sunny plain; it turns a few mills along the way and encircles the territory of Tournettes to the west and south. There, a succession of campsites enjoys its clear and swift waters before descending into the lower gorges of La Colle, where water sports like canoeing and kayaking are practiced. It reaches Villeneuve-Loubet, drained from distributing its water to the villages along its

banks and to the city of Grasse, which pumps its substance through the Foulon canal. This canal is impressive, as it is carved into the mountainside, traversing the rock through a series of tunnels, forming an extraordinary hiking path above the void. The Loup is now just a few steps from the sea, but it no longer flows. It only has one last effort to make before quenching its thirst in the vast marine expanse. A generous river, its modesty has carved its flanks. It is like those rivers of the coast, more often at low water than in flood.

The few bridges that span it all want to be called “Pont du Loup”; each of them has its own story. The one in Andon protects the young Loup as it emerges from its source. The one in Courmes is called Bramafan, which “cries its hunger.” Is it the Loup howling its appetite, or the poor people who harvest too little to satisfy theirs? History does not say.

At the foot of the Valettes castle, there is a small old bridge that allowed the “royal road” to cross the river. It is called “la Grenouillère” by the canoe-kayak clubs that use the river during high waters. The stretch between the Pont du Loup and this small bridge is particularly appreciated by these athletes as it is considered challenging. Every year, these clubs clean the route of its various pollutions: car carcasses, household appliances, or even tree trunks that often block the passages.



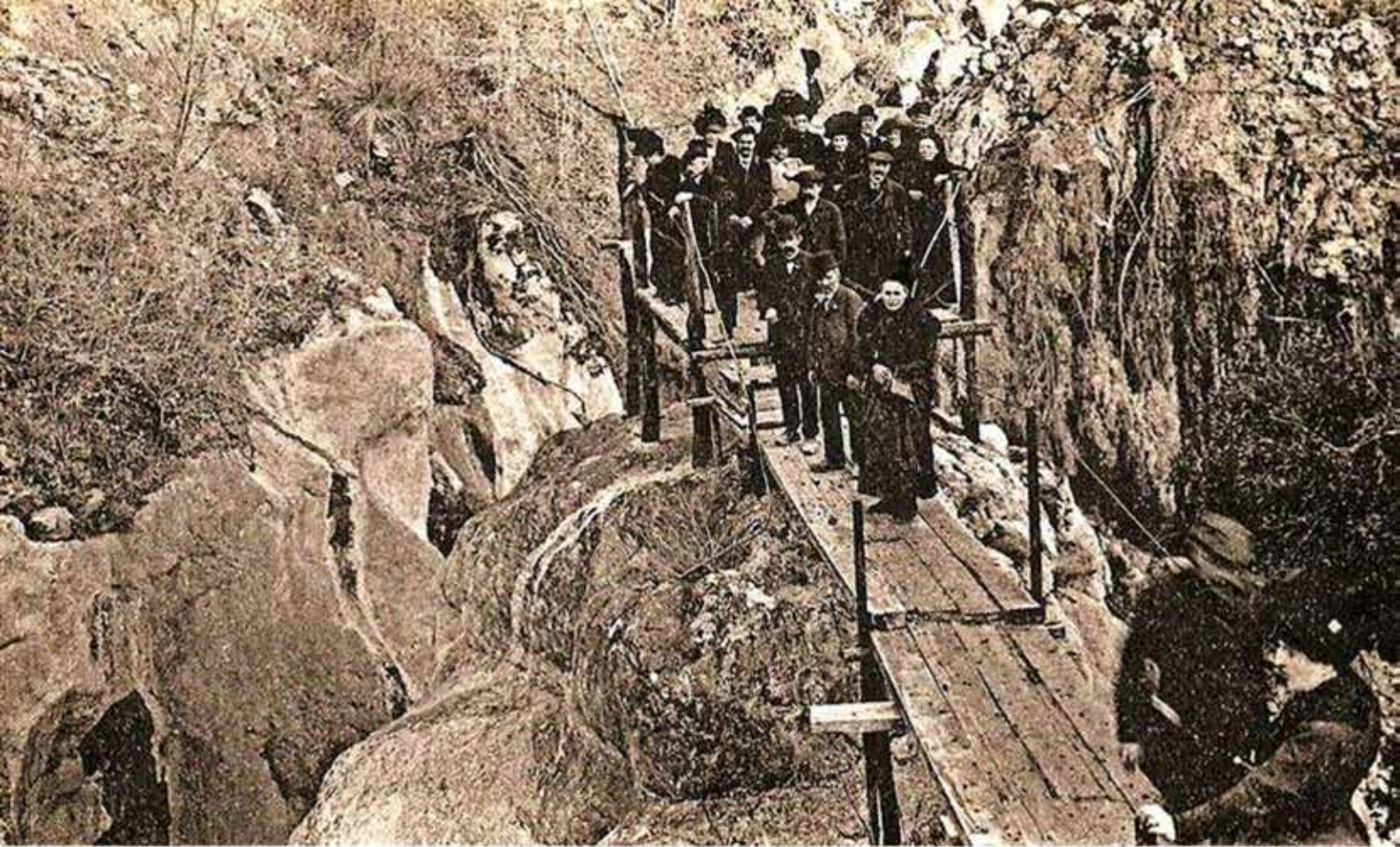
The footbridge made of loosely laid planks.

The seaside bridge became famous for the meeting of Saint Véran with Euric, leader of the Visigoths. In the 4th century, the barbarians invaded the coast, ravaging everything in their path, killing and pillaging. Saint Véran volunteered to negotiate with them. As the Bishop of Vence, he walked to the mouth of the Loup River to plead for mercy for his people. Euric asked for a sign from the sky to believe in his God, then he threw his sword against a tree, demanding to see it bloom by the next day. Véran spent the night in prayer. The next morning, at dawn, the sword was adorned with a red bindweed that had grown overnight. The barbarian made amends, and the bishop succeeded in his plea. Later, a hermitage would be built on the site of the miracle, the Saint-Véran Abbey, which Charlemagne endowed with magnificent gilding. Then, the church would take the name La Dorade, Our Lady of the Gilded. And it would disappear with time as all things do...

As it traverses time, the Loup River has crossed history. Throughout its course, it is dominated by primitive remains of the Celto-Ligurian peoples who were the first civilizations here. From the village of Andon to the sea, the castellas, castellaras, and other sites stand on rocky spurs, their ruins silently continuing their faithful guard.







The footbridge enhanced with a promontory, but still made of planks.



