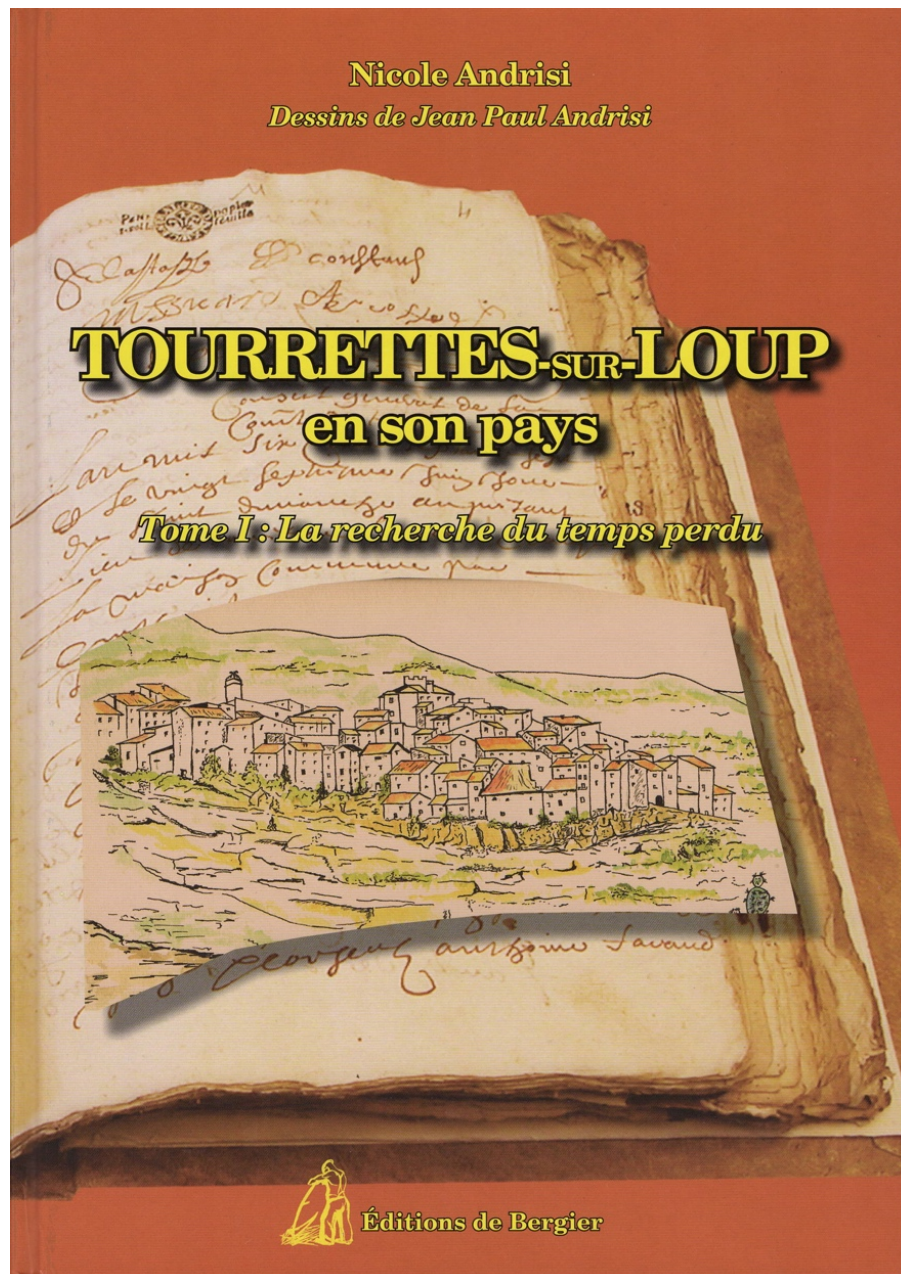


# TOURRETTES SUR LOUP

in its setting

Translation in part of the book *Tourrettes sur Loup en son pays* by Nicole Andrisi



Translated by Richard Bird 2022-23

## FOREWORD

This is a translation of what I consider to be the most interesting chapters of the book *Tourrettes sur Loup en son pays* by the late Mme Nicole Andrisi, a wide ranging and comprehensive work, even poetic in parts, the result of many years of research and exploration of the region.

The original book with its multitude of illustrations by Jean-Paul Andrisi and many maps is available for sale in the village shops.

I have included a selection of the illustrations with permission.

The book is titled “Volume 1” implying a further volume, which was never published.

I hope that this translation into English will permit many more visitors and residents of Tourrettes to appreciate and delight in its rich heritage.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Bird', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

*Richard Bird July 2023*

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## 1. Introduction

I entered Tourrettes as in a book.

Children's books are the most beautiful; when we open them, we cannot stay outside, as a spectator. It is enough to step over the threshold to enter the garden of the story and live the adventure therein. So, as for Alice in Wonderland sitting in the hollow of her tree, begins the most beautiful journey - that of the dream become reality.

I was looking for a small town in the area, a place to install my apothecary shop. I had never taken the road from Grasse which runs along the flanks of the first Alpine foothills. Suddenly, the village appeared on its rock. My heart skipped a beat, I whispered "Here it is!".

The spectacle of Tourrettes, poised between two ravines, which gives her an air of a fortress, is gripping. The old houses tightly packed on the edge of emptiness cling to the rock and face the sea wind. The village looks like a half petrified vessel facing the marine expanse. Located just a few kilometers from its pretty neighbour Saint-Paul-de-Vence, Tourrettes has neither sweetness nor coquetry. The fame of one puts the other in the shade. Twin sisters, they pray to ignore each other to avoid being enemies. And, in any case, they are not comparable. Tourrettes, hung on the mountain, has wilderness. The summit of the mountain behind is called the Puy de Tourrettes. It is not an ancient volcano, despite the bare rocks that descend the slope like large flows of lava. These "*lauves*" are limestone benches deposited by the primitive sea. The origin of the word *puy* comes from the Latin *podium* which means mound, eminence; it comes from the Roman legions who crisscrossed Gaul and have left their vestiges. Tourrettes was therefore a

Roman camp near Via Julia Augusta, the road that ran on the northern limit of *Massaliote* territory. The Greeks of Phocaea had built "*Massalia*" - future Marseille - and created landing places all along the Mediterranean coast of which they possessed a narrow territory. The Romans knew how to choose their site: a sea view and backed by a mountain that protects from the cold of the North.

History has passed in Tourrettes as in all the villages of France, nothing has been spared, neither wars nor epidemics, nor calamities of all kinds; misery has lived here for a long time. Every stone, every bush has kept track of it. Everything fits in a place, the good and the bad. Happiness and misfortune leave signs in the ground, on the rocks, even in the air regularly swept by the winds. It is an indelible mark like the one that traces soot on the walls of an old hovel, or the one left by candles and prayers inside an old church.

By opening Tourrettes' book, I awoke its memory. She gave me her joys and its troubles. Many are the Tourrettans who opened their doors and shared their confidences with me. I just hope I have not misunderstood their words and intentions. This collection is a harvest of individual stories which have contributed to the history of the town.

Listening to each one encouraged me to go back in time, to the origins.

So began for me the long quest, the slow journey of research, of libraries in municipal archives and departments, from old books to old documents, from encyclopaedias to museums, from various readings in specialized readings, bibliographies in university files ... long was my journey.

A small provincial town, Tourrettes has not left a lot of traces in time. Yet she found herself at the centre of a region where history has done its work. Between the cities of Grasse, Vence and Antibes, she suffered the consequences of a border region where passed and repassed the armies, friends or enemies, sometimes victorious, sometimes vanquished, along with the plagues they dragged behind them. It's with the help of documents concerning these cities that I tried to reconstruct Tourrettes' memory.

From century to century, its history is revealed, the stones are put to speak. Time has found its trace. Let's close our eyes and set out in search of time lost and found.

## 2. On the Flank of the Mountain

*“ To judge the past, it would have been necessary to live there; to condemn it, we should owe it nothing .... Honoring the past is not going back to it or maintaining it, it is rather inventing the present. “*

Montalembert, liberal Catholic of the 19<sup>th</sup> century

The French Riviera is crushed under the heat of summer. The sun shines brightly, the moving surface of the sea reflects it in a thousand ardent stars, unbearable in the eyes. The pebbles from the beach burn the elongated bodies that the water no longer cools. Unconsciously, the eyes seek a beneficent shade, to the north, where a grove of freshness and the green grass of the racecourse of Cagnes sur Mer attracts them.

In the distance, the view is barred by a mountain range where sits the *arriere-pays* – the hinterland. These first alpine slopes dominate a happy region of gentle hills where the climate is pleasant. There were born and have grown up these villages where life is good and whose fame went around the world: Saint Paul de Vence, Biot, Valbonne and others of the Grasse region, whose emblem is a flower.

To the East, the *baous* with steep cliffs crown the country of Vence with a royal tiara. The most beautiful is that of Saint-Jeannet that feeds La Cagne, one of the few rivers of the region. The *Baou des Noirs* and *Baou Blanc* are much more modest and stand over the ancient city of Vence, the City of Arts.

But further west, the mountain thickens, gets heavier, makes a round back like a big cat concentrating its strength before the attack. This limestone is fascinating, it hypnotizes those who approach it. Its wild appearance holds a powerful

charm. Its soft lines wave in the sky and draw the mountains of Puy de Tourrettes and the Pic de Courmettes. From these peaks which are around 1250 meters altitude, the view dominates the whole coast, from Menton to the Estérel, in good weather. Even Corsica can be seen on a clear day, when the mistral has swept away the sea mist.

These mountains have a bare forehead, but their flanks are covered with Mediterranean vegetation made of thorn bushes, broom, thyme and *sarriette*, where the pine groves and oaks climb the slope. Towards the summit of the massif, two shoulders hide vast domains known since prehistory, because the water sources allowed life there. Those are the areas of Caire and Courmettes, places charged with history.

Alone, on the elephantine ridge, a tree is cut out in silhouette on the skyline. Strange idea, to grow so far up and all alone up there! In summer, it's round like an apple and taunts the world; in winter, it becomes transparent and looks like a sign in the sky: it is a deciduous oak, it follows the rhythm of the seasons. It connects the earth to the sky which it seems to be holding with arms apart.

It is at the foot of this mountain that clings the village of Tourrettes, on a rock dominating two ravines.

One, *Pascaressa*, comes down from the farm of Villars and digs its bed in the rocks that outcrop and retain rain water in the *launes*, natural basins, which have long served as bathing places to children of the village.

The other, the *Cassan*, harvests rainwater from the baou of Tourrettes, a simple hill above the village, which dominates the smooth rocks offering the spectacle of a beautiful waterfall after the rain. At



the foot of the mountain is born the source of the spring Font-Luègne where the water seems hot in winter and cool in summer. At this place was built the *Lavoir de honte*, the Laundry of Shame; far from the village, it allowed the washerwomen to discreetly wash the laundry stained by menstruation and by childbirth.



*The Font-Luegne*

A little further down, the trickle of water polishes the rock and digs the valley that gives the village a fortress air. Rain after rain, water attacks the rock in large steps where the mills are installed. These, built for centuries have been using the force of water cascades to turn their wheels. In bad weather, when the sky goes wild and bursts its heavy clouds, the power of the water is amazing. It is tenfold and runs up to the rock of the village which vibrates from its power. It fills the valley with its rage and the quiet singing of the stream turns into roar of anger comparable to the continuous passage of a train.

Curious nature, fascinating water that we would gaze on for hours.

You have to be a poet to live in Tourrettes.

## ***The Mother Mountain***

The Pic de Courmettes dominates the village from its height of 1248 meters. To the west, it overlooks

the Loup which channelled out its gorges in its flank. By its bare top, this promontory recalls the distant Fujiyama and its icecap; it dominates the Puy de Tourrette by a few dozen meters.

Curiously, this *puy* is not in the territory of the commune whose name it bears.

The mountain is massive and generous. Of limestone origin, it absorbs rainwater in the violence of Mediterranean climate; by a system of faults and underground galleries, it redistributes mysteriously, according to the alternation of its layers of limestone and marlstone, the water necessary for life.

The mountain has not always been there. In the Secondary era, the subsidence of the Hercynian soil was invaded by the alpine sea, sediments accumulated in thick layers, where were imprisoned marine species and shells. In the Tertiary, the movement of Earth's tectonic plates lifted the old base, driving the water towards the Mediterranean, while sediments slid on the slopes. As they dried, they solidified. Today, shell seascapes dot the smooth rocks that make one think of large grey lava flows. In places, erosion has done its work; it moulded the huge rocks into the *dos d'éléphant*, the "elephant backs", observed south of the village.



Many sources spring from foot of this mountainous massif. They are the wealth of this hinterland, they allow Culture. In the wild there grow oak and maritime pines, giving way to brooms and thorns, while at the top stands the bare limestone in great

chaos. There, are discovered many ancient sites that prove the life of tribes, from the earliest times.

Dry stone enclosures delimit areas where are discovered foundations of huts, sometimes a cistern; they make you think of a pastoral enclosure, a summer refuge of shepherds with their flocks. On the summit, the ground digs into *dolines*; into their depressions accumulates loose soil where grows, sheltered from the winds, the short grass upon which graze the sheep ; here and there, the round dome of a *borie* looks like an unusual stone igloo. These shelters, typically Provençal, have no known age. They could have been built by the primitive tribes or later in the Middle Ages. No one knows the origin, but each era is served, by restoring them as needed, thanks to their brilliant design. Their rounded shape allows the occupant to have space inside enough for a single man. The dome in corbelled flat stones leads rainwater to the outside. Sometimes one of them, with a contrasting slope, directs a thin fillet of water to a narrow reservoir laid out inside the hut. Outside the *borie*, a small enclosure is built to protect the flock from predators.





### 3. The First inhabitants of the region

#### *Prehistoric times*

Since the most remote times of history, Man has left its mark on the mountain that dominates Tournettes. Its southern situation allowed the caveman to live in a temperate climate, safe from the rigors of winter.

When glaciers covered Europe, the ocean level was a hundred meters less. The Mediterranean coastline had another face. Great plains covered with tall grass ranged between the sea and the mountains of the Alps and Esterel, now beaten by the waves, which expose, in the rocky cliffs, the flooded cave grottos.

In Menton, the caves of the Baous Roux were inhabited by the men of prehistory. In the creeks of Marseille, the recent discovery of the sacred cave of Cosquer, one hundred and twenty meters under the sea, reveals, through its rock drawings, the secrets of this time.

The great plain of the coastline extended along the current line: on the islands of Lérins, Hyères and Marseille there were only wooded hills; in the harbours of Villefranche, Nice, Antibes and Saint-Tropez extended vast meadows where passed herds of *saigas*, snub nosed antelope of the steppes, wild horses, bison or *mégacéros*, large deer with huge antlers. In the cool waters frolicked seals and penguins.