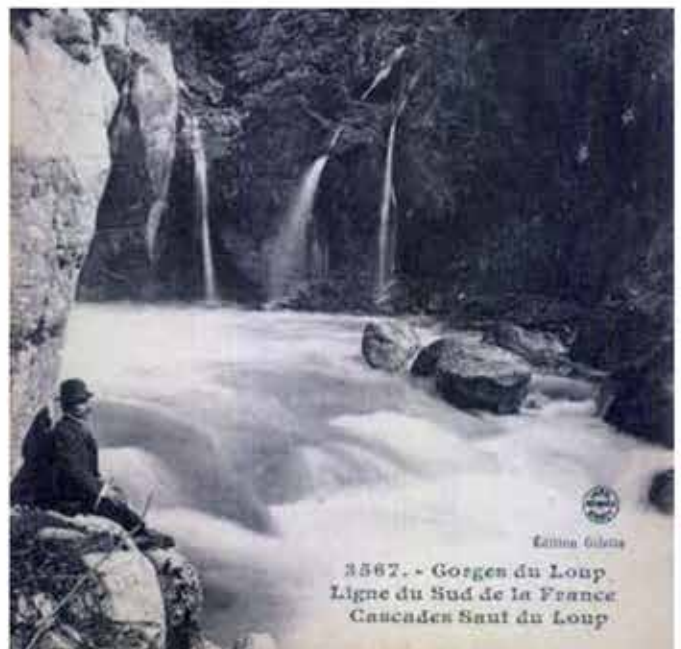
Honorable Jean Millo



Felix Millo with Juliette Giraud



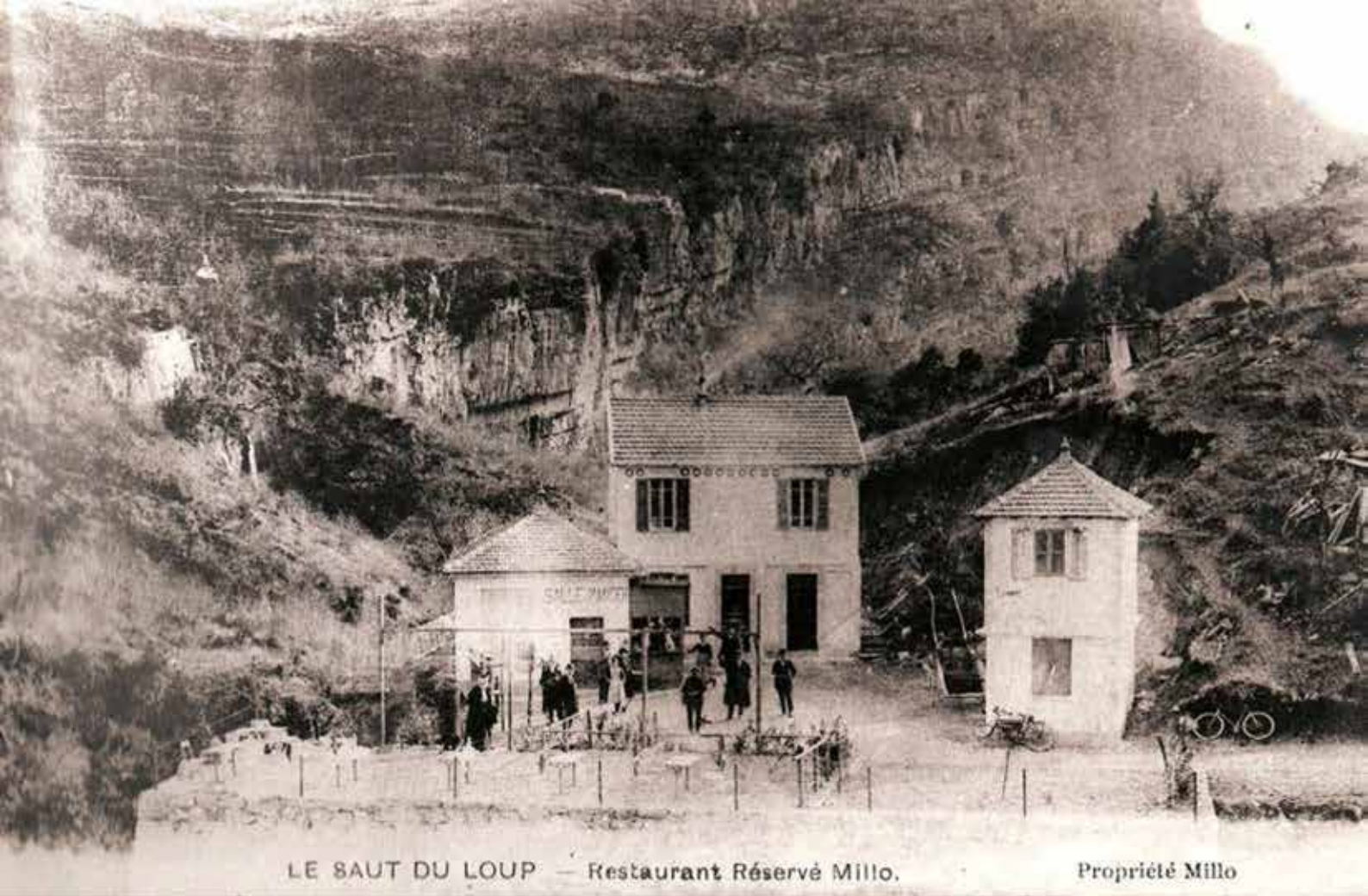
The Petrification Cave - Stalactites



3567.- Gorge du Loup
Ligne du Sud de la France
Caucaden Saut du Loup



3 - Le Restaurant
du Saut du Loup



At the Millo restaurant at the “Wolf’s Jump,” you were assured of savoring not only the famous trouts but also local game.

Wolf are you there?

The rumbling of the river in the gorges has long led people to think of them as lairs of wolves, ferocious beasts. In the 19th century, wolves were abundant in France, and Provence was not spared. A resident of Gourdon remembers the stories told by her great-grandmother, who had seen wolves lurking around the village, which was still modest at the time. In the evening, the wolves howled in the mountains, their howls echoing in the gorges, from one cliff to another, much like thunder during a storm; it was very impressive! Already, a three-year-old girl had been devoured alive in front of her house in Coursegoules. The fear of wolves was present, especially in sparsely populated areas, woods, and moors. In theory, wolves do not attack humans, but when hunger drives them out of the woods... A mythical creature, the wolf feeds the imagination of both men and children; it is simultaneously known and unknown.

The lone wolf is fiercely free, making it all the more mysterious. At night, its eyes shine and evoke a diabolical animal, adding to the fear people have of it. It spends hours searching for sick or weaker animals. When it hunts, the beast moves at a “wolf’s pace,” surprising its prey and relying on its strength. Winter brings the “wolf out of the woods”; it is known for its “wolfish hunger.” A social animal, it howls to stay in contact with its fellow wolves. It mostly lives in organized packs, seeking larger prey that will provide sustenance for an extended period. The lone wolf howls, the pack “sings,” all in chorus.

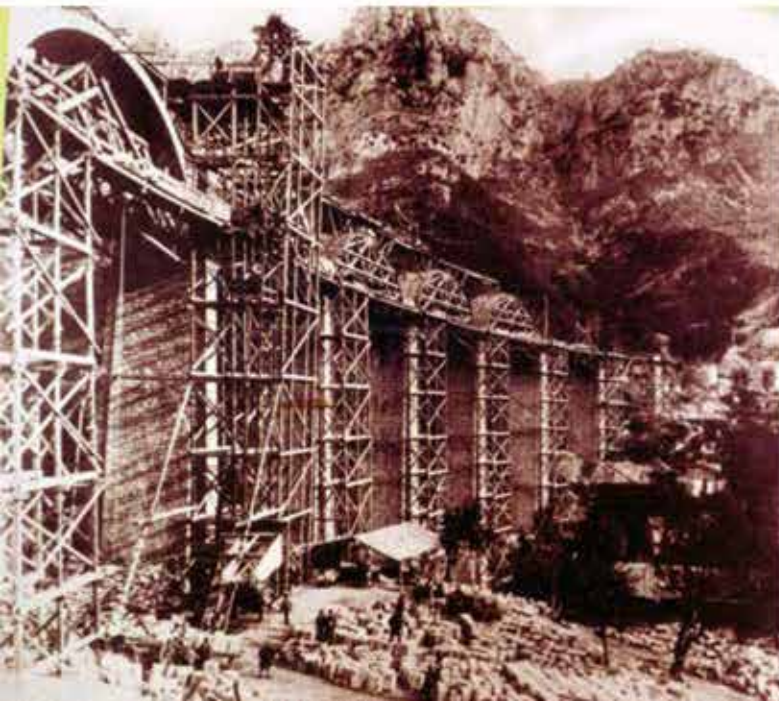
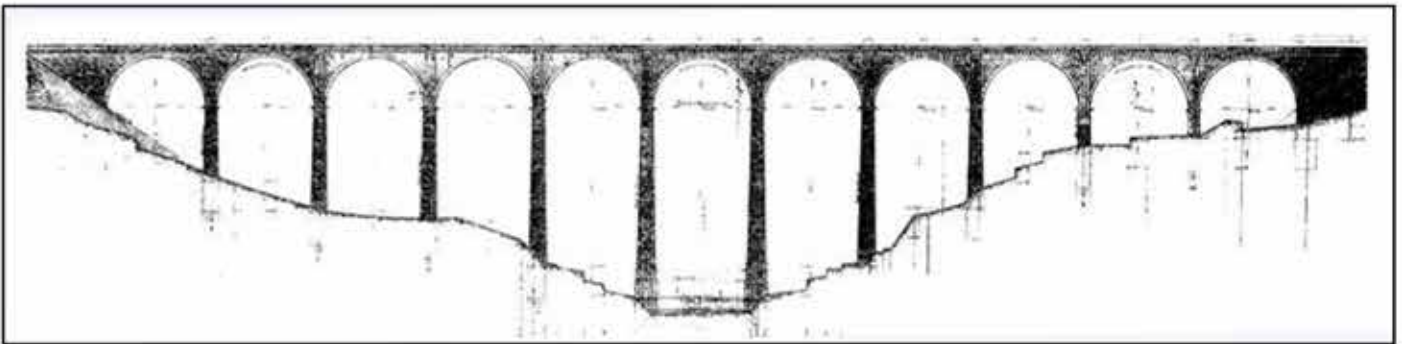
During gatherings, stories of wolves resurfaced from generation to generation; the elders remembered, and the children trembled with both fear and delight because they loved and still love scary tales before snuggling into bed without complaint.

The major works: 1888-1892

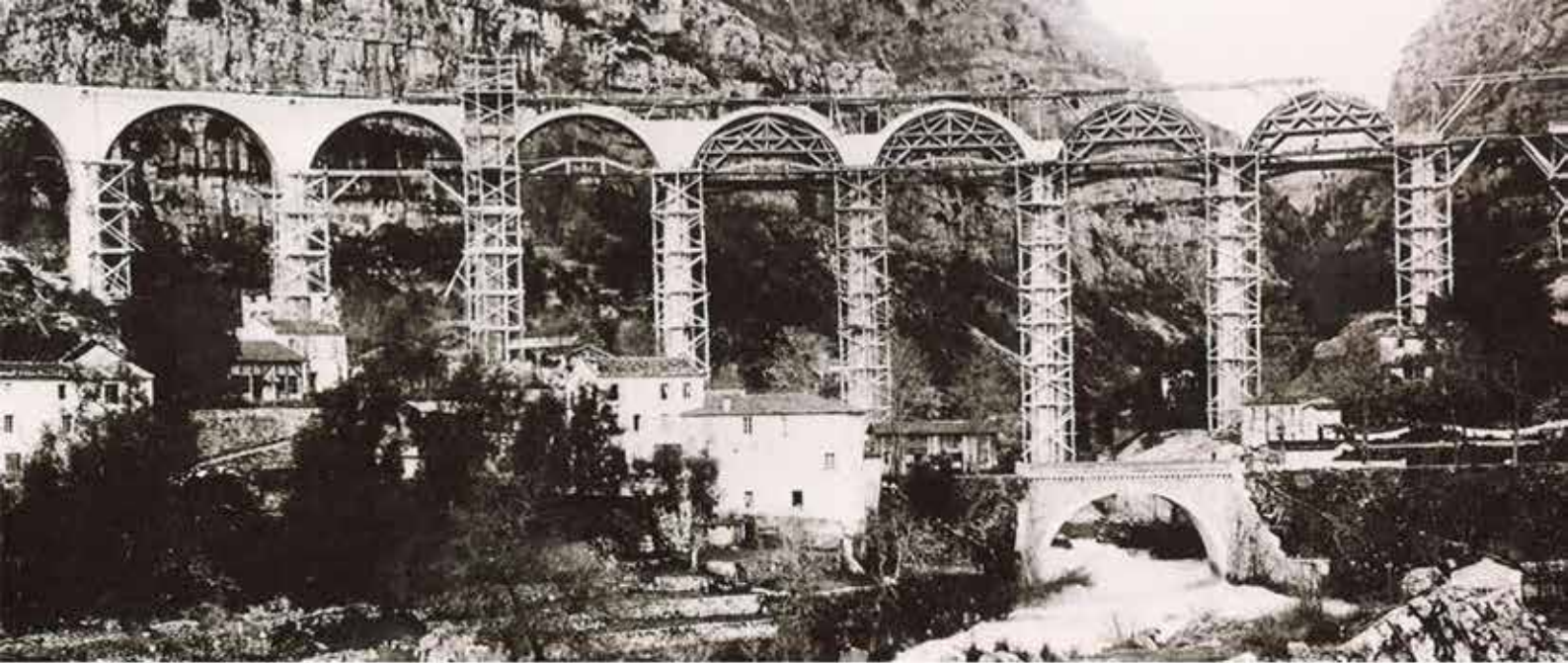
In the 19th century, before 1866, the “imperial” and later “departmental” road did not serve the hamlet of Pataras, consisting of five houses, which was not yet Pont-du-Loup. The hamlet lived off the cultivation of perfume plants, May roses, and especially bitter orange trees for orange blossom flowers. Tourrette-lez-Vence was connected to Le Bar by a narrow road that passed through Les Valettes and La Papeterie. There was only a ford to cross the river upstream from the current bridge. Until Bramafan, there was only a rocky mule track. This did not prevent, around 1889, the construction of the Canal du Foulon, intended to supply Grasse with water, halfway up the right bank cliff. Entirely hand-carved, often tunnelled, sometimes on a ledge overlooking dizzying cliffs, this structure winds for 2.6 km and can be traversed on foot.

Queen Victoria, who loved the Grasse region, came in a “Landau” to the Loup in 1890, as well as the following year, to enjoy the famous Fario trout that made the place’s reputation.

It was at the end of the 19th century that the construction of the railway line connecting Nice to Meyrargues, inland, was decided. It would serve the numerous towns and villages in the hinterland and Var, including Grasse, known for its perfume and aromatic product manufacturing. The entire economy of the city had long awaited this means of promoting its flourishing industry. The project, accepted in 1885, would involve construction sites spread along its route. Between Vence and Le Bar, a section with rugged terrain, a series of tunnels and viaducts were planned, with the most important being the Loup Viaduct, long and curved, with an impressive height of 50 meters above the river. The work employed a large number of local or Piedmontese immigrant workers. Designed by the engineer M. Ferrié, it was the most beautiful work of art and the largest viaduct on the entire line. It consisted of eleven arches with a 20-meter span projected on a 200-meter curve. Its height measured from the ravine reached 55 meters, and its total length was 315 meters. The volume of masonry executed was 19,200 cubic meters at a cost of around 900,000 francs.



At that time, the scaffolding was made of wood!



On April 19, 1892, a meal was organized at Pont-du-Loup to celebrate the end of the construction. Mr. Quintaret's speech matched the occasion: *"The viaduct is a formidable structure. Its robust and majestic form can defy eternity, and the winds in anger can now only caress it with their powerful breath. Its gracefully shaped piers will always be reflected in the clear and limpid water of the roaring Loup. It will see, as a happy immortal, the orange and violet bloom every spring. Under its great shadow, lovers from all over the world will come, and the girls from Bar-sur-Loup, on their way to see the good Saint Arnoux, will not be able to easily attach their cornettes. Let the small wine of Le Bar, combined with Tournettes' wine, flow into our glasses."*

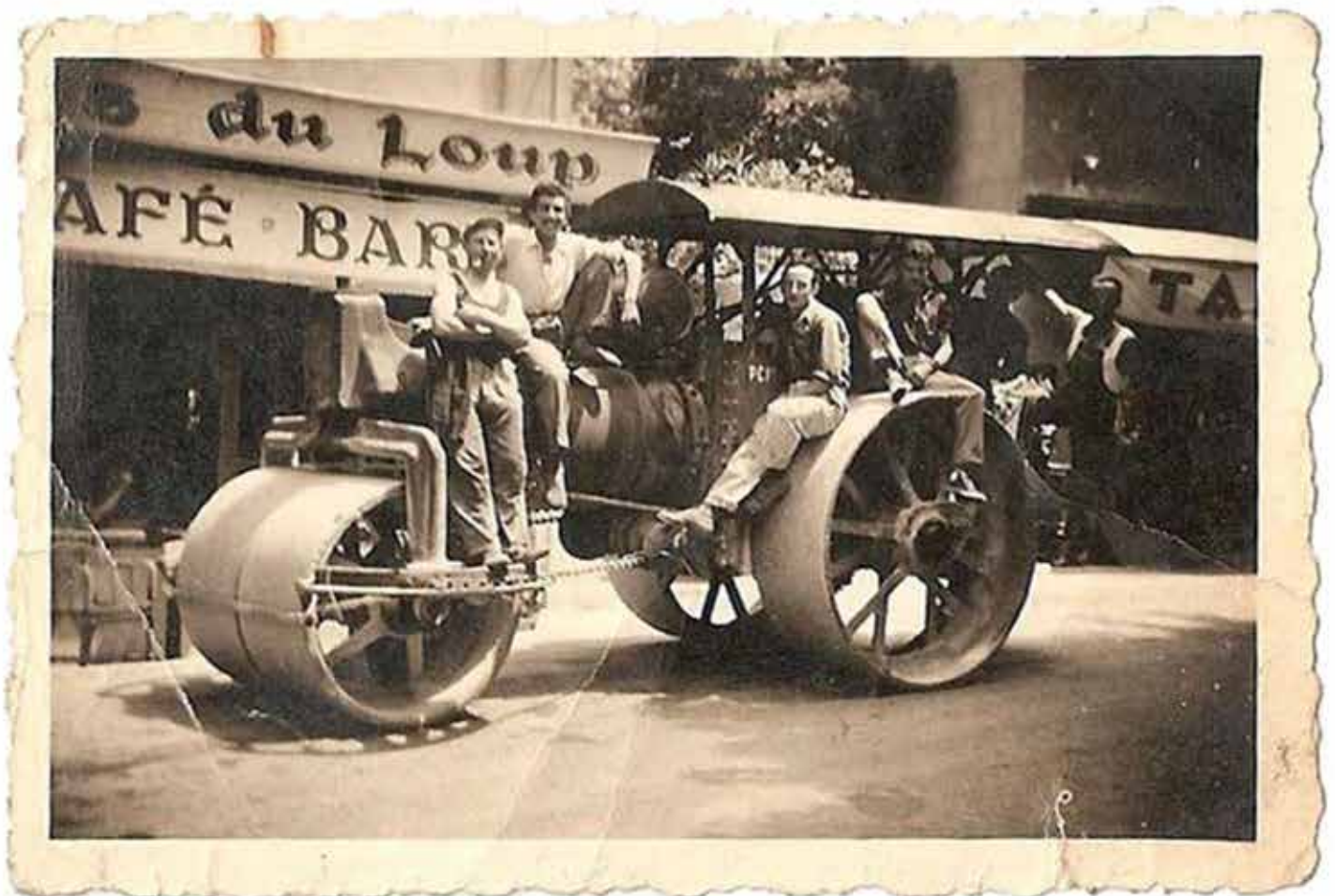
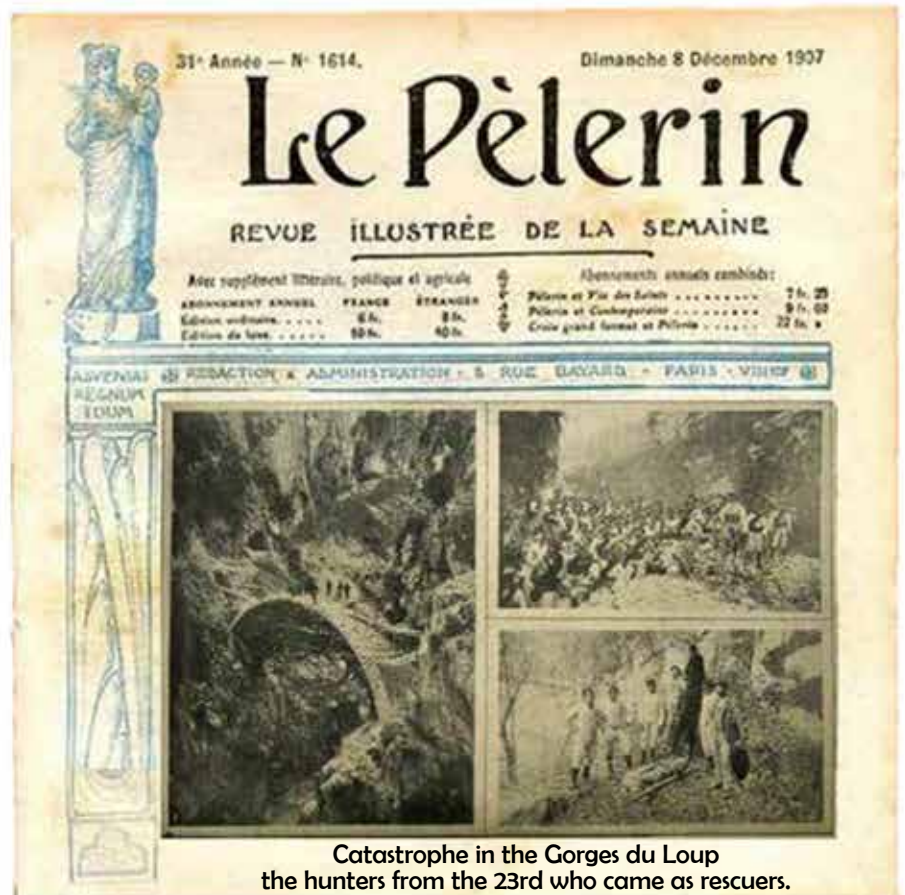
The poetic speaker saw far, but he did not suspect that the eternal work would only last about fifty years, alas! The inauguration of the Grasse-Nice section took place on June 7, 1892, and it was the occasion for a magnificent celebration with tricolor and Provençal flags, to the sound of the Marseillaise and the Coupo Santo, accompanied by many speeches and banquets. Enthusiasm was at its peak, and people rushed to take the train that put the city of Grasse just two and a half hours away from Nice, a joy provided by the steam locomotive with its whistles and sparks.