There settled hunting and fishing peoples.

At the end of the Quaternary era, the climate warmed. The glaciers retreated while the water level rose, forcing all life into the *Arrieres Pays*,

the backcountry. However, the climate softened by alternating dry periods and cold or temperate and humid. Wildlife varied according to the times. Animals from cold regions: chamois, reindeer, marmots or blue foxes, were moving into the mountains to the north, while ibex, horses, oxen or wild sheep also settled there. With the change of the climate and water level, the animal species thrived while man was trying to survive. He was a hunter before becoming a farmer. At the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, he began to domesticate wild sheep and to feast on the snails gathered in wet places or near springs.

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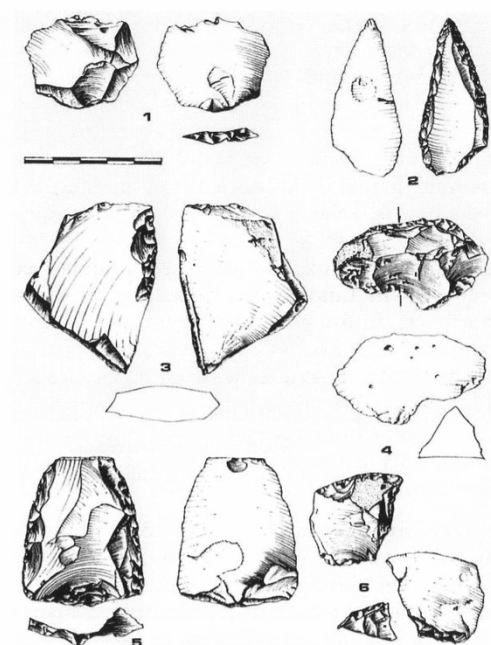
At the heart of the limestone massif is a new continent: the underground world. The heavy rains are swallowed by cracked soil, and they begin their long dark work. Digging and dissolving the rock, they bring about the formation of wells and sinkholes – *avens* - that extend into galleries and widen into caves. Sometimes a landslide causes the opening from an excavation to the outside, while the natural rock deepens into *baumes* - caves.

In Tournettes, the shelter of Pié-Lombard hangs on the cliff wall that dominates the valley of the Loup 150 meters below. There, were discovered stone tools and Paleolithic meal remains: bones of wolves, foxes, lynx or cervier wolf, wild boars and bears, deer, chamois and ibex, as well as many rodents. Sediments where were buried these vestiges allow us to date them from the Upper Paleolithic, from 30,000 to 10,000 years before our era.

#### *Prehistoric tools*

The cut stones discovered in this place allow us to reconstruct the life of these first hominids. There are many stone tools roughly shaped without being finished, waiting for use. In the bed of the Loup nearby, the stonemason begins to pick up big

pebbles whose roundness allows them to be held well in the hand. Then, using flint, these pebbles are broken from each side to get a more or less sharp edge, to make it a cutting tool. On a piece of flint called a kidney, the craftsman works with a tougher stone striker. The kidney is shaped, cut to make a biface. These tools of various rocks, flint, obsidian, glass brilliant and cutting volcanic, hard limestone, basalt or jasper, explain their various origins. They are made elsewhere and brought in this place, or they are fashioned in that place as modified tools.



The jasper of the striker found in Pié-Lombard is perhaps from the Lipari Islands, off Sicily. This leaves you dreaming about travelling Neanderthal men. The day's walk is then 25 kilometers without counting the time hunting for food and rest. This shelter would only be a camp for passing hunters or for these travellers who scour the region to trade in the flint only found in small quantities on the mountain of Courmettes. They exchange their merchandise: stones, shells, tools and sometimes even women.

According to the work of the researchers at the end of the 20th century around the 1970s, some chips

are cut in a triangle to serve as scrapers, used to cut up killed game, cut it, scrape it to remove the skin, saw, and peel vegetable matter. Bones are crushed, broken by a non-cutting tool: a faceted polyhedron. Some of these tools can serve as bolas, connected in twos or threes by thongs, and used as a weapon to bring down running animals. One has unearthed scrapers with semicircular blades, and stone blades fitted with wood and fixed by resin that serve as a "hacking knife", some scrapers including one bone.

Several chisels often associated with scrapers demonstrate the skill of these prehistoric men who knew how to make versatile tools. Some of these tools have notches and beaks, sometimes even denticulated teeth acting as saw teeth. One has also found a perforator. One has even discovered a Neanderthal child incisor "forgotten" there ...

In the *Baume Obscure*, nestled high in the hill, under the Courmettes plateau, have been discovered bifaces that can be dated mid Paleolithic, from 80,000 to 35,000 years before our era. At that time, Neanderthal man is mostly nomadic. This shelter is used at different times. The numerous objects found tell us their story: scrapers, chisels, truncated blades of which already a sickle and a wonderful rock crystal striker exhibited at the Nice Museum of Terra Amata. Discoid beads in limestone, fragments of wild boar canines, polished bones, a deer's *crache*, a useless tooth supposed to have magical power, and scallop shells are then used for making of masculine and feminine adornments. A few pistiliform or foliaceous arrow frames [untranslatable] bring us important information about the lives of these hunters.

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In general, prehistoric man lives in shallow caves. Rock shelters only allow him a momentary pause. The deep cave has for him a sacred character. The

darkness of the dens reflects the obsession of men. Only wizards learned in the mysteries of the shadows can penetrate there, because to face the caves is to arouse the unconscious. The underground world has a breath, a breath that follows the mysterious traces of a secret and dangerous labyrinth. To penetrate this closed world is to brave the forces of the night, the world of spirits.

That's why only the wizard, after following the rites of purification by fasting, abstinence and hallucinogenic plants, can face the dark world to trace drawings of animals which he begs for favours, thus "revealing" the beast, it gets in touch with its spirit which is "of the other side of the rock". Every sacred cave has its favourite animal: it's the cave of the bison, or the panther, or that of the bear which we find at the Col de Vence.

Intermediate between the spirit world and that of men, the sorcerer is able to interpret dreams, to predict the future, to heal the sick with rites, individuals.

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There is no sacred cave in Tournettes. But in 1993, while carrying out work, there was discovered a deep hole, which was immediately explored by the "Spéleo Club Tournettan". The *aven* – the *Grotte de Pascaressa*, finally explored, revealed its wonders: a deep pit lined with calcite flows goes down to more than twenty meters deep. On the walls, a large triangular opening reveals a pile of cauliflower shaped concretions, decorated on one side with many fistulous, thin limestone needles still called macaroni. This window is a passage that gives access to a small room lined with crystalline and flamboyant ochre concretions. A monumental draper- like casting of sparkling calcite hangs from the ceiling, eccentric stalactites defy the laws of balance and keep the mystery of their birth. A

fascinating mineral world exists under our feet, secret and enchanting under our ignorant footsteps. This *aven* is not accessible to the public but to know that it is there allows us to dream of the fantastic world of underground cathedrals.

Some unusual sites exist on the Tournettes territory, well known to children from the village that once took refuge there.

In the Cassan valley, near the bridge of the route de la Bourgade, open two small caves. A corridor descending approximately two meters is passed through by crawling, and leads to a small room. One of these caves is dark, without opening; the children came to play cards there by candlelight. They knew not to stay long to avoid asphyxiation. The other cavern has an open chimney that leads into the garden of the villa built above. These excavations are currently inaccessible because flooded.

Under the village, *baumes* - shallow caves - are spread out along the path that goes down into the valley from Pascaressa. They served as a hiding place for urchins.

At the entrance of the village, above the road to Grasse, a curious construction leans against rock. It is a troglodyte sheep fold. The facade of the house closes the entrance of the *baume* where the sheep slept.

All along the Chemin de St. Martin extend large *lauves* – the lava-like limestone rocks - with hidden shelters where sometimes runs a trickle of water. Some have preserved vestiges of prehistoric sites that were the subject of serious research.

## ***The shelter of Pié-Lombard***

After crossing the Camassade plateau, planted with oak and divided up with walls surrounding old vegetable gardens, the path enters the small wood and leads to a platform at the edge of a cliff.

Although out of sight, this place hides a public dump, shame of the twentieth century, where were thrown cars, engines, refrigerators and debris of every kind. The site dominates the lower valley of the Loup about a hundred and fifty meters below.

The way downhill starts a little further, towards the interior of the plateau, on the right. It runs for a moment along the fence of a beautiful property. The trail is overgrown with brambles and shrubs but its layout is still visible: retaining walls and stone steps down which the mules descended in the early twentieth century, loaded with grain, to the flour mill near the Loup. The passage is still practicable thanks to hunters who use it nowadays; but it no longer has the breadth of time long ago.

After several steep and dangerous turns, you have to leave the mule track to go right to a steep climb leading to the foot of a sheer drop hitherto invisible to our eyes, which dominates the valley of Pié-Lombard.

At the foot of this grey rock opens, like a mouth, a shelter in the cliff. Inside, the stone is lighter, raw like a mucous membrane. A deep groove in the ground separates the entrance from the bottom of the refuge. This furrow was dug by archaeological excavation companies around 1950 in the loose earth of the ground. The hole, more than two meters depth, remains gaping. It must be stepped over to reach the shelter largely open on outside. On the bottom wall, the traces of an ancient waterfall show the work of water in an indefinable time. Plates of wet moss betray the closeness of underground water. From the vaulted ceiling water

drips in several places. Yet the soil is dry and comfortable. Two or three men can stay there, curled up, for a short stop.

On the left of the entrance, some stalagmites were levelled to facilitate access to a small corridor that sinks into the bowels of the earth. Only one supple and thin person could sneak in.

The way back is easier. One can admire the trail with its supporting walls, sometimes reinforced, and its stone guards (*garde-fous*) avoiding the fall of mules loaded with the precious grain. This way is traced by mountain paths which climb the narrow passes: they first zigzag widely as long as space allows it; then the turns tighten nearer the pass, often narrow passages between two rocks. Yes, it's the forgotten way of the flour mill, that was once used by Tourrettans to carry their wheat crops near to the Loup.

## ***The climb to the Baume Obscure***

The *Baume Obscure* is found at the foot of a rock dominating the Plan de Vens, on the flank of the Pic de Courmettes.

One gets there by the chemin de St Arnoux, a little after the valley of Pié-Lombard, near the chapel of St Antoine. A rough path leaves from the tarmac road to climb the slope. A path branches off at a promontory where it leads on towards the quarter of St Martin. This path climbs towards an isolated *piton* - a pointed rock – which is easily seen. One must climb the summit of the piton in order to turn and redescend across rocks and thorny bushes.

The opening of the grotto, mysterious and low, is at the foot of the this piton. Inside, a low corridor leads to the central part which gives access on the right to a 'bubble' of a few meters, while it opens

to the left onto a very dark balcony with many nooks. Daylight does not reach to this dark den. A triple column of stalagmites separates the balcony from the entrance. It seem cold to the touch; a drop of water falls from time to time in the blackness. A slender root hangs from the ceiling and retains the humidity like fine droplets of rosé. This grotto was inhabited, its low entrance giving protection from the cold and heat outside.



## 4. The antique period

### *The Ligurians*

Millennia have passed before the Ligurians settle, towards the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC. Descendants of Neolithic tribes, they had been pushed back little by little from the Mediterranean coast towards the heights by successive invasions: they are thus of true Provençal origin.

Accustomed to arid lands and stony soils where only thorns grow, they are up to the task. Women work as men. The difficult life and the deprivations make the body lean and dry. "They climb the mountains like goats" says the Greek geographer Posidonios.

These small, stocky, vigorous men, black haired and sleek will settle on the rocky places that dominate the coastline. In the territory of Tourrettes, they left their traces in the form of more or less elaborate primitive constructions. From the Loup Valley up to its affluent the Claret which limits the Tourrettan *terroir*, a series of "camps" are built on promontories that dominate the rivers Cassan, Lauron or Camassade.

On the rocky spur near the new cemetery, a site was discovered. It is the *castellaras* of the cemetery that M. Bretaudeau studied in 1981. It dominates the valley of Cassan and presents itself in a barred spur. The enclosure is made of re-used cyclopean blocks. A cylindrical column stone with a diameter of 80 cm and 110 cm in height is used in the construction.

This *castellaras* may be facing another more important one located at the place of the current village. The choice of tabular relief and craggy rocks suggests an isolated Ligurian camp. Nearby land and water in proximity allow the cultivation of

cereals for the making of their bread and even, already, that of the lentils that made the reputation of village since the beginning of time.

The Ligurians hunt horses and cattle, rabbits and wild pigs. On the heights, they raise herds of goats and sheep that they have domesticated. On the summits of the Pic de Courmettes and the Colle de Naouri, at the Eouvière on the edge of the plateau des Courmettes, ruined walls in the form of enclosures are sometimes accompanied by *bories*.

Built in embattled spurs on the cliffs of the Gorge du Loup, these areas allow the surveillance of the enemy approach. On the broad shoulders of the massive Tourrettan, life is possible near water sources and fields are grown. Several camps are spread out a stone's throw from each other. There, between heaven and earth, they can watch the coastline where Greek boats cross between the Phoenician city Marseille and the different ports they created along the coast for their trade: Antipolis, Aetgina, Nikaïa, Monoïkos, which will become later Antibes, Cagnes, Nice or Monaco.

### *The Celt-Ligurians*

Between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, the Celts invade Gaul. They come from far away, from the confines of Central Europe. They progress slowly, not as conquerors but as nomads, looking for a place to settle. They arrive in long caravans of superb riders and proud people who drag behind their flocks their carts with women and children. Peaceful, they settle down as and when they choose. These prolific people, very organized, easily integrate with natives in the great rich plains of Europe.

Their path is drawn in the night sky: they are heading according to the Milky Way which shows

the route of the setting sun. At the loop of the Danube, they split into two groups, one heading south where the sun calls, the other towards the west in search of the end of the world.

The road to the sun crosses the plain of Po where several tribes settle. Around the year 500 BC, they pass the Alps. A few Celts stop in our country, while others continue on their way to the Provence of Arles. They make peace with the indigenous people. These big blond men, with their clear eyes, fascinate the small and brown dark eyed Lígures. They bring with them a certain know-how from an old great civilization. The Ligurians accept them as neighbours, marriages unite the two so-different races.

The Celts fortify the Ligurian camps in concentric walls, in arcs of circles backed by the peaks. Inside these enclosures, the houses are close to the bories. These fortified sites are beautifully placed in strategic places that allow seeing the invader arrive from far away. Inside of the enclosure, a reserve of water ensures the daily need, while outdoors, pens are built of dry stone to hold the animals.