With the railway, the construction of the road became essential to support railway traffic. The Pont du Loup was built to connect the two banks that had long been separated.



The gorge road: 1905 - 1908

On October 24, 1905, the decision was made to dig the road through the Loup Gorges. The work was entrusted to Emile Beretti, a contractor in Pont-du-Loup. This road was supposed to be traced to accommodate the tramway line that would serve Thorenc, but the utopian project was abandoned. Engineer Paul Faraut from Gréolières was tasked with continuing the construction of the road, but a landslide would lead to the catastrophe at Pont-du-Loup. At 9:30 a.m. on November 20, 1907, about thirty workers were on-site. A muffled noise was heard among the first group of workers. A mine explosion caused the collapse of the cliff between the Pont de l'Abîme and the Saut du Loup tunnel. The engineer and fifteen workers were killed, and two were saved. For a long time, this accident remained sadly famous in the region.





Construction of the Bridge of the Abyss.



The catastrophe of 1907

*Excerpt from the book
PETITS FEUILLETS (Small Leaves)
by Dominique DURANDY*

“I come from the Loup. The catastrophe that occurred yesterday morning in these wild gorges, filled with the roaring of the river, is one of those heartbreaking incidents that squeeze the heart and fill it with anguish. Men have ingeniously dug into the sides of the walls that encase the Loup, creating a picturesque road that is supposed to lead through Gréolières to Thorenc. The rocks have since known the bite of picks and the shocks of dynamite, and gradually, they submitted to the domination of those who violated and tore them apart. But the genius of the mountain was watching. Yesterday morning, while about twenty workers were tearing apart a steep slope, an avalanche of rocks suddenly descended upon them, and the work of death was consummated. In this primitive and crude grave, about fifteen poor souls are crushed, in pulp, along with their leader, the contractor who directed them. And when we arrive at the scene of the disaster, the first thing that strikes our eyes is the horrible and bloody trunk of a beheaded man, whose head the wave of stones swept away. Lower down, almost at the edge of the growling—or weeping—Loup, another flattened corpse is seen like a bloody pancake. In what condition must those who will be pulled from the rubble be!

Everyone runs and hurries: the engineers,

the Prefect, the sub-Prefect, doctors, and then admirable little alpinists from Grasse, climbing the mountain, carrying stretchers and first aid supplies. Suddenly, the rumor spreads that there is a man alive there, towards the extreme limit of the landslide, squeezed against the mountain, in a kind of cavity in front of which the tumbled rocks form a formidable wall. He was spoken to, and he replied. They want to save him, and they begin to clear the debris. The task is perilous because the mountain threatens over the heads of the rescuers, and it could punish with an avalanche those who try to take its prey away from it. But there are brave-hearted workers there; they get to work, animated by a mad fervor. With them is a gendarme, and he is admirable. He picks, works with a pickaxe, pushes rock fragments, and he stimulates, advises, encourages. I would like to know his name to tell him the joy I had in seeing him so simple and heroic, and I hope that Mr. de Joly, who saw him in action, will remember him.

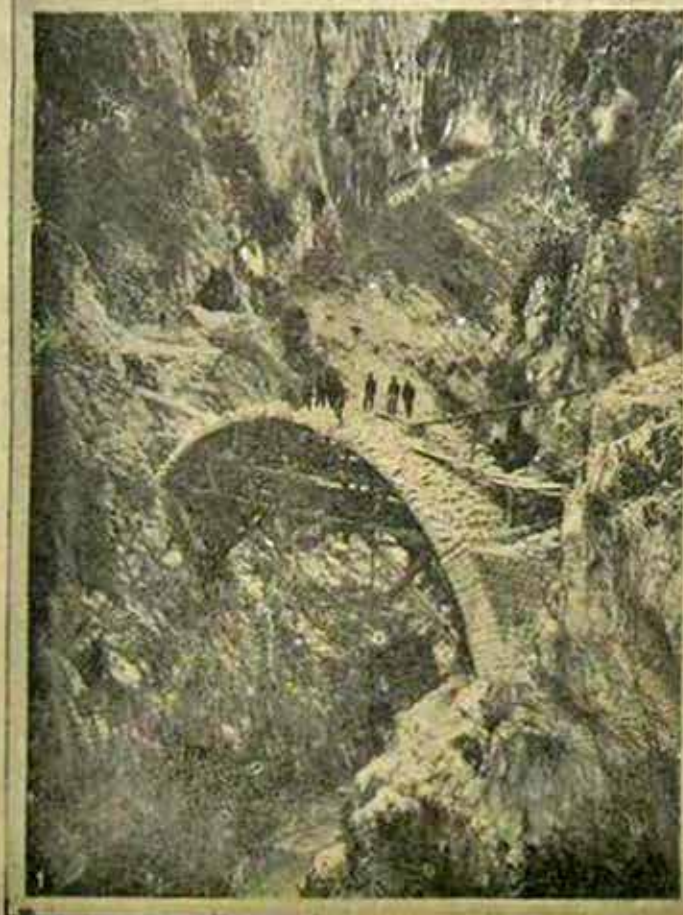
Meanwhile, the entombed man has been able to communicate with those working to get him out of his tomb. He speaks, they pass him cordials, he waits, and he hopes. But while he glimpses imminent liberation, corpses are discovered very close to him.

Quickly, they are taken away, and as the alpinists pass with their funereal burden, everyone salutes. They are victims of labor being carried away. Sobs rise in the air, shrill and tearing like a lament. It is women who weep. They are led away,

and their cries mingle with the howls of the river. In the wild gorge where the bushes put the rust of their dying foliage, night falls, lugubrious and funereal. The great voice of the Loup becomes mournful, and in the sky, dark clouds descend like large funeral veils. It seems as if one is in a grand and fantastic cemetery, and in my eyes, I feel large tears rising...”