In addition to this method of protection, the Celts bring an unknown technique of the Lígures: the art of working metal to make weapons of defence and to create wonderful jewels. The women are beautiful, they wear with pride decorated twists of red enamel, bracelets that jingle on their arms, rings that they hang on their ears, or circles that hold their hair in place. These blond women compete in beauty with Ligurian women brunettes with beautiful hair.

So then life can be calm and laborious, the sky clement. Depending on the season, you have to work the earth, sowing or harvesting. Herds of cows and sheep provide them with milk, meat,

wool. Pigs with a hard coat, left in the wild, have a size and a particular strength. (Their tail is straight, the corkscrew tail appeared with domestication). Dogs protect herds from the ravaging wolves. The Celts like horses; if they are brave warriors, they are not barbarians.

In their daily life, the Celts mix sacred and profane. They worship the places: hills, rocks, springs and rivers, forests. The sacred groves are their cathedrals where only the Druids officiate, the initiated clergy. The Celtic Pantheon, solicited by their prayers, protect their lives. Their offerings can sometimes be bloody when the smooth running of the Universe requires it. Stones erected seem to have been altars dedicated to a god protector of the tribe. They also serve as tribal limit. In solar worship, these steles are sometimes used as astronomical gnomons, real sundials of immense scale.

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In the twentieth century, an erect stone, more than of a ton and dating back 180 million years, was saved in the works carried out on the track leading from Courmettes to Coursegoules. Discovered just in time, it is found in the track of a bend. Not far from there, a humble dolmen barely out of the ground suggests a Celtic burial rite.

Dominating the gorges of the Loup, the dolmen of Camptracier is called more commonly "the tomb of the Ancestor": a corridor of two meters length leads to an open cella. Only the bedside slab to the east and two flat stones along the corridor remain.

In the heart of the village of Tourrettes, a stone of sacrifice serves as a ramp to a staircase outside, it is sunk into the ground on a third of its height. Not far from the Portail-Neuf, [the new gateway] small



depressions dug in the rock near the Castel dei Gai may have been used to collect the blood of sacrificed victims ...

## ***The Roman Peace***

When the Romans arrive in the region in the first century BC they use the Heracles route, built by the Greeks to join by land their established trading posts along the Mediterranean coast. Victory won over local tribes is immortalized by the trophy of Augustus at La Turbie, called the "Torre del jayant" – the Shouting Tower - by the troubadour Raymond Féraud in 1300. This makes us think of the "Castel dei Gaiants" – the Castle of Giants – of Tourrettes. The Romans settle in the hinterland of Vence, making the city of Ventium an active agricultural centre that becomes the granary of the armies of Caesar. They make peace with the indigenous people, bringing them the benefits of their civilization and their protection against the attacks of neighbouring tribes.

These Romans work with order and method, cause the Celto-Ligurians to leave their *castellaras* and *oppida* – their towns - to come to live in houses in the plain, getting organized around large agricultural domains called "villae" where wheat, vines and olive trees are grown.

At the cemetery camp in Tourrettes were found some objects of Roman signature: stone or terracotta weights used with weighing scales, *fusaioles* which adorned spindles for spinning, debris of vases, pottery and tiles. These vestiges prove the activity commercial of the Romans. The *fusiooles* are made of a terracotta ball or stone, pierced through its centre. They served as counterweights to wooden or bone spindles who have not stood the test of time. These balls gave the spindle the momentum of its rotary movement. They reveal the existence of a textile

craft corresponding to spinning and weaving wool provided by sheep farming. The pyramidal scales found in this place could also be used for weaving on wooden frame.

The Romans build roads useable by vehicles as and when they conquer. On the Héraclès route and prehistoric paths, they arrange the "Via Julia Augusta" which connects Liguria with Rhone by the inner provinces. Provence lives in the "Pax Romana".

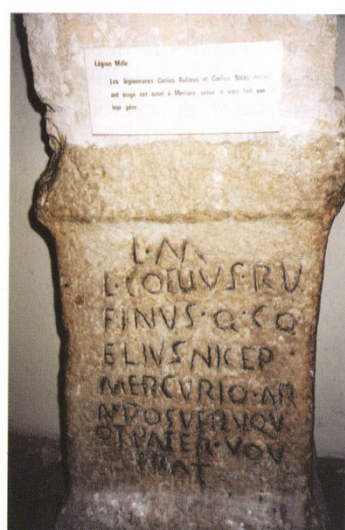
From Vence, *Ventium*, which they made a prosperous city, the Romans trace the "via Ventiana" which, crossing the first line of baous, joins up via Digne with the great routes of the Alps. This paved road climbs the col de Vence and serves the remote villages of Coursegoules, Cipières, Gréolières ... already known since early history.

Towards the West, they link Vence to Grasse and find, at the location of the present village of Tourrettes, a shoulder of the mountain fortified from place to place by Celto-Ligurian sites.

The Romans are used to marking the distances by means of bollards they place along the tracks. In strategic places, they engrave an erect stone which they offer to one of their deities to protect the place.

Behind the high altar of the church of village we find today a stone dedicated to Mercury, the Roman god of travellers, merchants ... and thieves. Assimilated from the Greek Hermes, the Roman Mercury is above all the god of commerce. But the poets have made it the god of lies and theft: barely born, he would have stolen the oxen and the quiver of Apollo, the trident of Neptune, the sword of Mars, the belt of Venus ...

God of eloquence, he is charged by Jupiter to transmit the divine messages to men and especially to women. He travels the roads, with his helmet and winged sandals. He takes this opportunity to watch over the paths and crossroads where a directional error can be fatal to the traveller. He punishes those who do not obey the law of hospitality. So is he revered in the countryside and in the towns. We sometimes find his image on the doors of the houses.



L.M.  
L. COELIUS RU  
FINUS. Q. CO  
ELIUS NICEP  
MERCURIO AR  
A POSUERU QU  
OT PATER VOV  
ERAT

The engraved stone of Tourrettes carries the inscription:

which means: *Legion Thousand.*

*Legionaries Coelius Rufinus and Coelius Nicep (horus) have erected this altar to Mercury according to the wish made by their father.*

This votive stone standing near the Roman way may have been used more later as a pagan altar in a temple, to the location of the current church.

The place is favourable for establishment of a surveillance camp that Roman soldiers developed near existing sites. There is ample water, the flat lands allow suitable agriculture. The slopes are transformed into terraces, terraces retained by dry stone walls, and little by little grown on a large scale. Olive trees from the Mediterranean countries, from Greece and from Italy, are planted

there. At their feet, sheep graze and nourish the land with their manure. Depending on the era, they grow vegetables that feed the families or, more late, flowers: anemones, pansies and violets which will make the region famous.

In some cottages were discovered Roman objects, such as scales, weights, tools, coins proving the work done by these invaders who have brought a certain wealth to the country.

Vence became a Roman city, made attractive due to its climate and the purity of its waters, its flowers and its sun, and the wives of the Roman chiefs such as the beautiful Poppée, Nero's favourite and famous for her baths in donkey milk and her beautiful masks. The city, dedicated to the goddess Cybele, the Great Mother, honours her with feasts, *Megalies*, where sacred dances take place in a deafening sound of cymbals and drums. Rams are sacrificed, or bulls in whose blood men are purified. *Taurobole*, sacrifice of the bull, and the *criobole*, sacrifice of the ram, are ceremonies of atonement, baptisms of blood. The one who offers the sacrifice is placed naked in a pit covered with a grid on which the victim is slaughtered. The warm blood flows on him washing away his faults.

We can associate with these rites a curious stone, roughly trimmed, sealed in one of the pillars of the church, near the choir. This head, called "desert lion", seems to have wooden horns, now missing, stuck in the stone by slits. Barely worked, it must be earlier than Roman times where they knew how to make masterpieces of sculpture. Perhaps it was used in Celtic rites, bloody too? The Celts did not have the inclination for stone or wood carving. It makes one think of those expiatory holidays of the *criobole*, developed like the *taurobole* from Mithran myth. This Eastern deity Mithra came from Persia, was the angel of light, mediator

between the men and the unique god Ahoura Mazda, represented by the sun, enemy of the night and demons. Baptism by blood led to purification and divine communion.

Another strange carved stone is reused in the facade of a house in the rue du Brec. It's a Celtic head with an enigmatic smile; in the village we call it the head Enri, without knowing if it relates to the name of the owner Henri or if these are the INRI letters on the cross ...

These "Anthropomorphic" heads, barely outlined, had a guardian role.

We can see such "Romanesque" heads in Saint-Auban, famous for its canyon of the Esteron. [Illustration]. These heads were sometimes placed at the entrance to cemeteries, they were used to chase demons. In the Middle Ages, they were sometimes used in chimneys to support the transverse beam. Placed on each side of hearth, one smiled, the other was stern. They symbolized the two aspects of life: the joy and sadness.

The Roman Empire begins to break up with the struggles for power in Rome: Julius Caesar is assassinated by Brutus, Tibère smothered by Caligula, himself killed by the Praetorians, Claudius is poisoned by Agrippina ... In Rome, to kill a tyrant is common and the emperors succeed one after the other.

It is then that Christianity appears. It dethrones the Ligurian, Celtic and Gallo-Roman gods and Romans who had great similarities and had amalgamated over the centuries, peacefully, like the successive populations. Venerated in Vence, Cybèle is dethroned by the Virgin Mary while Mars is replaced by the Archangel Saint Michael.

The new religion from the East is persecuted by many Roman emperors including Nero and Valerian, for several centuries. This persecution comes to an end with Emperor Constantine, head of the Eastern Roman Empire. By his baptism, he protects Christians and establishes Christianity in all of the West. The Roman Empire, too vast, marches towards its decline which will be total with the breaking waves of barbaric hordes at the end of 4th century. The imperial fall is accelerated by this new oriental religion which, in its philosophy of love and equality, transposes Zoroastrian and Mithraic cults by new ideas. At that time, the monk Honorat will create a set of small monasteries grouped around an established centre in the Lerins Islands, in the bay of Cannes. The great invasions will sweep Gaul.

## 5. The Dark Ages

### *The Visigoths*

While the Franks and Alamans devastate the north of Gaul, in the third century the Visigoths settled in Italy. In 410, their king Alaric sacked Rome; he is killed shortly after. To succeed him, Euric assassinates his brother Theodoric. He takes the lead of the Visigoth hordes and invades Provence in the fifth century.

The barbarians plunder the cities and burn everything on their way, massacre men and prelates without distinction. Nice is only ruins. Bishop Veran has his cathedral in Vence. Seeing the danger, he sends the population hiding on the *baous* and decides to meet Euric to beg him to save his flock.

The bishop then goes on foot, through hills and forests, accompanied by his choirboy and provided with a bundle in which he folded his vestments. Barbarian armies camp at the mouth of the Loup, where they meet.

Clad in his cloak embroidered with gold threads and wearing his brilliantly jewelled mitre, Véran humbly offers his life against that of the *Vençois*. With a sneer the cruel leader casts his sword near the bishop, assuring him that his quest would be heard if the weapon was flowering the next day. The holy man, filled with faith and hope, prays during the whole of night. The golden legend tells us that the next day Euric found his sword illuminated by the rising sun, serving as guardian for the bindweed which had grown in the night and dressed her with its foliage and brightly coloured flowers.

After this miracle and many others, Véran was recognized as holy while the Visigoth chief continued on his way to Spain. His son Alaric II will be defeated and killed by Clovis near Poitiers in 507.

Curiously, these barbarians are Christianized as early as the fourth century, but converted to Arianism, a doctrine condemned by the council of Nicaea in 325. For them, Jesus Christ is a perfect nature, similar to God but not God. It is in this place of confrontation that Charlemagne, en route to Lombardy, will later build the Church of Notre Dame which he endows generously: it will be called the Golden or Dorado. In the eleventh century, this church is in ruins. Monk Pons will erect the Monastery of Saint-Véran, near the mouth of the Loup, in memory of this meeting. Pons will give it in 1055 to the Lérins Abbey, where he himself will finish his days. (According to A. Venturini)

### *The Lombards*

Life resumes, cities come out from their ashes, the country seems pacified. But to the end of the sixth century the Lombard invasion breaks out in the region. Alboin, leader of the Lombards, coveted Provence for a long time. In 578, the Lombards pass the pass of Tende, raze Cimiez, burn Nice, Monaco and Olivette in the bay of Villefranche: Hospice, the holy man of the peninsula, is tortured. Vence is threatened, the panicked Vencois take the path to the *baous* and retire in caves and in constructions of stones that are the origin of the fortress Saint-Laurent-la-Bastide, while the Var bridge and the monastery of Saint-Veran are destroyed.

Vence is ruined, its ramparts razed. Deuterus, its bishop, rebuilds the city inspired by Lombard architecture.

Ostrogothic domination, led by the King of Ravenna, Theodoric, is a true liberation, a restoration of imperial authority, because Theodoric is acting on behalf of the emperor of the East, as of the time of the Romans. This peace will last thirty years, it will be a prosperous period of Byzantine inspiration. On the death of Theodoric, the Franks restore Provence to the Ostrogoth king Theodatus. But these Nordic aliens do not know Roman traditions rooted in our region. The Frankish period will be an era of thirty years of disorder as a result of the fratricidal struggles of the Merovingian dynasty.

While the Vençois take refuge on the baous, the Tourrettans flee in the mountain and settle in the old fortified plateau sites of Courmettes and Caire of which Tourraque is a good example. Dominating the plateau of Jas-Neuf, the Tourraque is a fortified pre-Roman camp, close to the Roman road leading from Vence to Coursegoules and Gréolières. Not far from there was discovered a Gallo-Roman necropolis. The view extends from Cap Martin to the Estérel. The remains of the walls of enclosure, at ground level, but of a thickness more than one meter, are cyclopean, they are made of a huge pile of stones without mortar. The name of Tourraque would come from the Latin "*turris aquae*", the water tower. Indeed, many springs come out of the clay soil in many places, large green grass fields cover the plateau. The enclosure circles the top of a hump dominated by the crest of the mountains. Inside, walls, hut foundations and a cistern attest to a dwelling. A wonderful refuge from which one could monitor the progress of barbarian invasions that burned everything in their way.

Peace returned, Provence is handed over in good condition thanks to the bishops and monks

who have preserved a refined culture, formerly brought by the Romans. They tackle the economic and social decadence. This is where we see the important role of the Lérins Monastery, true nursery of bishops of Provence: these are Veran in Vence, Valerian in Cimiez, Fauste and Maxime at Riez, Honorat and Hilaire at Arles.

These holy men will leave their name to villages that will settle around parish churches: Saint-Véran in the Alps, Saint-Maxime near the sea, Saint-Hilaire in Grasse ... Chapels are added to large estates, the "*villae*", churches are built in the villages. These are built near the ramparts, "*extra muros*". They are the first rural parishes in which the bishops are trying to install their authority.