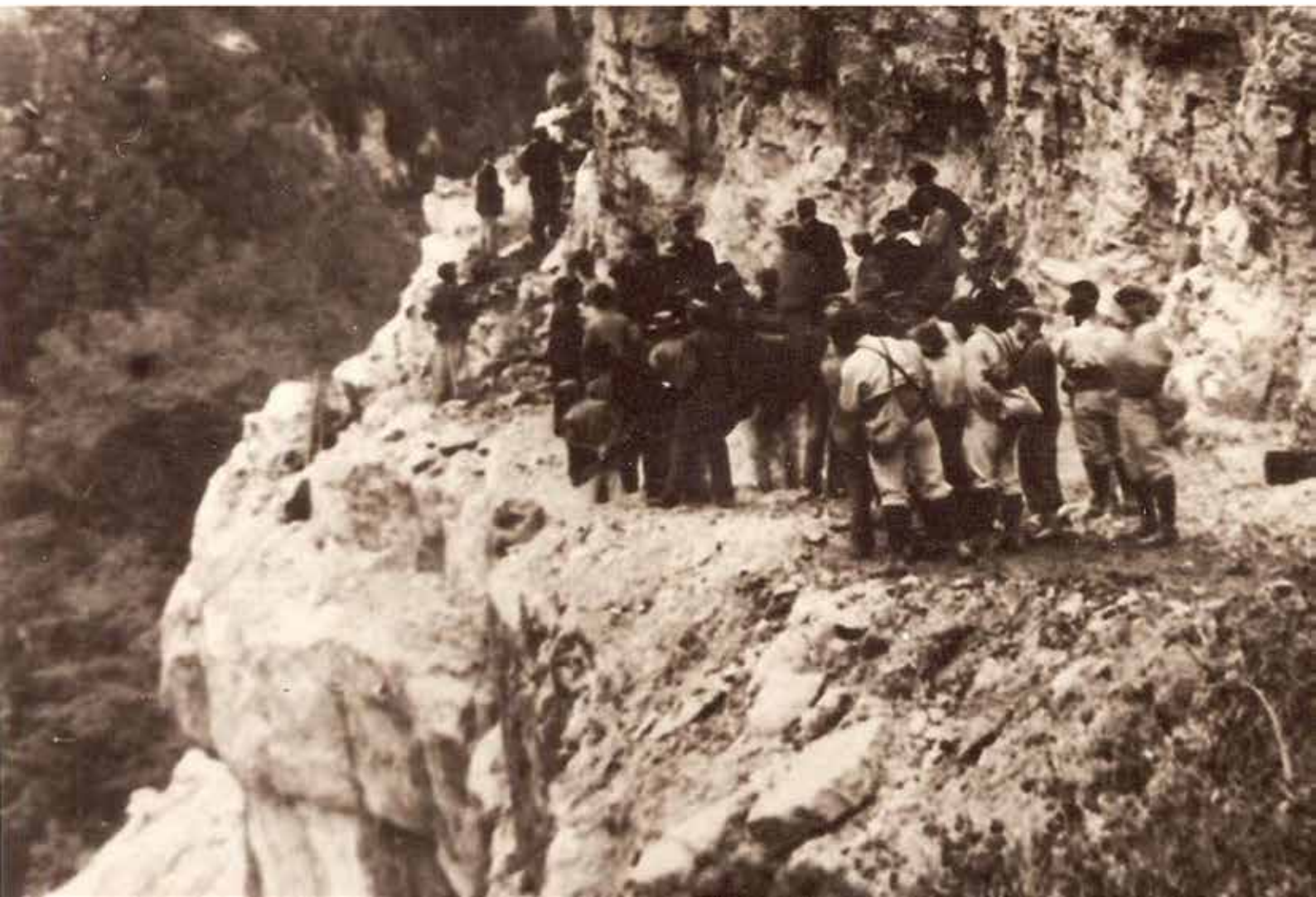


LA CATASTROPHE DES GORGES DU LOUP



1. Pont en construction sur le Loup, en avant du lieu de la catastrophe. — 2. Les chasseurs du 23^e venus en secours. — 3. Transport du cadavre de l'un des victimes.

The hunters from the 23rd, who came as rescuers.



After the catastrophe

“Death and pain are great levelers of classes and boundaries. It was clearly seen yesterday in Grasse during the funerals of the workers crushed in the Loup landslide.

Around the poor coffins of white wood containing the mutilated remains of seven victims of labor, there was a dense crowd where officers in uniform, the Prefect in uniform, politicians, and officials fraternally rubbed shoulders with simple workers, women of the people, and young soldiers.

Death is always a subject of painful meditation, but when it strikes with more brutality than usual and its scythe leaves behind a long trail of blood, men feel the instinctive need to come together and collectively express their grief and emotion. And that is why, yesterday, near the corpses of unknown and miserable workers, most of whom came from small Italian villages and whose lives were supposed to pass quietly and uneventfully, everyone was gripped by the same anguish because death had marked its passage in such a way that even the most blind were dazzled.

And it is this theme, so profoundly true and human, that Monsignor Chapon developed with rare eloquence before the coffins that rested on the pavement of the small chapel in Grasse.

The Bishop of Nice had a trembling voice, and a sort of painful smile twisted his pale face. The right hand, adorned with the pastoral ring, reached out towards the coffins, covered with the mortuary shroud, in a paternal and blessing gesture, and Monsignor Chapon spoke abundantly about the joys of sincere faith and the consolations of hope. And while he wept for the departed, a ray of sunlight illuminated a splendid Descent from the Cross by Rubens, placed on a wall of the chapel, and under the flow of light, the wounds of Christ seemed to redden and bleed as if to put his martyred body in unison with the torn remains of the unfortunate whose funeral was being celebrated. Then, on the steps of the hospital, in front of the hearses, there was a series of official speeches. All were animated by the spark of life given by vibrant emotion, and I really couldn't praise one more than the others for

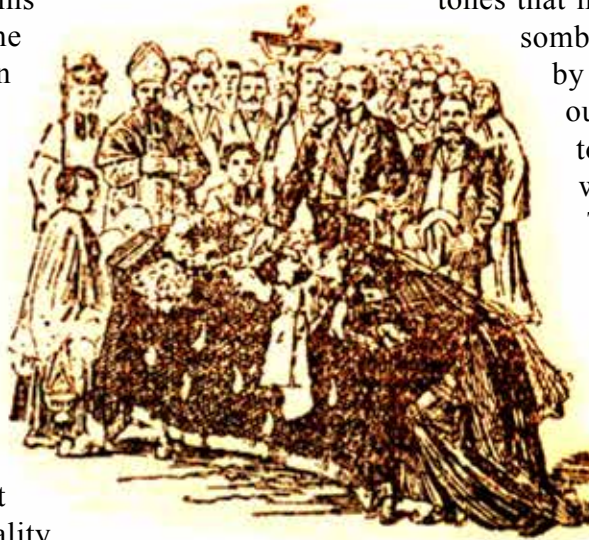
the speeches delivered by the Prefect, my friend Seytre, and the mayor of Grasse.

But it must be said that the vice-consul of Italy, Mr. Mayoni, after them, knew how to find poignant tones that moved the crowd that listened, somber and saddened. He began by thanking, in French, for the outpouring of sympathy shown to the Italian workers who were victims of the accident. Then he spoke in Italian with great elevation of thought and warm eloquence. The admirable language of Dante lends itself wonderfully to manifestations of the soul. It sings with equal lyricism of love, hatred, and pain, and while Mr. Mayoni invoked the memory of the absent Homeland and

spoke of the generous blood that Italian workers had shed on the soil of friendly France, the crowd stirred as if under the effort of a violent breath. It was then the march to the cemetery, the last ordeal before the final rest. The authorities and the crowd followed, and there was a loud noise of muffled footsteps and whispered conversations. But there, very close to the hearses, in the very shadow of the coffins, there were some wretched human rags crawling. They were relatives. I saw a poor woman with disheveled hair, wearing a black dress and a simple large cloak. She cried incessantly, and her sob was painful like a lament. On the hearse she was following, there was a wreath: ‘To my beloved son!’ She was a mother, and when they reached the cemetery, she threw herself on one of the coffins, moaning, and had to be forcibly dragged away... Poor woman! We suffered with her; we wanted to find comforting words and we all remained silent, annihilated...

Yes, death and pain are great levelers of classes and boundaries!”

*Excerpt from the book
PETITS FEUILLETS (Small Leaves)
by Dominique DURANDY*





On the right, the Courmes waterfall with the staircase leading to the A. Millo Bar-Restaurant—the tunnel preceding the Abyss Bridge.

27 LES GORGES DU LOUP. — La Nouvelle Route
au Saut de l'Échelle. — L.I.



The tunnel of the Courmes Cascade from the Bridge of the Abyss side.

The tunnel on the Courmes Cascade side.





On the Bridge of the Abyss, one could stop peacefully without fearing the arrival of another vehicle.