In Tourrettes, the parish church is built on the site of a Romanesque church "outside the walls".

Towards the middle of the sixth century, the first monasteries founded by Lérins Abbey come out of the ground. Thus is born La Napoule and Cannes, Vallauris and Mougins, Saint Martin la-Pelote at Tourrettes.

Shortly after, in Africa, [sic] the prophet Muhammad is born who will proclaim the Holy War and will trigger a new devastating invasion, that of the Saracens.

### ***The Saracens***

In the 8th century, Muslims invade Spain and pass the Pyrenees. They are stopped at Poitiers by Charles Martel but turn to Provence, placed under guardianship of Mauronte, count of Avignon and Marseilles. He opens its territory to invaders from whom he wants to gain their services and support.

In Lérins, five hundred monks are massacred with their superior Porcarius. Antibes and Nice are razed again. The Vencois population flee again to the *Baous* and build the fortress of Saint-Laurent-la-Bastide. Repelled by the defenders of Vence, the Saracens fall back on the village of Tourrettes, which they are said to have occupied and fortified.

The Moors ravage the coast from Toulon to Nice, kill everyone that resists, ruin churches, monasteries and monuments. They settle along the coast, erect Saracen towers in the Estérel. They proceed by guerrillas and helping hands.

In the 9th century, they land at night in the Gulf of Grimaud and massacre the sleeping villagers. They settle in Fraxinet which will later become La Garde Freinet. They fortify the village and make raids on all of the coast as far as Genoa. People leave their houses to take refuge in the interior of the country. The Arabs are the masters of the place, they carry everywhere sword and fire, and take the people in slavery. They fortify the heights that they occupy to make them impregnable: so they build strongholds all the way along the Baous, in Gourdon, Gattières, Carros, Le Broc, Tourrettes and the castle of Gaudes.

The Saracen occupation weighs heavily on Provence. Guillaume Ier, count of Provence, appeals to the lords of the region to push the enemy out of Provençal territory. Many are the lords who answer to his call. All together storm the stronghold of Fraxinet [La Garde Freinet] where the Muslims are crushed in 972. Those who reside in the other fortresses flee. Provence is cleaned of Sarracens. Count Guillaume is called "the Liberator".

Tourrettes would be the last village freed from these invaders, in the region of Vence.

The count thanks the valiant lords by distributing to them domains that are in fief to their overlord. It is the birth of feudalism: the lords acquire the inheritance of their fiefs, their offices and their dignities received for "good and loyal services" but become attached to the count to whom they must pay tribute.

## 6 The High Middle Ages

### **Feudalism**

Since the 8th century, Europe has been divided by political struggles, threatened by barbarian invasions, infested by epidemics and undermined by famines. The monarchs fight each other for power and neglect the great works indispensable to the good of the country, such as buildings and the maintenance of roads, bridges, aqueducts. The lords tyrannize their subjects, this leading to misery. The Church helps the most poor as she can.

Roman society was based on the law, the rights of men; medieval society is organized around the possession of the earth. Charlemagne sends, in the different provinces, messengers, the "*missi dominici*", in charge of making the central authority prevail. Those men swear allegiance to the emperor and are entrusted the duties of governor over justice, taxes and defence.

The most powerful lord parcels his lands and entrusts them to men who must give *ost* service, temporary service in the seigniorial army. The suzerain receives the tribute of these men who are linked to him by an oath until their death. These vassals themselves have sub vassals or "Vavassers" who may have their own vassals or "vasselets" who swear allegiance to them in their turn.

The Lord has only a part of the fief which constitutes his domain, the rest is distributed among the inhabitants of the village. he does justice, raises taxes and recruits men for the defence of the territory. In case of war, he must support his suzerain with its own military forces and defend the serfs. In each area he has part of its land through the system of chores, work required some days of the week. The other part of the domain is fragmented into tenures, small farms

entrusted to the peasants. In addition serfs must provide part of their harvest: it's an economy of exploitation. The more humble people work, the more they produce and the more they give to the Lord. They have only the bare necessities left. In exchange, the Lord protects them in time war or invasion. But more the Lord receives, the more he spends in feasts, in rare objects, in land or to make war.

At the same time agriculture is developing: ploughing is improved thanks to iron ploughshares, the three-year rotation allows the earth to rest by rotating crops, water mills are built little by little. It's the beginning of the horseshoe that protects the hooves, and the stirrup that stabilizes the riders.

### **The Feudal Society**

*"The reason for sheep is to provide milk and wool; that of the oxen is to work the Earth ; that of dogs, to defend sheep and oxen from wolves. If each species of these animals do their job, God protects them ... "*

This statement by Eadmer of Canterbury of the 11th century urges us to conclude: so is it of each man. Clerics and monks are made to pray for others, the peasants to work the land and feed others, the warriors to defend everyone.

In feudal society, everyone is bound to the person closest to him in the hierarchy: the serf to the local vassal, this one to his lord and so on until the king.

The knight is a vassal who engages to assist his lord by the service of *ost*. He has a healthy horse, weapons he must provide, and soldiers to do the other work. He is often from families of property owners or small lords. Little by little, chivalry gets organized in an institution with its rites and its own ideal. The Church is trying to give it a noble purpose



to transform the warlike energies and the spirit of adventure for the benefit of the defence of the good and of the law for the glory of God.

The knight is trained from childhood. Judged dignified and of noble lineage, he enters the service of a lord to serve him as a page. He is not a little servant to whom are reserved the humble tasks. He serves the Lord at the table, helps him to dress and arm. He learns how to handle weapons, the customs and duties of the knight; he also learns to ride. Towards the age of fifteen, he becomes a squire: he wears the shield and the helmet of his lord during the steps, follows him to battle to protect him. This custom will last several centuries and recalls Philippe telling John the Good at the Battle of Poitiers: "Father, guard your right, Father, guard your left"...

Later, if he is proven, he is armed as knight during a solemn ceremony. After a night spent in prayer, he listens on his knees to the lord spelling out the duties of the knight, then the former gives him a blow from the flat of the sword on the shoulder, his spurs of gold and the girdle for his sword. The young man became a knight.

### ***Around 1000 AD***

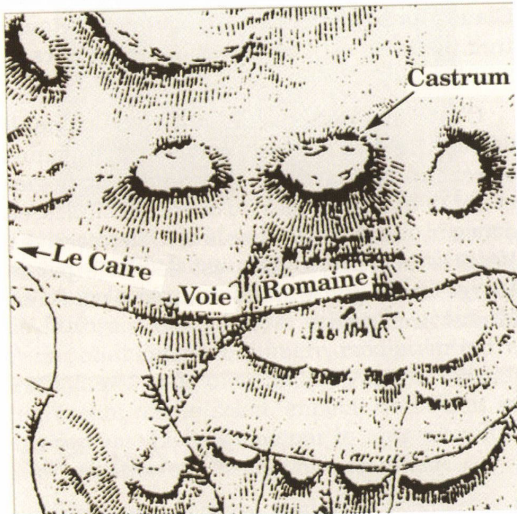
After the departure of the Saracens and three centuries of anarchy, Provence finds peace from the end of the 10th century to the beginning of the 11th century. The region is devastated, the cities demolished ...

Guillaume, count of Provence, devotes himself to raising the ruins and to help the local lords and bishops. He reorganizes all public administration, delimits several counties by appointing at their head the valiant lords who fought alongside him. All the archives were burned by the Saracens. He has the cadastre restored defining the limits of seigniorial, ecclesiastical and private properties .

The churches and abbeys are rebuilt. Monks, guardians of sacred letters and laymen, are busy reviving a religion more fervent, a morality more pure and a greater intellectual knowledge. Monasteries are created or restored. St. Abbey Victor de Marseille develops while receiving donations from all over Provence. The city of Vence donates to the Notre-Dame priory Crottons who will become Notre Dame des Fleurs, in the district of Malvan. The abbeys of Lérins and Saint-Pons of Nice give back to the Church an ideal of peace by prohibiting violence against the disarmed poor and holy places. The truce of God forbids any act of war from Wednesday evening to Monday morning. Churches try to find a renowned patron saint to acquire more lustre and attract more diocesan favours. That of Tourrettes chooses Saint Gregory the Great, Pope in the sixth century and great reformer of the Church. The taste for relics develops with that of pilgrimages. That's when the pope Urban II proclaims the first crusade, in 1095, for the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

Many will be the lords who will leave to fight against the Infidels, as a certain revenge taken on the Saracens. In two centuries, there will be eight crusades that will be conducted with varying degrees of success by the kings of France: Louis VII, Philip Auguste, Louis VIII, and Louis IX who will lose his life and become a saint.

## The Appearance of “Castra”.



In Provence and throughout the Midi of the France, around the year 1000, the population is spread out. The lords reign supreme over their land. To fight against general insecurity, they organize a process of *incastellamento* which groups houses on a perched and fortified site. This *enchâtement* allows them to assure their authority over men. The *castrum* is both a seignorial fortress and fortified village built around the fort. The Lord gathers the population to protect it better. The *gastes* are land which are fallow or returned to the state wild, the *dépens* are well-defined areas where the rights of use are regulated. In the day, peasants go to the *campagnes* – the common lands – for agricultural or pastoral work. In the evening, they regain the protection of high walls, closed at night by a heavy door. The abandoned villages are colonized by families from the nearby Liguria. From this time, the territory of Tourrettes is cited in documents, its limits are located between the valley of Claret to the east and the Loup in the west. A first castle exists as early as the twelfth century. In the country of Vence, the enumeration “*castra*”, from 1235 to 1244, shows that the numerous villages that are spread out over the long baous are already born: these are Gateriis for Gattières, Sancti Johannis for Saint-Jeannet, Carocio for Carros, Oliva for L’Olive du Broc, Sancti Laurencii for Saint-Laurent-

la-Bastide de Vence, Torretis for Tourrettes, Corma for Courmes, Cormeta for Courmettes ...

## Life in the Middle Ages

While the nobles take care of the security and administration, the people take care of earth and crafts, the clergy are dedicated to prayer and the education of children. Each village has its gardens, its barns, its reserves. Cities connect villages with each other neighbours two leagues round, about eight kilometers. Proximity is defined by the distance travelled back and forth between the sunrise and sunset. Every *terroir* has his talk, his festivals, his traditions. Roads are used by all kinds of people: criminals or fugitives, thieves, vagrants, itinerant merchants, royal officials or lordly, day laborers, religious or pilgrims ... These travellers spread the news. The lords are in charge of road safety, they have to compensate the victims of robbers on their territory.

In Tourrettes, the gate of the tower of the old castle, the current town hall, is 9 meters above ground. This semi-circular opening is perched up high for security. Access was by a ladder or a retractable staircase, a kind of lifting staircase. The rectangular dungeon was redesigned several times thereafter. A feudal castle, in the 10th century, constituted a dungeon around which are ordered buildings serving as reserves and stables, surrounded by stone and wood fortifications. In the dungeon, a large room is enclosed with small windows, obscured in winter by draperies or scrolls stretched on a frame of wood. The rooms are small and do not serve only to sleep. Little furniture, some tables, stools, chests and benches ...

Hunting is the great distraction of lords when they are not at war. They roam all day the *maquis*, fields and forests. The “ladies” have maids who do the

domestic chores, prepare the meals; they themselves spin and weave wool and linen.

Around the castle, the peasants are dispersed in the countryside. They have no right to hunt or to bear arms, they poach at the risk of being punished. They work in the fields, it is on them that rests the economic life of the fief. These serfs are subject to chores and pay taxes annual paid to the lord.

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In the village, houses are huddled behind a ditch, wall or palisade. The streets are narrow, littered with daily rubbish in which search dogs and swine. For the holidays, they are cleaned, and covered with grass and flowers while the facades are adorned with decorated sheets or tapestries.

The houses are high. At the bottom, a stable, where are kept horses, mules, poultry, rabbits or pigs, a cellar or shop. On the first floor above, the living room serves as kitchen and dining room. On the floor above, a dormitory or small bedrooms. Windows are closed with oiled paper or greased canvas, the full shutters are fitted on the exterior on the ground floor, but interior upstairs. The kitchen has a sink drain towards the street, one takes the water from the fountain. Large fireplaces with a stone bench near the hearth warm the rooms. Each house has a tub for laundry and the bath, jars for oil reserves and grains, barrels for wine, a ventilated charnel house for bacon and general stores.

In the streets, the smells of the stables mingle with those of cabbage and bacon soup or the aroma of spiced meat with garlic and the mustard. The meat diet causes skin diseases to the people of that time, that the fasting of Lent helps to heal ...

## *The Medieval Garden and the virtue of plants*

(This chapter is strongly inspired by the work of Michel Botineau Belin " Les Plantes du jardin médiéval» op. cité)

Each village is isolated by their difficulty of access, the poor condition of the roads and their distances which separate them from the city. Hence the need to live in autonomy. Each community has its own gardens, close to homes. In this tormented ground region, plots of land cascade the slope thanks to the low walls supporting them; they are real gardens hanging on the edge of the ravines.

In Tourrettes, vegetable gardens extend along the royal road, at the entrance to the village, in the district of Peyrière, later named the Bourgade. These narrow gardens are shared between several families and are fed by a channel system capturing the water from the ravine close to the Cassan.

On the other side of the village, at sunset, the neighborhood of Horts has wider and less steep land where the culture is easier.

Meat is expensive, the villager feeds on rye, barley or spelt bread dipped in a broth of potted herbs; they sometimes add a handful of dried vegetables. In the medieval garden or housewife, one cultivate herbs, roots and vegetables, not to mention the herbs and condiments that perfume the hotpot.

Cabbages, chard, *cardoons* and salads enter not only into the composition of the potherbe but hold properties that allow curing of the daily worries. The cabbage, staple food, called " Christian vegetable " by the Arabs, helps dispel drunkenness. Its juice mixed with warm white wine relieves ear pain and deafness. The blette, [Swiss chard] known since prehistoric times, whose flavour is bland, is

eaten seasoned with "oil, vinegar and brine". The goosefoot, wild spinach with crow's feet, to "soften the belly and kill the worms".

The sorrel of sour flavour "excites the appetite". White or black mustard is already known since prehistory; its leaves go into the composition of the soups. The powdered plant is used for poultices which, when applied to the shoulder, "wakes up the patient in apoplexy and paralysis ". Its seeds "break the kidney stone, relieves *quarte* fever and heals the hypochondriac melancholy ". Salads have also their values: lettuce is known since Antiquity, it has calming properties and slightly narcotic, useful in case of cough. Chicory of the paths is "aperitif, detergent, clean for obstructions and for to purify the blood". Watercress, called "twisted nose " has a tangy flavour that goes up the nose like mustard. To all these herbs, we must add the little burnet or "pipinella" which mixes its peppery taste with the salad ; it heals wounds and is besides antihemorrhagic. The purple *mauve*, "clean to soften, " is useful for headaches, drowsiness and kidney diseases. As for the borage, it "improves the blood and releases the belly ". Its flower is cordial and sudorific.

The root plants that go into daily diet also have their therapeutic properties. Cabbage and turnip, at the root "windy", are cooked in the water separately, before being mixed in herbal broth, they are exciting and aphrodisiacs. Horseradish and radish with "roots" "are eaten with meat to facilitate digestion. Boiled, they heal chronic cough. The carrot is diuretic, aphrodisiac and "gladdens the heart". The leek heals burns, haemorrhoids, bites insects and snake bites. Onion, shallot and garlic allow for conservation of dishes into which they are added. As for burdock or grass with tingling, with heads "Catchy", its cooked fleshy roots have a taste

of "artichaud". The plant is used against scrofula and scrofula, ganglia neck, against leprosy and scabies.

The seeds contained in the fruits of legumes or those fruits themselves are consumed in soups, broths, or the broths of cereals. The "mongette" or fayot de Charlemagne is eaten cooked, grains or pod like green beans, in salad with brine and vinegar, it facilitates digestion. Chickpea food of the poor, strengthens. The bean keeps very well, it neutralizes the smell of garlic in the mouth. Its decoction pod is useful against "the gravel, stone, the nephritic ". As for the lentil that will make the reputation of Tournettes, its name comes from lens which means sweet in Latin. In the past, it was thought that those who lived on lentils had a softer mood and were more temperate than others. Maybe the Tournetans ate lentils to calm their strong personality? ... The lentils is known since prehistoric times, its decoction "loosens the belly "; in enema it excites sweat.

Spices and condiments are used as culinary seasoning but also as pharmaceutical drugs. The "Four major hot seeds" are the cumin, caraway, coriander and fennel. St. Hildegard, Benedictine Teutonic abbess of the twelfth century, advocates them against seasickness and heartaches. Pigeons are attracted in the dovecotes by cumin seeds. Coriander "chases the winds" and facilitates the digestion. The fennel by its root "purifies the blood ", its leaves are used against evil eyes, its fruits are good for the mouth. Dill is useful in nosebleeds, chest diseases, pain of the and, according to Hildegard, "calm the ardour and the pleasures of the flesh". All these plants are appetizers, digestive and carminatives. The parsley has the particularity of breaking the glass that contains it, by its salt. In addition, it "chases winds, attenuates the stone of the kidney and bladder and softens haemorrhoids. " The *ache*, appetizer and carminative, facilitates breathing; it will be the origin of celery root and celery branch in

the 17th century. Lovage with the taste of celery heals the wounds; Hildegard proposes it against the cough, abdominal pain, dropsy and diseases of the glands. Chives and scallions are used in civets; rosemary or "Dew of the sea", fortifies the brain, relieves epilepsy. Hyssop, "sweet-smelling grass", is recommended against hoarseness, sore head and "leprosy due to debauchery" ...

*Cucurbitaceae* have a special status: they are climbing plants with flowers. Cucumber, melon and calabash are known from Upper Egypt. Bitter cabbage and donkey cucumber whose fruits, shaped like hairy pickles, stand out from the peduncle with popping sound and spreading pulp and seeds around; they are violent purgatives and used against gout. It is the same for bryone or "couleuvrée", mythical plant that must be picked before sunrise of the day, with particular incantations. "Divine Plant", "Queen of the Gods", or "Vine of the Devil", it is highly purgative.

Further away from the village are the terraces with cereals. Terraces are built on hillsides using low walls in dry stones. The stones are assembled without mortar or binder, each is judged by the eye, presented, rectified, calibrated at best, without hole and without play, respecting the formation of sedimentary rocks. These stones are picked up in the fields during stone clearance.

Land, often far from any point of water, is reserved for growing cereals which are used to make bread or porridge, basic dishes of the population.

Spelt is the oldest wheat, it has a tough envelope that requires grinding and can only be eaten in boiled food. The grain, wheat with tight ears, is rid of its lashings by threshing. It is used to make bread, as well as barley and rye. Oats has served the

Carolingians to make bread until the 13th century; dethroned by wheat, it is then for animals.

The vine also plays an important role in the diet. According to the Arabs, wine and bread are the "food of Christians". Charlemagne is spreading his culture in the monasteries because wine is "the best regenerator of vital spirits and all bodily faculties; it purges the brain, excites the intellect, rejoices the heart, vivifies the spirits, clears the blood, expels from the body every impurity ". Its excess leads to "horrible diseases: apoplexy, paralysis, epilepsy, lethargy, madness, deafness, blindness ... sudden death ". He also includes many medicinal preparations: wine absinthe, horehound.

Other plants are grown for their practical utility. These are the textile plants, dyes and other utilities necessary for daily work.

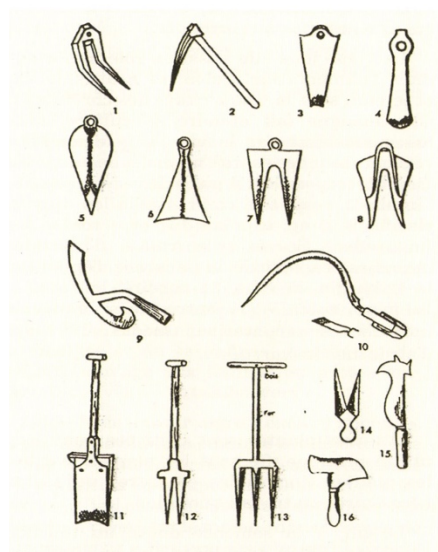
Flax, with the seed sweet to the touch, gives fibers with which one weaves a very fine canvas. Its seeds provide a drying oil for industrial use. Seed itself contains a mucilage allowing to fight against constipation.

Hemp grows in waters stagnant, hemp or canebiere; its solid fibers make it possible to manufacture ropes and weave solid canvases into which are cut poor people's clothes. Its seeds or *chenevis* are toxic for the man but relieve burns, tinnitus and kill worms. However, they are used to feed little birds.

Fuller's Toad, with its heads "Crochues", used to card wool. The little water reservoirs at the axils of his leaves are called "cabaret of birds".

Dyestuffs are important to dye textiles. Etching allows to fix the dye to make it indelible.

Gaude is a reseda; the dry plant allows to obtain a very solid yellow dye.



The broom of the dyers has some yellow pigments which, with copper sulphate give a green colour that was used in the Bayeux tapestry. By its dried root, the southern orcanette provides a red tincture that was already entering the beautiful lipsticks of antiquity. The madder, whose root gives a very bright "Turkish red", will later serve to tint the pants of the French infantry in the nineteenth century; the Gauls mixed it with pastel juice to get purple. Isatis of the Greeks, the pastel provides the blue colour. The *saponaire* or "soap herb" is used to degrease wool from sheep treated with wood ash. Its leaves foam and clean on contact with water.

Each village has its way from the Orchards, where fruit trees grow, places particularly well exposed, safe from prevailing winds and early frosts, no far from a damp spring or valley. In the Middle Ages, fruits are not very popular because they are often bitter and acidic. They are more used for medicinal purposes.

Apple leaves are effective against diseases of the liver, spleen, the stomach and bowel. Those of the peach are against epilepsy and worms; its bark serves against bad breath and erysipelas; its stone against

headache. As with pears, raw peaches are considered poisons, you have to cook them with wine to eat them ... and then they become antidotes! The astringents fruits of the mountain ash, loquat and quince are mainly antidiarrheals; they are eaten only overripe. In XII " century, apothecaries prepare pasta of quince with a thin puree of pulp cooked in honey with spices.

Walnut in the cool shade is generous for its benefits: its bark is vermifuge, its leaves cure gout, leprosy, and fight against the tapeworm; its almond is useful against poisoning, liver abscess, skin diseases. In addition, the nut by its brain shape would be good for the mind! As for the laurel, symbol of glory, of victory, dedicated to Apollo, it is a panacea of the Middle Ages : used against migraines, gout, fever, asthma, obstructions of the spleen or of the liver, it would give the gift of double vision and protection from lightning ... do not forget the fig tree, (indispensable to any garden in this Mediterranean country, because its fruit, if it is "worth only a handful of figs" , is the base of peasant food), nor the lime tree with refreshing shade, calming flowers and with wood that is not attacked by the *vrillettes*, used for manufacturing of everyday objects and sculptures.

In the scrubland, on uncultivated land, grow wild shrubs whose fruits are collected for jams: these are the hawthorn, whose flower is active against gout, hardwood dogwood which makes tool handles, barberry whose fermented berries come into the composition of wines.

One area is reserved for healers and to witches: it's the magic plants which must be picked at night, "in solitude, silence, in secret". The presence or not of the moon is of great importance, according to the species. Ascending moon, full moon, moon descending or new moon are acting on the

properties of the plant, depending on what you want to increase or decrease the effects. Aconite or "Jupiter helmet" with blue flowers, aconite Wolfsbane serving as bait to kill wolves and foxes, and hemlock are known toxins since antiquity. The poppy whose capsules are narcotic and a sleeping drug, was used by the Gallic nurses in the porridges to put the children to sleep!

The evil plants are used already by the witches, "unique doctors of the people for a thousand years," wrote Michelet. The use of these plants affects the conscious state of these "ladies" by giving them "supernatural" powers that allow them to prophesy, to cast spells and even to move to remote locations to exercise their evil power. Decoctions applied behind or between the thighs would provoke feelings of levitation by means of brooms to fly to the night meetings of the Sabbath ... according to the popular belief.

Verbena or "sorcerer's herb" is vulnerable, deterrent, astringent and consolidating. It is used against jaundice, sore throat, ulcers, sick kidneys and bladder, fevers ... The mandrake, with forked root in the shape of a human body, is particularly magical: you must not harvest it with your bare hands. Yet its root is narcotic, stupefying, resolving and refreshing.

The belladonna also enters many witches' potions. its name of "beautiful lady" comes from the fact that the Roman coquettes put a few drops of sap in their eyes to get "a dreamy look". In Dionysiac orgies, juice from this plant was added to wine. The *jusquame* or "pig bean" is the black grass of the witch garden, by the colour of the centre of its flowers and their veins.

It goes into the composition of magical drinks because it has a reputation for generating madness. It gives the impression of being suspended in the air without touching the

ground. She is used by witches to give hallucinations and drunkenness. Curiously, the user does not remember anything. It will serve as anesthetic for surgery of the 15th century.

There are still many simple plants used for health in the Middle Ages. Those are dewormers or "anti-smoking" plants, purges in common use to find the balance between the "four moods" according to the Hippocrates theory, the herbs against fevers like a *queen-of-the-meadow* from which one extracts the constituent of aspirin, expectorant herbs like the "singing grass" which "excites spittle".

Plants vulnerable to astringent virtues stop haemorrhages and are healing, with the strawberry of the woods with the smell "pleasant and cheerful" or agrimony still called "Sainte Madeleine herb" with its fruits quills, without forgetting St. John's Wort or "Devil hunting", harvested at St. John's. The podagraire or "foot of goat" by the form of its leaf is the "gouty herb" and the comfrey or "carpenters' grass", heals festering cuts and wounds. Until the bistort or "serpentine", at the root two twisted like a snake, which stops "Vomiting, belly cramps and haemorrhages" and is used against venoms.

There are also women's plants, useful to midwives, including mugwort or "grass of St. John" which is the great remedy of the time, because "it excites the month to women, helps with childbirth and get the baby out". It cleans and fortifies the matrix. It breaks the vapours. We use it internally and externally". The agrimony and its leaf in wolf's paw, the sabine and the street are also used "to maintain health". The latter, a special panacea for Saint Hildegard, is a magic plant to harvest according to a very precise rite after incantations, before sunrise, grabbing the plant between the thumb and the little finger of the right hand. As for the tamier or "herb battered women", it



is a black vine with Scarlet fruits, that we scratch on wounds and bruises, tumors and bruises.

The medieval garden is completed with the flowers that are not only beautiful but also useful for health: the rose purges, the iris relieves bladder pain, the lily is resolute and the peony is used against epilepsy. Blueberries heal eyes, violet of "sweet and pleasant smell and pleasant to the view" has emollient and resolving leaves, pectoral and cordial flowers, seeds and a purgative rhizome.

The medieval garden is a real pharmacopoeia, open book of singles for to treat daily. Nature in his wisdom provided for the plants necessary for the health of poor as rich. She is a great medicine for who knows how to use it ...

The healer knows all these plants and uses them regularly. In addition he has a gift which consists of a great intuition and a instinctive knowledge of the human body. By dint of feeling, he knows the bones, the joints, muscles and nerves, he knows the glands and their operation, the necessary actions to calm, save, straighten, massage. In addition, he has the gift of "raising the fire" with prayers and impositions of hands. The important thing is to believe it, because ointments and remedies do not heal not all. The donation must be supported by a vibrant faith, through daily prayer. This gift is given for free, so it must be issued free of charge. The healer is only one intermediate, his hands are the hands of heaven.

The gift of healing and treating burns will be used a long time, until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. My young son had the opportunity to benefit from it after a strong sunburn. The healer who is often a healer because this gift is usually given to women, operates after sunset. After a moment's rest, the woman place a plate filled with water on the head of the sick. A reversed glass is placed in the centre of the plate.

Prayers and incantations do the rest, the water rises in the glass and for who does not have faith ... brings with it the fire of fever. That's all simple and amazing.

## 7. The medieval age

### ***The Advent of the Templars***

*"Because of your life you only see the bark that is outside ... but you do not know the strong commandments that are in it. (The Rule of the Temple)*

By the 4th century, Jerusalem had become a pilgrimage site. The construction of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, above the tomb of Christ by the Byzantine Emperor Constantine, had aroused the fervour of Christians. Saint Jerome had founded a monastery for men and another for women not far away.

In the 7th century, Muhammad preached Islam and declared the holy war. Jerusalem is in the hands of the Muslim empire.

In the 11th century, Pope Urban II preaches the first crusade to defend the holy places of Christianity. Frankish knights decide to dedicate their lives to the cause of pilgrims in the Holy Land. They are called "Poor Knights of Christ". They're becoming "the Knights of the Temple", "the Knights Templar", when Baldwin II, King of Jerusalem, gives them a room for residence on the esplanade of the ancient temple of Solomon. These are monk soldiers charged with the service and of the pilgrims' defence. The Templar embodies the holy warrior.