The prosperous times of Pont-du-Loup

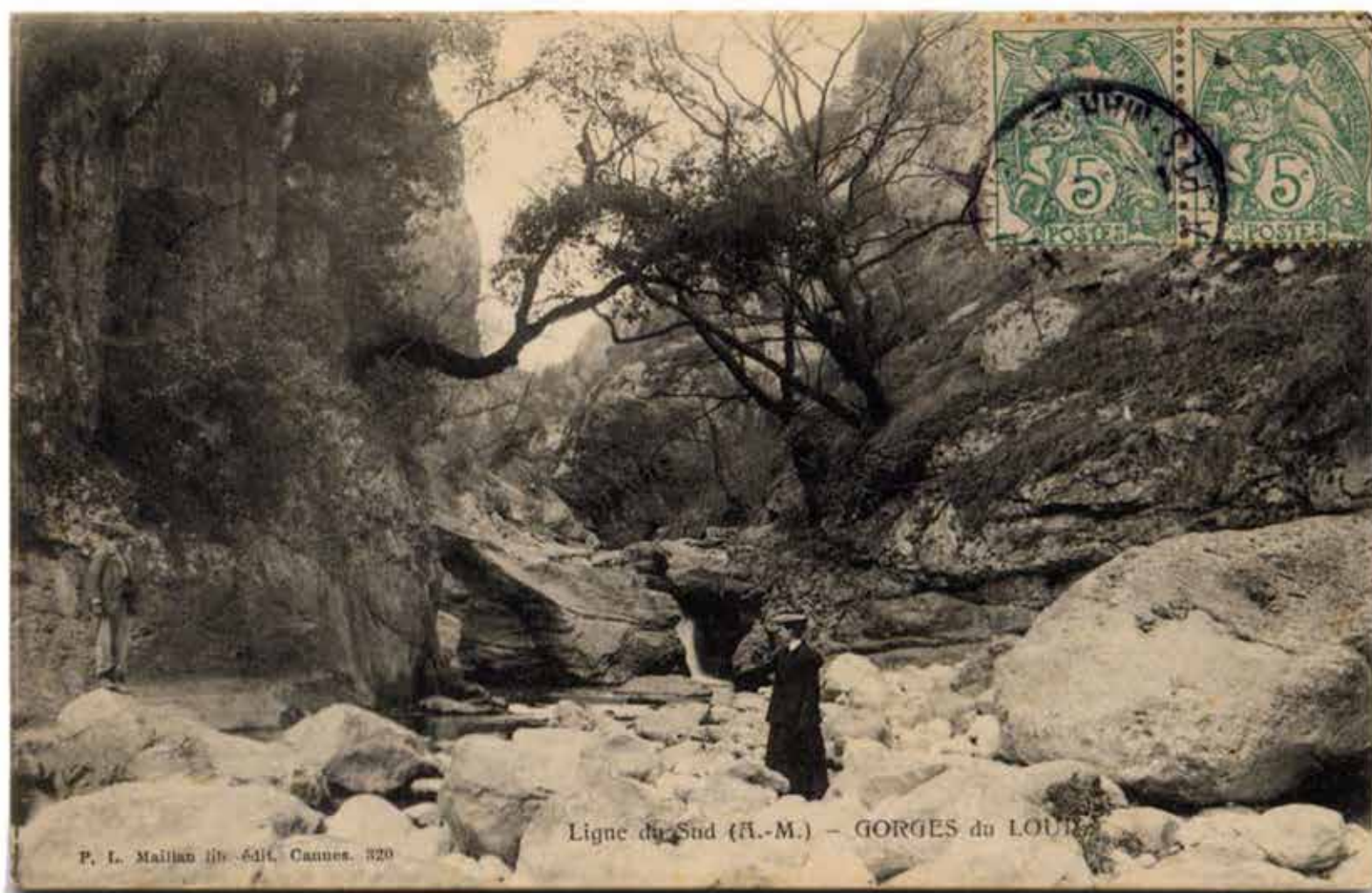
At the beginning of the 20th century, the Gorges du Loup became a destination for excursions for elegant tourists from the French Riviera. The small station of “Halte du Loup” was always crowded; there were not enough seats to wait for the often delayed train. The manager had to bring out her own chairs for the tired customers because the station was located at the top of a steep slope that had to be climbed to reach it. The complaint book was filled with demands: there was no lighting on the access road, water was lacking in the summer to cool off, and the waiting room was cluttered with packages. Visitors began to use the limousines provided for day trips from Cannes.

The Gorges du Loup offered various excursion destinations. A small path started from the bridge, passed by the old mill, now a renowned confectionery, and followed the course of the river on the left bank before crossing the torrent at the level of an impressive cliff that modern athletes climb. The trail was dangerous in places: either it was swallowed by the swollen waters, or it was eroded above the void.

The walk led to the hermitage of Saint-Arnoux, the patron saint of the area. There, a modest chapel

had been erected in a magnificent setting, between rocks and the torrent, with the apocalyptic sound of water bouncing on scattered rocks. In 1867, a landslide destroyed the oratory. The inhabitants of Pont-du-Loup built a private chapel, which has no name, in the heart of the hamlet in 1869. The hermitage was later rebuilt because the pilgrimage still took place. A footbridge allowed crossing the river at the level of a cross fixed on a rock. Sick people and those in difficulty came there to pray to be healed. One had to walk around the sanctuary nine times, reciting nine “Pater Noster” and nine “Ave Maria” with great devotion to hope to be heard by heaven.

One year, during these circumambulations, a deaf-mute came, as per her vow: she could read and write but couldn't speak. She had written on a piece of paper that she wanted to go to the mass at the chapel in the Gorges. While the procession circled around the building singing hymns, the mute girl started singing; the congregation was disturbed by this miracle they witnessed. Healed, the young Italian girl entered a convent in Italy until her death.

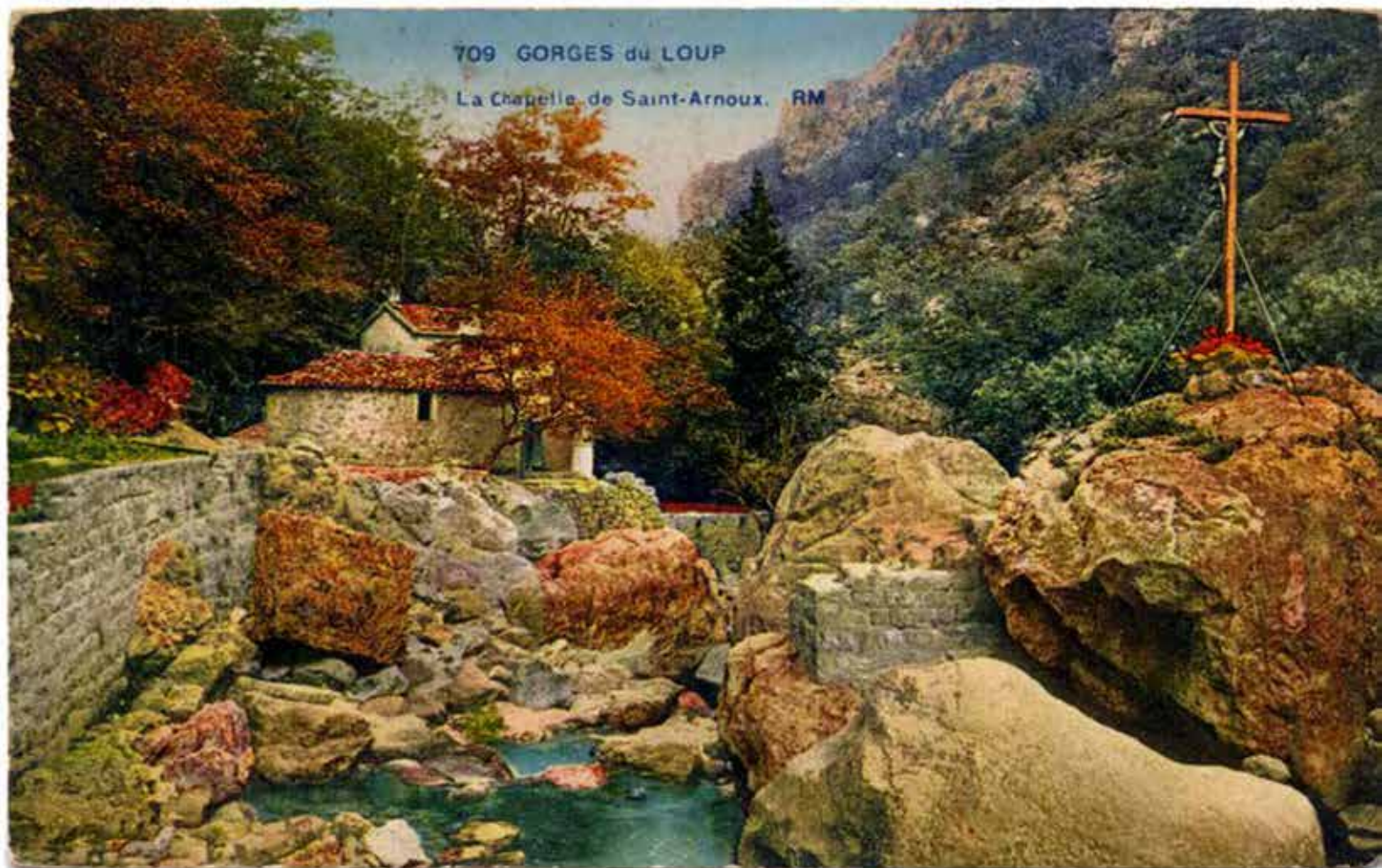




The descent of the access path to the hermitage from the road was dangerous because it was narrow and winding. The turns were tight, and a few car accidents occurred, miraculously stopped at the edge of the precipice. A little boy who had gone over the parapet was found safe and sound, clinging to the

frame of a wreckage covered in brambles. A faithful man who couldn't have children made a vow to go barefoot to the sanctuary via the rocky path at the bottom of the Gorges, and he fulfilled his promise. This man worked at the confectionery at the bridge when his little girl was born the following year.

The same view after the destruction of the footbridge by the impetuous waters of the Loup.





The interior of the Saint-Arnoux Chapel



Access to the chapel was long and perilous.



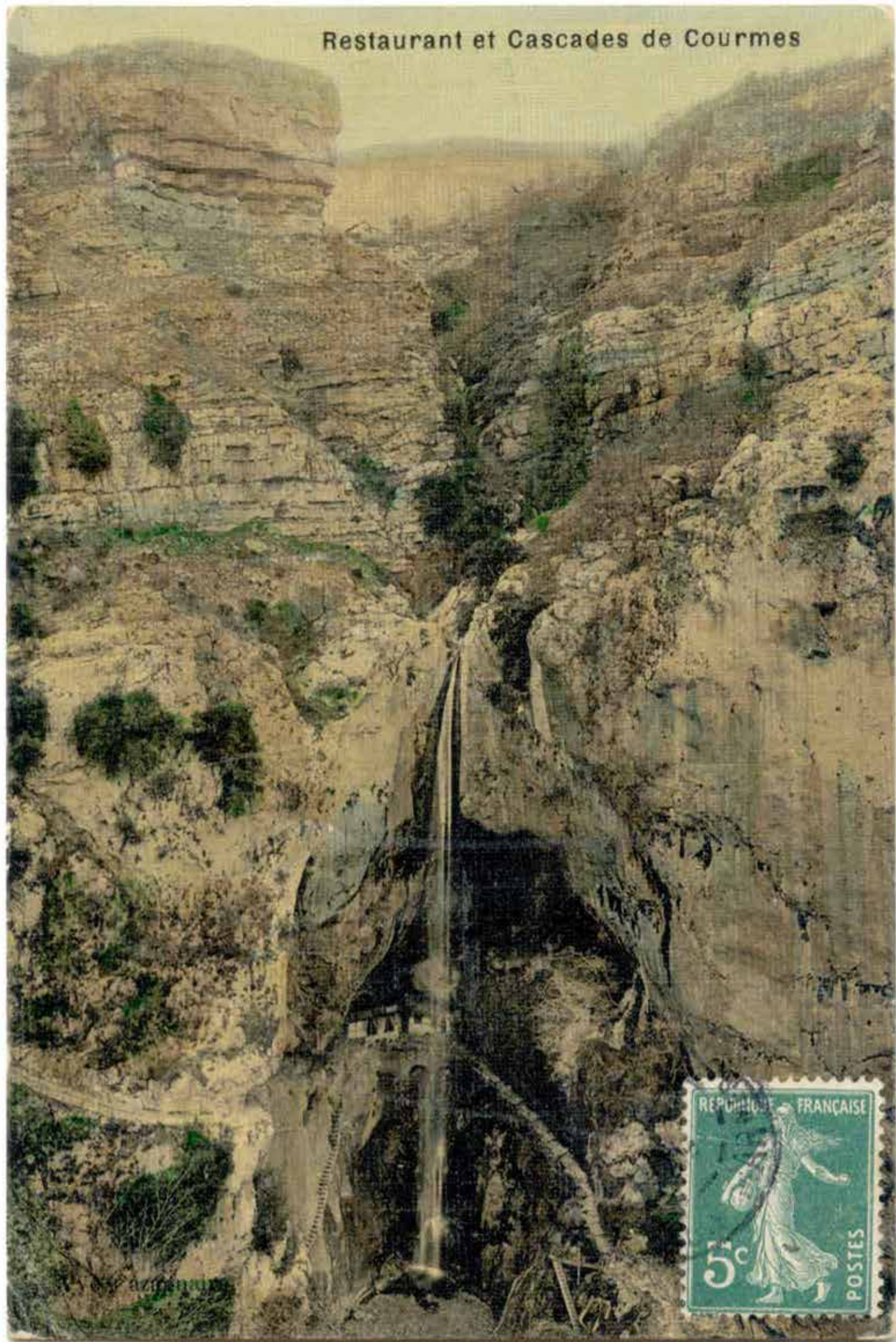
Stamp of the hermitage affixed to the back of postcards.



A walk along the Loup River
and sometimes on walkways hanging from the cliff overlooking the river.



Restaurant et Cascades de Courmes





Restaurant Bar
A.Millo



Along the cliff, the stairway leading to the Restaurant Bar.

The Courmes Waterfall

Further along, the path led to the Courmes waterfall, a pretty stream of water falling from the rocky edge of a curious semicircular excavation before being collected in a natural basin. A few stone steps allowed access to a narrow passage carved halfway up, which circled the circular wall. Beneath the falls, a refreshment stand had been built on a small platform. Thirsty hikers could enjoy their anisette by reaching under the waterfall to dilute their “pastis” with water. The walk could continue beyond the Abyss Bridge, all the way to the Saut du Loup, particularly impressive during times of high water with its petrifying cascades.



This wooden staircase has been complemented by a gallery carved into the cliff.



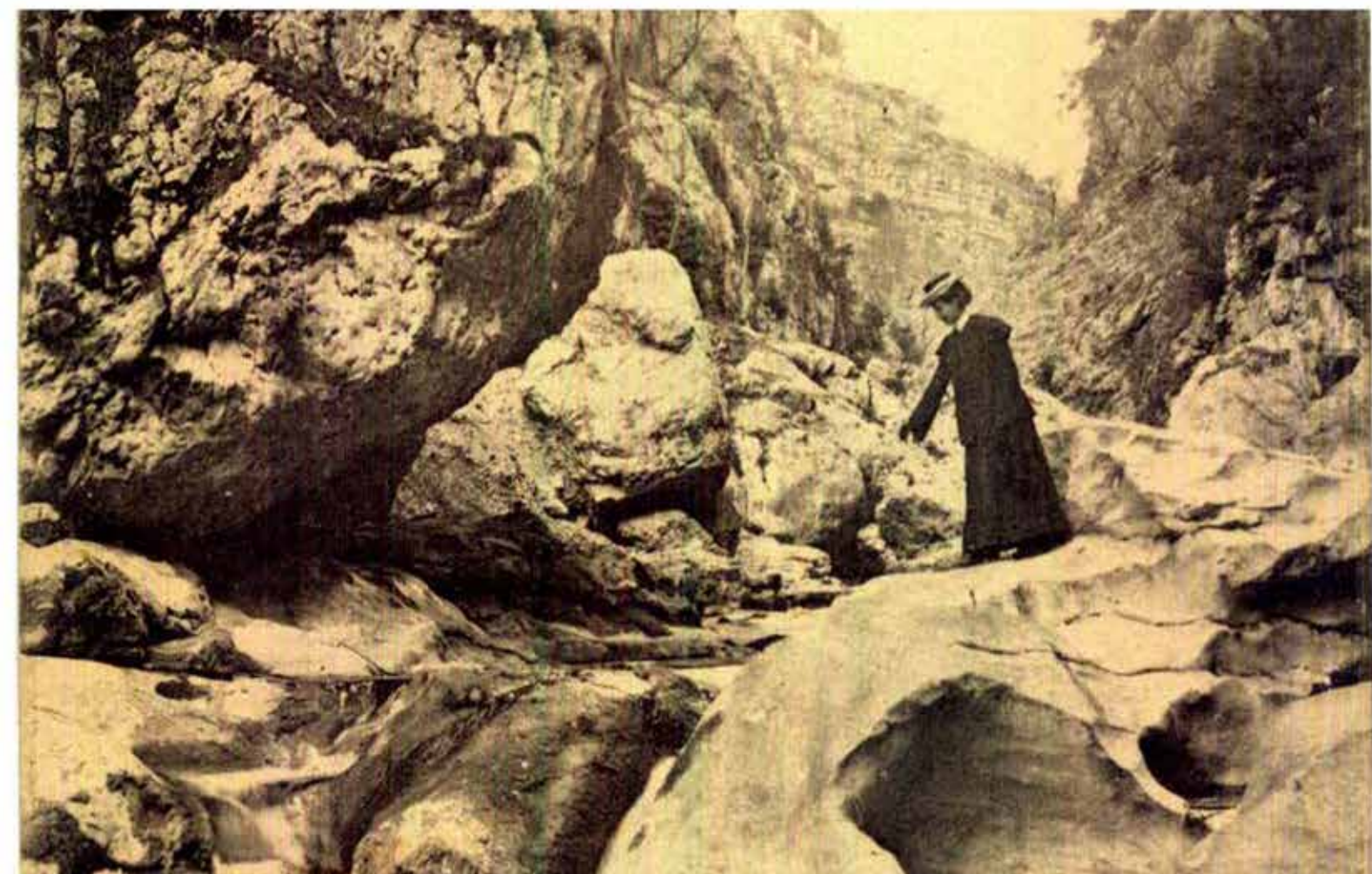
Between October and March, a violet seller would set up shop at the foot of the Cascade.
At the foot of the stairs, tourists are waiting for the guide.