Their rule is based on that of saint Augustine. Saint Bernard of Clairvaux encourages them. According to him: *"The Templars live without having nothing of their own, not even their will. Simply dressed and covered with dust, they have their faces burnt by the heat of the sun, with a proud and severe look; as they approach the battle, they arm themselves with faith inside and iron outside; their weapons are their unique adornment; they use it with courage*

*in the greatest of perils, without fearing the number nor the strength of the barbarians: all their confidence is in the God of armies. "*

These knight monks are only soldiers as part of their protection mission. They are mostly monks doomed to poverty, the chastity, obedience and prayer. The discipline is hard, austere life. The nobles are clothed in a white dress, their white coat wears the vermillion cross granted by Pope Eugene III. Married brothers, squires and sergeants have the black coat. A hierarchy is installed: the knights fight on horseback, sergeants fight on foot and ensure the stewardship, the chaplains pray and give the sacraments. It is often the lords who constitute the knights of the Temple because arming is expensive.

At the same time in Europe many *commanderies* that govern farms develop. Three or four Templars suffice to form a commanderie. These monks, with the help of villagers, give value to the land received, ensure harvests and send grain and cattle to the east necessary to their Order. Transport of soldiers to Jerusalem demands a lot of money. In France, the commanderies raise funds in these "houses" to charter boats.

In France, they serve as places of recruitment and retirement. The wounded, the invalid come back to these houses for end their lives in a monastic atmosphere. There are four commanderies in Eastern Provence : in 1135 is founded the House of the Temple of Nice with the Commander Arnaud at its head. Then the Templars settle down in St. Pons de Nice and in the city itself. Soon they pass the Var and create commanderies in Grasse in 1201, Biot in 1209 and in Rigaud. They have establishments in the main cities, enjoy commercial privileges and manage many rural properties.

In Grasse, the house of the Temple possesses some land near the city and many *censives* – small farms – in the parish. But this house is more of an administrative centre than an operating centre.

From 1213, the Grasse house obtained the authorization to build a church dedicated to Saint Jacques, and a cemetery, reporting income from burials. At the fall of the Temple, this church will pass with all the goods of the Temple to Hospitalier hands before being given to the Capuchins who will demolish it in 1761. On its site will be erected a factory for aromatic products. (According to Durbec)

The house of Biot is very important, it includes a town, a castrum, a domain, hundred horses, sheep and cattle. In 1209, the Comte de Provence gives it all the rights of the seigneurie. The Temple buys tenures thus constituting an area of 1200 to 1500 hectares.

As for Rigaud, the commandery seems to be "a refuge-commanderie with thick walls forming an enclosure and capped with a fort. ". (According to Durbec).

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Around these main houses, the Temple has many properties purchased or received as a gift: "house annexes", bastides, barns and all kinds of land, more or less cultivable, from which it derives the best benefit. The network of Temple, well organized, spreads over Provence a strong and well-knotted net to collect countless goods over two hundred municipalities. So five communes depend on the house of Grasse, fifteen on that of Biot and twenty-five on Rigaud.

The staff of these houses is varied and complete:  
- a lieutenant of the Commander who seconds him and replaces him occasionally.

- a Brother chaplain is part of the Order or is simply invested.
- a steward and a chambermaid take care of stewardship, staff, maintenance and repairs.
- a squire accompanies the Commander in his travels.
- serving Brothers are in charge of the exploitation of the domain in each locality.
- donors sometimes live among them, because they gave all or part of their property to the Order. In Biot, women and children form part of these houses. Some residents are there permanently, others stay there more or less long. They are invested by the Commander, on his knees, hands joined, during an official reception, and they make an oath to observe the rule of the Temple.
- sedentary people: cooks, suppliers, millers, *tourniers*, clerks, herdsmen ... a whole set of staff to live in autonomy, according to the importance of the property.

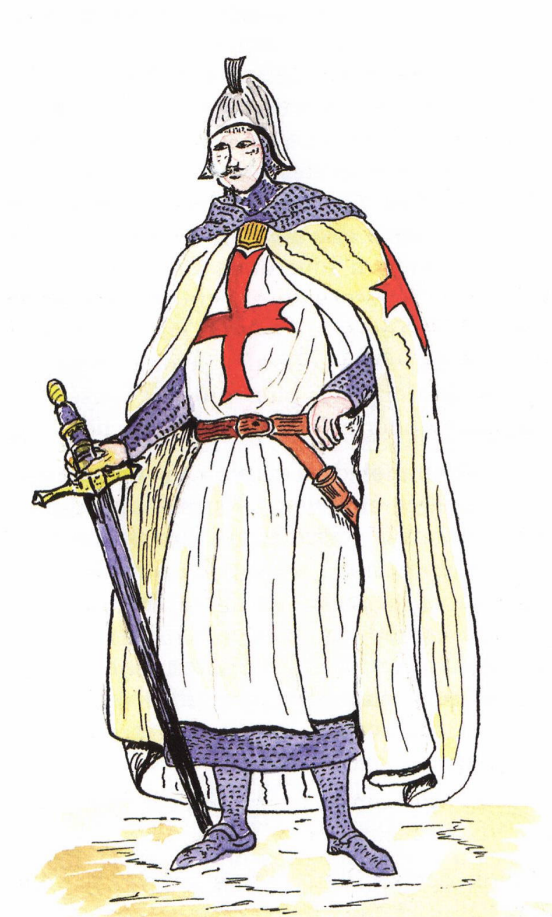
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In the bishopric of Vence, the Temple has 88 "Services" including 40 in and around the city: the Malbosquet, the Claus, the Cross, the Cayrons ...; 21 services at Broc and "Lausa", 6 in Villeneuve and 3 at Loubet, 6 at Tourrettes, 4 at Saint-Paul, the Gaude and Trigans, 4 at Coursegoules and at St. Michel, 2 in Bézaudun ... Among the feudal fees of Tourrettes, four tenants enjoy respectively 1/2, 1/4 and 1/8 of *albergue* or right of lodging. In addition, the village is subject to nine feudal fees and land taxes. The Commanderies of Nice, Grasse and Biot are managed by a single Commander and just two or three Brothers.

The adjoining houses are "members" of these commanderies, but they are never administered by a particular Commander. They settle on the hillsides of Vence, in Broc, La Gaude, Saint Martin de Vence, at Saint Martin de la Pelote in Tourrettes,

in Coursegoules, Saint Paul and Villeneuve. They depend on the commandery of Biot.

They occupy former Roman posts perhaps recovered at the time of the various invasions, or former abandoned villages, and communicate by means of fire towers, a kind of semaphores before its time.



For a patron saint, the Templars choose Saint Martin, the soldier with the open coat, symbol of altruism and generosity, which succeeds the ancient Mars revered at Vence. Their houses have vaulted chapels, a single narrow nave, its head sometimes plain, sometimes Romanesque, in *cul-de-four*, [unknown term] which are similar to the Cistercian chapels: order and simplicity. Around these holy places extend their cemeteries. In Saint-Martin-de-la-Pelote, the ruins of the chapel trace out a nave, a rounded choir and a vast portal facing the setting sun. The walls still show traces of loophole windows.

The Temple has its own *chapelains* - chaplains - who do not depend on ecclesiastical authority. Moreover they are exempt from the tithes that are imposed on the religious folk. Once a year, a collection is made in the churches for him. Many donations and deposits are made by the lords leaving for the crusade. The houses of the Temple then exchange the money against letters of credit, the origin of bank cheques. The Temple has the reputation of being rich and arouses much jealousy.

The monk soldiers are very active in the villages; they take care of the defence against possible invaders and wandering bands of robbers. They treat the sick, prior to the organisation of any social system. In addition, they provide work for young farmers who can become serving Brothers.

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The "houses" all belong to the Grand Master of the Temple in Provence and to him alone, from Aix to Nice:

*"Frater Rostagnus from Comps, preceptor major domorum milicie Templi in Provincia, a civitate Aquensi Usque ad Niciam "*

(3 January 1247)

The Commander or Preceptor aims to make frequent changes, in order to avoid any routine, accommodations or personal interests which might be detrimental to the general interests of the Order.

The life of the Preceptors, leaders of these houses, looks like that of the lords; their role is to acquire or exchange goods, to legally defend their possessions, to guard their value, to collect services of all kinds ... The tenants of ancillary houses are called "inferior" when they depend on the Order and owe services. "Free" tenants can be lords, knights, notaries or even prelates. During the inventory of goods inherited from the Temple by the Hospitallers, 1338, the officers of the bailiwick of Vence declare that there are no Templars within the

limit of their constituency. Indeed, if there are no such faithful, the possessions of the Temple are held by "men of the Temple", as are called those who work for the Order. The lands are worked by labourers.

The tenants are tied to the Temple by several kinds of contracts. The most common is the lease of *cens* and "perpetual" services which the tenant must pay either in money or in kind. In order not to take risk, the Commander claims the rental in advance. In the Vence region the costs vary. The total return is three *livres* divided as follows: one *livre* four *sous* in Vence, a *livre* ten *deniers* in Broc, four *sous* ten *deniers* in Tournettes. Only La Gaude provides benefits in kind, i.e three *setiers* and three *enimes* of oats. In contrast, Biot produces 1168 *setiers* (of oats, meslin and wheat), fourteen times more than the whole commandery. This shows its wealth.

These "men of the Temple" live in poverty and simplicity, their only weapons are their agricultural tools that allow them to yield the best harvest. All in all, they sometimes have a supervisory role; they have spies placed on the towers, they organize round ups and raise fines against offenders. They can even do "policing of the roads" with a *setier* of wheat by plough. (According to Papon - History from Provence II p. 271).

Their diet is frugal, made from beans, chickpeas, lentils accompanied with hazelnuts, figs and almonds. Wine, oil and cheeses embellish the ordinary meal.

On the coast, the houses of Biot and Nice collect the products produced in the hinterland. These products are then shipped by *cabotage* to the ports of Marseille, Toulon or Nice where they are loaded on ships of the Temple or others in departure to the Orient. Toulon has moreover granted important

franchises to the Order for the transport of foodstuffs, flocks and even pilgrims and crusaders.

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But the many crusades will not suffice to maintain the kingdom of Jerusalem that collapses with the fall of Saint-Jean-d'Acre in 1291. The Templars return to the West where they are envied and exterminated by Philippe le Bel, who has long coveted their wealth.

October 10, 1307, warrants for arrest of Templars reach the officers of the Royal Courts of Grasse, Nice and Puget-Theniers, as follows: "*Go immediately in the Temple houses of your viguerie (or Bailiwick), pick up members from the Order you find there, enter all the property dependent on these houses and entrust management, provisionally, to trusted persons*". (Bouche - History of Provence II p. 331). This order from the Count of Provence actually comes from higher than him and despite his own wishes. A proclamation in Provençal language is made in all the communes of the diocese of Vence, in order to regroup all the *censitaires* scattered in their bailiwick. They gather in front of the chatelain of Villeneuve, Guillaume Galard.

*"... Mandamens es de nostre senhor lo Rei de Jehrusalem et Sesilia et de son bayle que tota persona que ren tenga o aya del Temple, sia movel o non movel, sian bestias, deniers, blat o autras causas, quai que sian, per calgue manier que sia ..., o venga manifestat a la corte de nostre senhor lo Rey, a Vila Nova, aldich bayle, vo a son notari, çu pena ... de cent march d'argent fin.... "*

*The King of Jerusalem and Sicily makes it known that anyone connected with the Temple in any manner whatsoever must make himself known at the Court of the King, at Villeneuve (Loubet), on pain of a fine of one hundred marks of fine silver ...*

Twenty-one Templars are arrested in the houses of Grasse, Nice and Biot. Seventeen are locked up in Meyrargues, two in Biot and two from Grasse at Pertuis. Many are tortured and sentenced to death. These pious men living in poverty are accused of all vices: heresy, idolatry, intemperance, pride, greed and above all ... uselessness.

The fault of the Order is to annoy many people: the Prelates by threatening their temporal ecclesiastical benefits, the big landowners by giving them competition in land purchases, the Count's officers who cannot apprehend without being obstructed, the tenants who suffer from their obsolete rights ...

In 1312, at the Council of Vienna, the pope Clement V pronounces the sentence of the Knights Templar and decides to give the possessions of the Templars to the Hospitaliers of Saint John of Jerusalem. The 1338 survey of Hospitalier property proves that their numerous possessions derive from the Templars. However, we do not find their possessions in the territory of Tourrettes, which seem to have been entrusted to the *seigneur* of Vence.

The seal of the Order presents two knights riding together on a horse. It symbolizes the poverty of the Order, but also a higher level, both the double nature of the Order: the exoteric warlike nature and the esoteric monastic nature. Both characters and the horse represent in addition the tripartition of Being into Spiritus (the spirit), Animus (the soul) and Corpus (the body). The number three, the *Tetraktis* of Pythagoras, often appears in the life of the Order: give alms three times per week, accept three attacks before responding ... This stone, excavated by a Tourrettan friend Charly Droeven around 1990, was found in Saint-Martin-de-la-Pelote.

[Illustration]

The Crusades bring to the West fruit trees, dyes and new crops, then, later, apricot, buckwheat and rice. The trade of silk and spices was for a long time in the hands of the Arabs who had the monopoly.

## *The Medieval Village*

In the eleventh century there exists a "*castrum de Torretis*", cited since 1024, in the *viguerie* of St. Paul and the diocese of Vence. In 1042 the territory of Torretis is located on the edge of lands of Notre Dame des Crotons de Vence, between the Loup and the river Claret of the valley of Notre Dame.

The meaning of Torretis is still uncertain. Some authors attribute it to Celtic prefix "*Thor*" indicating the eminence, the rocky outcrop on which lies the village. Others prefer to refer to Latin "*turris*" which means towers. Maybe there was already a fortified keep and one or more watch towers. We then think of "Castel dei Gaï "or" Gaïans " – Giants - whose cyclopean remains are on the way which descends from the village through the Portail Neuf. Besides this, the old tower which served as clock tower of the present parish church, has medieval accents ...

Not far from this castrum are cited two other strongholds that are part of the present territory of Tourrettes: these are the "*castra*" of Courmettes, which pass through successive seigneurial hands, since from the XIV ' century they are part of the prebend of Courmes. The prebend is an income for an ecclesiastic to take care of a parish.

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In the middle of the twelfth century there appears in Tourrettes a family of knights, with Guillaume-Amic, cited in a donation made in 1144 with the lords of Vence, Grasse and their vassals of Mougins and Sartoux, according to the Cartulaire de Lérins. We

find Guillaume-Amic in the first names of lords of Vence, which suggests that this "*Guillelmi Amici de Turretis*" may be playing the part of the cadets of the Vence family, or are simply their vassals.