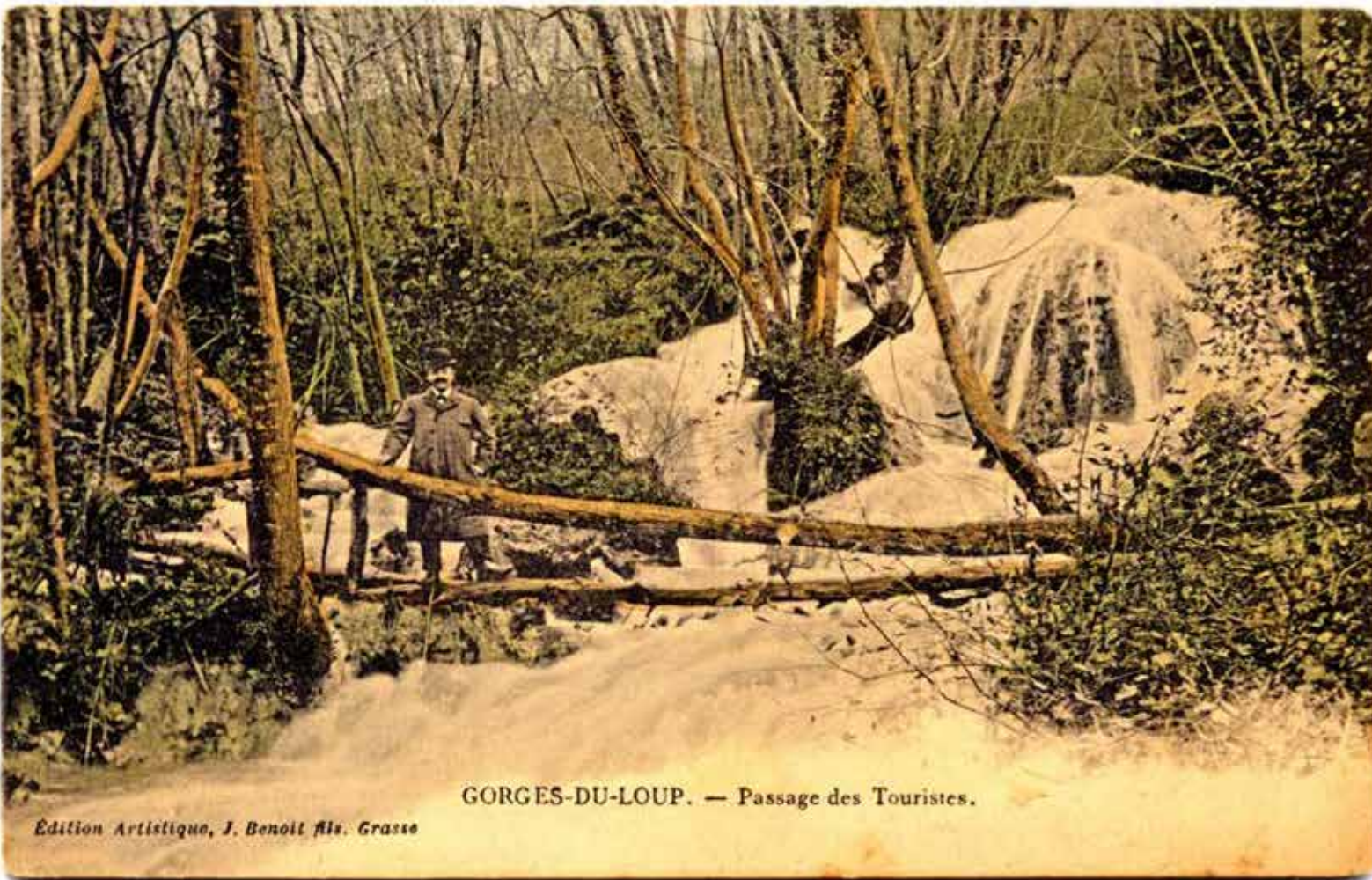




Panoramic view taken from the passage carved into the cliff of the Restaurant Bar at the Courmes Cascade.

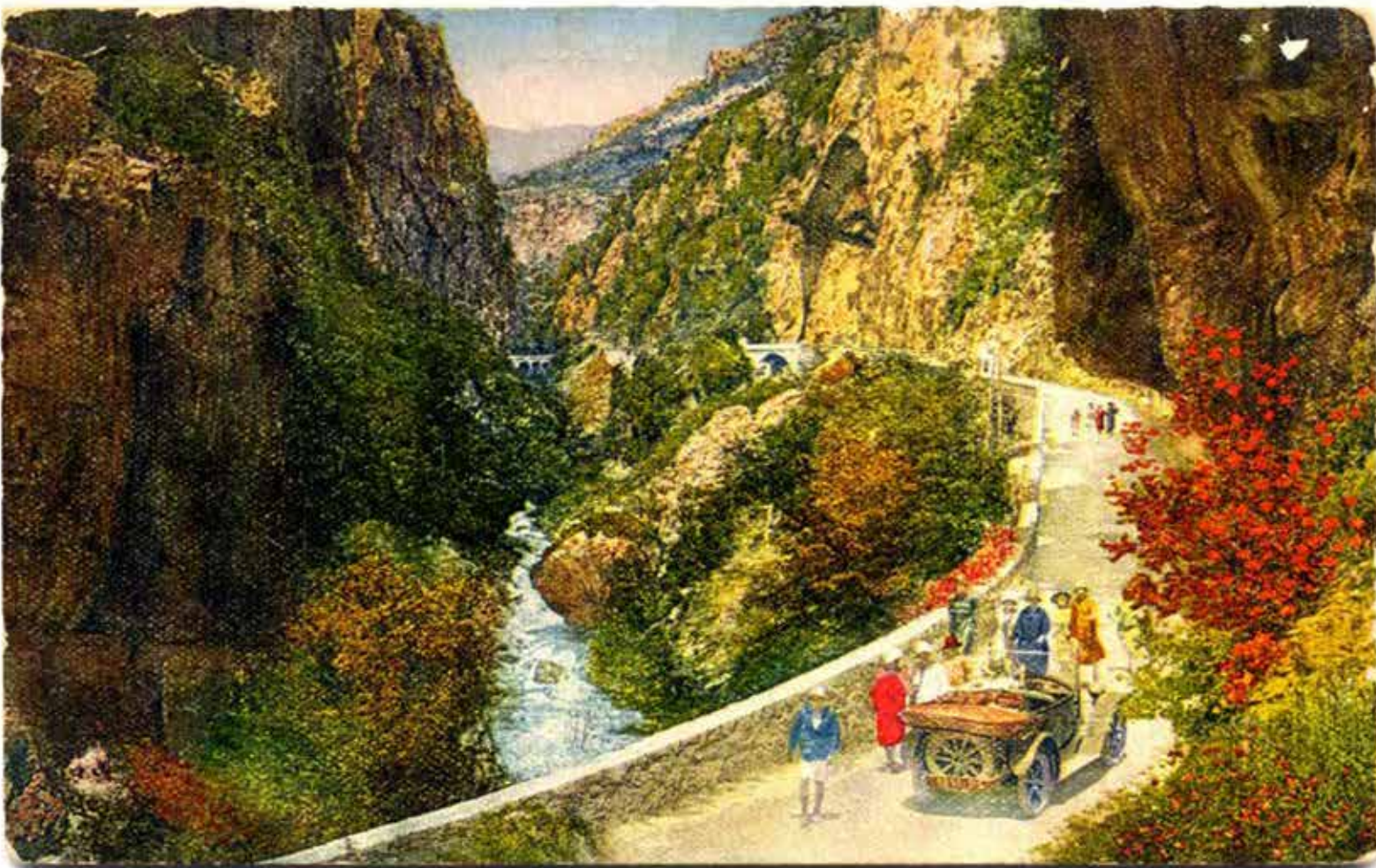
A fearless walker on the edges of the rocks at the Saut du Loup.





Tourists did not hesitate to use tree trunks to cross the torrent.





At the bottom of the Gorges, you can see the Bridge of the Abyss, and to the right, the tunnel of the Courmes Cascade.



222 — Gorges du LOUP (Alpes-Maritimes). Ligne du Sud de la France. La nouvelle Route, le Loup et les Tunnels. ND Phot.



Today, the section of the road turning to the right and running along the cliff has been closed due to the risk of landslides.
A tunnel through the mountain has been drilled as an extension of the road.

The Bridge of the Abyss