In 1152, some *Sicard* of Tourrettes and lords of the Malvans are named among the knights of Grasse. These families provide consuls to the city. In 1173, the Sicards of Tourrettes are three in number, seated at the consulate of Grasse established by the Count and the bishop to deal with the power of local lords. These are "Isnard Sicardi, Hugo Sicardi "while" B. Sicardi " is consul in Grasse. Hugues Sicard will himself be consul in Grasse in 1211 and 1212.

The twelfth century is an important time for Provence. The line of the first Count ended on the death of Bertrand II who had only daughters. In her dowry, the Douce de Provence offers the Count's crown to her husband Raymond Bérenger, count of Barcelona.

He strives to unify and pacify his lands; his son, of the same name, does the same before disappearing too young. On reaching adulthood, Raymond Bérenger III marries Richilde, the niece of the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, his overlord, in 1162. This marriage gives a some shine to the *Comté* while the young Count adds to it his *lettres de noblesse*: he likes good company, knows how to surround himself with a brilliant court and refined troubadours. Sadly, he finds death at the headquarters of Nice occupied by the Genoese, in 1166.

But the tone is set, the taste of the fine arts and *belles-lettres* is launched. Many are the troubadours on the Provençal paths. Often barons or knights, they roam the country, stop in the castles where they entertain ladies and lords. They are

always welcomed because they bring news of neighbouring countries. Through the game of marriages, Lords are all cousins to some extent...

Troubadours sing courtly love that elevates feelings above vulgar passions. They use a new and poetic language, Provençal, understood by all the people of southern France and which will dethrone the different dialects of the *langue d'oc*.

At the same time there flourishes a school of Romanesque architecture. Many chapels are built in cities and villages, places of devotion and pilgrimages. In the Midi, the Romanesque chapel has a nave which is quite wide and low. The vaults are in *berceau brisé* and cut by large arches which rest on cruciform pillars. Between the pillars, there are no aisles, but large recessed arches lighten the walls side while decorating them. Windows of semi-circular arches are few and narrow, as in the church of Tourrettes.

In this atmosphere of order and peace, cities spread out, outside of the fortifications.

In the 13th century, the new Counts of Provence, from the house of Barcelona, face the old aristocracy. The lords feel threatened in their rights. They fortify their castles and estates and make claim to their seigniorial rights. By the *chacement* they grant to a vassal the enjoyment of land for life subject to royalties and easements. The new Lord adds value to the land and thus revives the village economy.

The Count of Provence seeks to consolidate his lordly authority over the feudal lords who tend to ride roughshod over the fiefs or the possessions of church property. Surrounded by a hundred armed soldiers, he wants make the rebellious lords see reason by using *contre-siege* tactics; blocking water and communication routes, the Count subdues the



rebellious vassals. The impatient lords are then used as warriors at his side, and they are rewarded by the gift of local seigneuries.

In 1217, the Count of Provence, assisted by his mother Garsende, names Catalan Justas as Baile of Forcalquier. On this template are created the *bailies* carving Provence into large constituencies that roughly match our current departments. The judicial functions are set up in courts directed by permanent delegates and provided with their notary; they coincide with each *bailie*. (According to A. Compan)

All this jurisdiction is dominated by the Judge of Provence, assistant or deputy to the Count. The sentences of Bailiffs Judges are addressed to him "on appeal". The sovereign becomes powerful and indispensable. He relies on bishops to promulgate statutes of peace with possibilities of excommunication and outlawing.

From 1224 the Count of Provence, Raymond Bérenger V concedes to Hugues Sicard "the County rights of Tourrettes, except the cavalcade. He will give him before All Saints Day what owned the lords of Malvans and B. of the Guard or his brothers by his mother ". But Hugues Sicard is not alone in his castle of Tourrettes, he is surrounded by his family which he does not share ideas. By rallying to the Count, he is obliged to dissociate himself from his family. He raises against his own castle of Tourrettes that of Valettes which blocks the road from Grasse to Vence. In 1235 the castle of Tourrettes is in ruins, the co-lords rebuild it. In 1261 Hugues Sicard is forced to give his shares to Raymond de Tourrettes; in exchange he keeps the Valettes. The two lordships become distinct. (According to J.C. Poteur)

The co-lords have shares in the seigneurship. Their shares are not necessarily equal, they are in co-

ownership. These shares they are given according to their rank or merits, some are sometimes sold.

According to the portrayal of the lord of Le Bar, one can imagine what is the life of the peasants of the region at this medieval time.

The lords assumed the role of absolute masters: many have the right to life or death on their subjects. The lord of Le Bar has the reputation of being fierce, he requires tribute and labour; in his stronghold, the taxes are enormous. From the hunters he claims the shoulder of the deer and deer, the hoof of wild boars. The hunt of partridge is reserved for him ... The inhabitants are tied to their city, they cannot work nor settle elsewhere. The Lord names the municipal administrators, sometimes leaving them in the open air for their meeting. He condemns to the gallows, shackle or fine, confiscates property, recovers neglected heritages, fixes taxes at will.

The neighbouring communes, including Tourrettes, have already cautiously acquired privileges like to choose their consuls and to have the right to assemble in the public square.

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The line of Count of Barcelona goes out with the death of Raymond-Beranger V who had only daughters. Beatrice, the youngest one transmits the crown of Provence to her husband Charles, Duke of Anjou and younger brother of King Louis IX.

The Rights and Revenues of Count Charles I from Provence allow us to know the population of the Venetian region by taxes recorded in 1252.

The bishopric of Vence brings together 26 localities group 3,000 souls while Nice in about 3500. If Vence has 300 inhabitants, Saint Paul has 500,

Tourrettes only 200, Courmettes and the Valettes count 20 each.

The Comte de Provence has the "majus dominium" on his subservient lands, he has all sovereignty over sales and trade seigniories, and impositions.

The right of *albergue* is the lodging imposed on inhabitants with whom the Count can be accommodated and fed. This tax in kind will become a cash tax calculated on the basis of number of fires in a municipality. Fire represents the dwelling in which can live one or several families.

As for *cavalcade*, it's the right of the Count to call his vassals to war. It is a real military service due to the king. According to the importance of the castrum, the cavalcade is the obligation to provide an equipped knight with cuirass and helmet, on an armed horse or not, or an unarmed knight with only a *haubergeon* and a shield to protect himself, with horse. The principle of cavalcade allows to the Lord to quickly raise an army without the inconvenience of a regiment permanent which is expensive to maintain.

In 1249, the revenue of the *albergue* amounted to 66 livres in the lease of Vence. Tourrettes must pay 7 pounds and 10 sols for the *albergue* and 7 pounds for the cavalcade, or a rider with a horse, not armed, and two armed servants. For the Valettes, an *albergue* of 1 pound and 10 sols and a cavalcade of 15 sols. For the Courmettes, an *albergue* of 1 pound without cavalcade.

While Courmes does not pay the *albergue*, but 15 sols of cavalcade, the Malvans must pay 4 pounds of *albergue* and 5 pounds of cavalcade: which proves the importance of this fief at this time! Saint Paul with its 17 pounds of *albergue* and 24 pounds of cavalcade appears to be a big city.

Seigniorial revenues are distributed between nobles and the *caslans* or *chatélains*. This income consists of various taxes:

- *bans* are regulations for use agricultural and pastoral land with related charges –

- the *quête* is claimed by the Lord vassal for exceptional expenses such as: travel, weddings in his family, purchase of land or a precious object, departure in crusade, conferring title on the lord or his son.

- the *droits de haute justice* - rights of high justice - concern murders, robberies, rapes and adultery.

This justice is called blood justice because the punishment may be death or mutilation. The *bourreau* – the hangman - has an important role in society: he is in charge of the pillory, where the condemned are exhibited to the wrath of the people, the mutilation of the thieves from which he cuts hands, hanging criminals ... His house is on the outside of the city as if to separate him from the honest people. In Tourrettes the executioner's house was near the Old Gateway to the village.

- the *gabelle* is collected on salt, wine, fish and plants used by tanners and tanners working in Grasse: roux, sumac, myrtle and fustet.

You have to pay the right of *fournage* to use the seigneurial oven. The breeders of herds must pay *pasquier* to the local lord to graze their animals ...

The peasants are crushed by taxes.

The 14<sup>th</sup> century is crossed by periods of bad weather leading to bad weather crops. Famine settles. The serfs leave the work of the land, emigrate to the cities from the Coast and beg. The lords rent pastures to foreign shepherds, peasants abandon the villages. The Black Plague wreaks havoc. Cities, villages are deserted. A massive repopulation is carried out by

foreign immigrants, it's a real colonization or "acts of habitation", with the consent of the feudal lords.

### ***Organization of the commune up to the 14th C.***

To fight against the power of the lords, the communes are organized into "universities", to manage their affairs and defend their own interests.

At the head of these assemblies, consuls are named, chosen from the "most apparent", those who are in a good legal standing. These are often literate bourgeoisie, called *sieurs*. Around the consul, councillors are represented by the heads of families, literate or not. Every family includes father, son, single brothers or uncles. Head of the family is "the most able" to manage the family operation that hires workers for ploughing, sowing, cutting of the olive trees or vineyards, harvests, harvests fruits or flowers, the painful work of carting or logging. Sometimes distant campaigns are farmed. Heritage conservation requires that the eldest son or one of his brothers the "most capable" inherit the family domain, the others receive additions.

The highest charges of the municipality are given to the owners the "most interested parties", that is to say the most taxed. The Provençal tax is based on the estimated productive income from the farm.

The "more interested" are therefore the most capable to better manage public affairs: the oven, the mills, the customs, the abuses manorial. It's the consuls, the cadastre estimators, the viewers of the communal tenders, the auditors of the accounts of the treasurer: they form the backbone of the communal regime. The "most interested" is aware of everything, he knows all the problems, he is best able to find solutions. He is the man in the know, which allows him to evaluate long-term risks.

In this organization of the consulate, the Lord is not desired because his interests are often opposed to those of the commune. He is represented by a seigneurial bailiff, judge's lieutenant, who signs the minutes of the deliberations. The property of the Lord, or tenures, are entrusted to the municipality by *emphytéose*, a kind of long-term lease. Many will be the trials where will confront lords and villagers over the centuries.

### ***The Vencois Demography***

It's interesting to look at evolution of the demography of the Tourrettan territory and its surroundings, and compare it to neighbouring cities of Vence and St. Paul. The study is based on the number of *queste* fires, with an approximation of five inhabitants per household on average.

According to the table on the next page [Table, p 43] we see that in the 15<sup>th</sup> century the region depopulated dangerously. The plague did its ravages: Courmettes will not recover. Courmes regains strength at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Vence and Saint Paul contest the star place with a preference for Saint Paul, even in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. As for the Malvans which declares two hundred inhabitants in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, there is no one in the 15<sup>th</sup> while there are just two families there in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, before its complete disappearance in the revolution when the community is attached to the nearby town of Vence.

In 1765, the average population per household is higher in poor villages of Tourrettes and Courmes, 5.5 and 5.4. The families are larger in order to have more than hands to work in the fields. In the richer towns like Saint Paul, the bourgeoisie does not need "manpower".

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Tourrettes is part of the bailie of Vence, while in 1319, it is attached to the already

unpopulated *viguerie* of Grasse les Valettes and Roquefort.

After the County of Nice Secession of 1400, Tourrettes, Malvans, Vence and the other villages are attached to the bailie of St. Paul; Courmes, Coursegoules and Gréolières are part of that of Grasse. After the affouagement of 1471, Saint-Paul resumes the jurisdiction of Courmes, Coursegoules and Gréolières, while Vence, is curiously detached to Grasse, and makes an enclave in the *viguerie* of Saint-Paul.

In 1319, the community of Valettes has 13 *cavalcade* fires or about 65 inhabitants. It is reduced to nothing in 15<sup>th</sup> century because it is quoted at that time as an uninhabited place. In 1698, there are ten large bastides and twenty thatched cottages. This flow and this ebb of population can be explained by the fact of wars and their consequences: misery, famines, epidemics ... The Valettes, on the road to Grasse, are the obligatory passage of enemy troops invading Provence from the east and are pushed back to the border of Var. In fine weather and peace time, they become again a happy countryside on the banks of the Loup, in the fertile land where the sun makes the work of the fields fruitful. Olives vines and cereals cover the flank of the mountain with generous springs.

In Tourrettes, *"the olive trees, the shelter for violets, form groups in the middle of a strange soil, made of a black and grey rock, arranged like monstrous guts. The village of Tourrettes stands on cliffs lined with fig trees of Barbary ... With its calcareous rocks which look like molten lava, with its cactus, its aloes, its grey walls surrounded of precipices, Tourrettes offers a very original and makes one dream of an Arab village built near a volcano ... to whom three towers of the Middle Age gave his name "* (According to G. Doublet)

At the bottom of the square called "the Plan", two old doors serve the village and a belfry will be erected in the sixteenth century.

**[Picture: The old Gate., p 44 ]**

## 8. The Saga Of Villeneuve

### *Catalonian Provence*

The history of the village of Tournettes is explained through the history of Provence. The dynasty of Villeneuve begins with that of the Counts of Barcelona. At the end of the eleventh century, the last King of Arles, Bertrand, Count of Provence, had no male heir. Upon his death, his niece Douce inherits the county crown; she marries the count of Barcelona and offers him this crown in the wedding basket. We are in 1112. The house of Barcelona will unify and pacify Provence.

The Villanova family, coming from Catalonia, accompany the count of Barcelona who becomes Count of Provence. Giraud I "de Villeneuve receives the feudal allegiance of the castles of Trans, the Arcs, the Motte and Esclans.

Romée de Villeneuve appears at the court of the Count, in 1223, on pilgrimage, hence his name Roumieu the Pilgrim. He has received minor orders and is provided with a *canonicat* in the Cathedral of Frejus, which is equivalent to the title of canon. He is the second son of Giraud; his brother Arnaud is the grandfather of Roselyne, the Provençal saint of the miracle of roses: summoned by her father to open her apron where she hides bread for the poor, she obeys and sees with astonishment roses pour out instead of food ...

Count Raimond Bérenger V welcomes the Roumieu, receives from him good advice; he is made head of his county house and the steward of his finances. Romée will be the author of royal marriages of the Count's four daughters who will become "the four queens".

- Marguerite de Provence with Louis IX, king from France, says Saint Louis,
- Elonore with Henry III of England,
- Sancia with Richard of Cornwall, King of Rome,
- Beatrix with Charles I of Anjou, brother of King of France and himself King of Naples, who will inherit the Provençal crown and will be the origin of the Angevin dynasty of Provence.

Romee makes a fortune. In 1224 he is a "*juge mage*", in 1234 Grand Bailiff and Constable of Provence. From the Count, he receives many fiefs including Vence in 1229 with the title of Baron, in gratitude for his good services, and stirs up jealousies. Upon his accession, Charles d'Anjou suspects him of "indelicacy" in the financial accounts of his predecessor and seizes his goods. Paul and Pierre, the children of Romeus do not own their lands in Vence apart from purchase of paternal fiefs by their grandmother Aycarde from Villeneuve.

### *The Lords of Villeneuve*

In the fourteenth century, the Villeneuve dynasty, lords of Tournettes, begins with Guichard, called the Bastard. He is the grandson of the lord from Vence, Bertrand.

His father Paul de Villeneuve is the third son of Baron de Vence, Bertrand de Villeneuve, said d'Aiguines, and of Lady Beatrix d'Esclapon.

At that time, the eldest son of the Lord succeeds his father while his brothers enter the king's army where they can stand out by some great deeds, or else choose the ecclesiastical orders with hope for high office.

Paul de Villeneuve-Vence is destined for religious orders. He becomes canon sacristan of the chapter of Vence around 1336. The canon sacristan is still called treasurer, because he deals with the "treasure" of the church: the sacerdotal clothing, the sacred vessels and the objects of worship that are the ciboriums, chalices, patens, monstrances, censers ... he is in charge of luminaires, perpetual lamp maintenance, he provides the balm and oil for the Saint Chrême used for baptisms and extreme unctions, cords for the church, the candles and the two *brandons de temps pascal*. [Meaning unknown] . For this he receives two-thirds of spiritual legacies made to the Church. It should be noted that the candles are expensive in the Middle Ages because wax is expensive, very expensive.

In addition, Paul has a prebend at Tourrettes where he founded the chapel of Saint-Pierre and Saint-Paul. There are then canons (not priests) who offload prayer onto religious people for reward. These lay people are often cadets of seigniorial families tempted by the big income from the prebend. The Council of Trente, in 1563, will require that at least half of these canons be priests.

After the disappearance of his older brother Truand, lord of Vence, and of his nephew, Romea died childless, Paul must leave the chapter and collects the estate of the house de Vence, in 1338, according to Romée's wish. He married the daughter of Baron d'Ollioules, Sybille of Ventimiglia, with whom he has no children. In 1353, he was a viguier de Marseille and died in 1361. Yet he leaves a natural son, Guichard the Bastard, who will bury his father in the chapel of Saint-Pierre and Saint-Paul in Tourrettes.

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In the 14th century, Provence was ruled by Queen Jeanne Iere, granddaughter of King Robert of Naples, says the Sage. Upon the death of his grandfather in 1343, Jeanne becomes queen of Naples, of Sicily and

Jerusalem, Duchess of Calabria and Puglia, countess of Provence, of Forcalquier and Piedmont. She is 17 years old.

The county court no longer sits in Aix-en-Provence but in Naples. Queen Jeanne, so much beloved of Provençaux, has lived little time in Provence. But her youth, her beauty, her charm give a reputation that will cross the centuries. To the people of Nice who welcome her into their city, she said with a smile, "*I need nothing but your hearts.*" The Queen is loved by some, hated by others; she will be all her life fighting against those who want to rob her of power ; all her life she will look for money to defend her lands and her crown; she will know wealth and betrayal, generosity and hatred. Queen of pain and tragedy, she will have unhappy marriages, lose her three young children and end up strangled in the Apennines by her cousin and heir, Charles de Duras, in 1382.

*"Ideal Queen, familiar and mythical, the Queen Jeanne belongs to these historical figures ... to which are attached in the memory popular heroic legends, purebred traditions, mysterious monuments ... The beautiful Jeanne is for us, Provençaux ... a mirage of retrospective love, youthful regret, of nationality, of poetry flown away. "*

Frédéric Mistral, greatly in love with this queen, still tells us in good provençale that this countess left in our province "The glare of a meteor", which makes it almost supernatural. We lose count of the Provençal castles, monuments and the bridges which bear the name of this much loved Provençale queen.

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In eastern Provence, Queen Jeanne is surrounded by local lords, the Villeneuve de Vence, Giraud and Paul, Guichard le Bâtard son of Canon Paul (all great grandchildren of the great Romée de Villeneuve), the Lascaris de Tende, the Barçillos of Saint-Paul, René II Grimaldi of Monaco, Rostan de Courmes, Honoré

de Malvans, Giraud and Blacas de Carros and Lord Bertrand de Grasse du Bar. All these beautiful people go on expeditions royal knightly war, full of courtesy: a real war in lace. The Queen Jeanne wishes to reward all of these handsome gentlemen and valiant knights.

Always short of money, she hurries to cede to Grimaldi, in 1363, the towns of Vence, Tourrettes, Gattières and Bouyon. In the same time and on his command his great Seneschal Foulques d'Agoult has already sold to the lords of Vence the jurisdiction of the city. The queen must cancel the act done with René Grimaldi, who was not lord of Vence and Tourrettes ,after just one season. Grimaldi had started to form a small empire extending from Grimaud, starting point of his lordship, to Menton. To enlarge it to the *baous* of Vence did not scare him. It is due to this that Tourrettes almost belonged to the principality of Monaco!

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In 1378, the Great Schism broke out. It divides the Church between the pope of Rome and that Avignon. While the bishopric of Nice obeys the Roman Pope, that of Vence chooses the Avignon party. The Queen makes the same choice, which is going to cost her her crown of Naples which she will never be able to recover. Several kings of France will go to Italy to reconquer the Neapolitan kingdom, but to no avail.

The governor of Nice sends troops to take over the strongholds of the former bishop who had taken up the cause of the [Roman] pope, fled from Vence and had been replaced by "The white bishop", Jean Abrahardi, so called because he is Dominican in white robes. Giraud of Vence is stationed at Gréolières and Coursegoules, his son Paul is at the château des Gaudes, while Guichard protects Tourrettes. The enemy cross the Var at the ford of Gattières, avoid well guarded Vence and head towards Tourrettes which the Bastard defends like a

lion. The people of Nice must retreat. To thank him, Queen Jeanne gives Guichard the fief of Tourrettes-les-Vence with the title of governor of the Var border, in October 1378.

The death of Queen Jeanne causes new disorders. On the Pope's advice, Jeanne chose to inherit the Duke of Anjou, Louis, brother of the King of France Charles V. Nice takes sides with the house of Duras and prefers to give itself to the Count of Savoy, Amédée V, the Red Count, who has for a long time been looking for an opening of his dukedom on the Mediterranean. The *Acte de Dédition* is signed in 1388 at the Saint-Pons monastery in Nice.

The young count of Provence, Louis 1<sup>st</sup> of Anjou, is killed in Naples; his wife the queen Marie de Blois obtains guardianship of her minor son Louis II. The lords of the vençoise region defend the new queen and welcome her with enthusiasm. Queen Mary is quick to confirm by letters patent, to Guichard in 1388, "*all freedoms, enjoyments and immunities as well as full possession of the whole of Tourrettes lès Vence*".

As governor of the border, Guichard defends Vence, and restores in 1390 the ramparts, the towers, the barbicans of the city; he seriously guards the gates : "*by men and not by children*", rounds are made day and night. History does not say whether he did the same for his new Tourrettan estate ... He receives from his king, Count Louis II, son of Queen Marie, other properties in Tourrettes ...

On August 15, 1390, he was present at deliberations of the States of Provence in Aix, as "Lord of Torretes" so much ... "*as much for himself as for the nobles of Malvans and their men*". He sits there with Marc and Lucas Grimaldi, lords of Cagnes and Antoine Barcillon for the community de l'Isle.



Guichard is an active man, he takes part in 1400 in the expedition directed against the Genoese pirates who seize the fortified monastery of Saint-Honorat de Lérins. All the municipalities in the region start ringing the tocsin bell. The lords, under Comte du Bar's command, arrive too late ; they appeal to the galleys of Toulon to lay siege to the islands but the fortress is impregnable. After ten days of negotiations, an agreement is established: the Genoese leave with sacred reliquaries and vases as spoils of war.

We find Guichard governor of St. Paul in 1429 when he steps down in favor of his son. He marries Aynésie de Demandolx who gives seven children: two daughters, Jacobette and Perrinette and five boys, Antoine and Paul who will succeed him, Esparron, Hélión and Jacques one of whose descendants will be religious at Lérins Abbey.

(Indeed, around 1510, there is a Jacques de Villeneuve-Tourrettes-Vence, monk of Lérins. He is one of those who oppose the reform of the monastery decided by the bishop of Grasse, Augustin de Grimaldi. The rebellious then write a protest to the king of France Louis XII who answers them on July 27 1510 by prohibiting the bishop from bringing the Cluny church in Lérins. But soon after, the monarch changes his mind and the Benedictines of Cluny arrive in Saint-Honorat.)

Jacques de Villeneuve decides, with a few companions, to settle with the lord of Tourrettes by founding a branch of the convent in 1511. In April 1532, we find him in a chapter assembly, held in Tourrettes lès Vence, as sacristan.

On the death of Guichard, his eldest son Antoine succeeds him and pays homage to Tourrettes in 1433. He lives in Vence, near Peyra where find the Tower portal and constructs his castle of Tourrettes, giving it

a beautiful facade with wide open windows under the sun.

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All the nobles, proud of their rank, display their coat of arms. The coat of arms exists since the 12th century by military necessity. In effect, the knights armoured from feet to head are unrecognizable. Shields, banners, helmets are decorated with distinctive signs. They are often figures animal or chimerical, lion, eagle, dragon ..., that the families of the nobility adopt. More late, usage will expand to other classes social, noble women, bishops, the bourgeois, the corporations or even the abbeys will have theirs.

But only the eldest of the elder branch of a family can carry a full coat of arms. The cadets and derived branches must break them, that is to say modify them a little to make them different. The bastards must break them with a bar. The coat of arms of the great family of Villeneuve is "*with fretted or broken spears Golden*". Then we add small silver badge. The arms of the Lords of Tourrettes recall the Villeneuve coat of arms: "*gueules fretted with six spears of gold, between sown similar badges; on the whole of azure at the fleur de lis of the second*". The cotices are half crisscrossed in the direction of the bar, from senestial to dextral, half in the direction of the tape. These weapons are accompanied by the motto "*Mantenense*", from Provençal, which means "to maintain oneself".

Lords take advantage of their seniority and oppose the rising bourgeois class. Family celebrations are celebrated in style: baptisms succeed marriages, and are followed by burials. Everything is a pretext for big feasts at the Château Villeneuve where splendid suppers are taken using the taxes of the people. Pride and abuses of these lords lead to revolts that neighboring municipalities follow. Vence is buzzing, the locals are struggling to recover their lost rights,

with King René, and want to choose their consuls according to the ancient tradition. Around François, the eldest of the lords of Vence, group his younger brother Raymond of Gréolières and his cousin Antoine de Tourrettes. They want to put forward their seigniorial rights granted by Count Raimond-Bérenger V to their ancestor Romée de Villeneuve.

They [the lords] decide to beat to death the insolence of the peasants from Vence! King René is in Italy. His wife, the Queen Isabelle, advises the consuls of Vence, in 1440, to "defend oneself day and night and keep the keys of the towers and doors that are currently in the Lord's custody". But the lords refuse to return the keys and attack the impositions. The Vencois gang up on them and bring the case before the Parliament of Aix. The sentence is terrible, the lords win their case while that the consuls of Vence are condemned to make amends, kneeling, a torch lit by hand, under penalty of 500 guilders fine. The inhabitants are humiliated. Antoine Ier de Villeneuve-Tourrettes dies in 1440.

In 1443, the *tourretins*, tired of the heavy tutelage of their lord, meet in the olive grove in front of the church of Saint-Grégoire-le-Grand; they hasten to make their complaints and charge their consuls, with the notary Jean Suche, to ask Lord Honoré Ier, son of the terrible Antoine, for a new constitution; they give the consuls powers to "defend and retain their privileges, statutes, capitulations and conventions, to protect said university, to order sizes, impositions and cavalcades "... The new lord compromises with his subjects who pay him 1,700 livres of annual pension.

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Antoine Ier dies, his son Honoré follows him soon to the grave. Antoine's brother Paul succeeds his nephew Honoré in 1444. He married his cousin Roseline de Villeneuve, daughter of Baron de Flayosc, but she dies childless. He remarries with Catherine de Comti, of the nobility of the kingdom of

Naples, of which he has two children: Antoine his successor and John who will, through his marriage, the initiator of the Villeneuve lineage Châteauneuf-de-Grasse.

(Indeed, John, the second born son of Paul de Villeneuve-Tourrettes married Yolande de Bertatis, sister of a co-lord of the Malvans, she gives him eight children. Their eldest son Honoré I wife in 1526 Antoinette Lascaris, daughter of Pierre Lascaris, coseigneur of Châteauneuf-lès-Grasse. She inherits property of his brothers and sisters who die without posterity. Their eldest son Honoré II inherits from his uncle maternal, co-lord of Châteauneuf, to condition to bear the name and arms of Lascaris with the motto "Dei Gratia". He becomes Honoré de Villeneuve Lascaris, lord of Châteauneuf. )

In 1434, Paul de Villeneuve-Tourrettes calls into question the problem of the waters of Malvan which had been graciously offered to the city of Saint-Paul by Queen Jeanne, in the previous century. Vence and Tourrettes had been dispossessed of them and had not stopped trying to recover them since. In this Mediterranean land, the springs are a royal gift. The trial is judged by Bertrand de Grasse, lord of the Bar, in 1437, but without success.

The lords of Villeneuve consider the inhabitants of Vence like serfs without even a thank you. The Vencois get angry and send their two elected consuls to complain to the good King René. This confirms, in 1441, all the privileges of the city. In 1450, the *tourretins* renew in the square, to their lord Paul, the claims they had made to his nephew Honoré.

Upon his arrival in 1444, the new bishop de Vence, Antoine Salvagni, receives from the abbot from Saint-Victor de Marseille Notre-Dame Abbey Lady of Crottons. He tidies up in the affairs of his predecessor and claims the restoration of the

jurisdiction of the Church from Vence on Saint-Martin-de-la-Pelote, which he assumed the lord of Tourrettes had appropriated.

Queen Yolande, mother of King René dies of the plague. In 1462, the plague arrives at Vence. The Lady of Tourrettes, Marguerite de Villeneuve-Vence, the bishop and the Vencois consuls decide to create many more doctors, surgeons and apothecaries in two localities. Towns have a *Hotel-Dieu*. The epidemic lasts several decades. It is decided to close the gates during the day as well as night. The cities are depopulated: Nice, Tourrettes, Villeneuve (-Loubet), Cagnes and Saint-Paul do can no longer bury their dead. Gaude is abandoned, its inhabitants go to Saint-Jeannet.

The plague rages in Nice and Grasse, it is decreed that whoever passes the Loup could no longer come back. The river has become a border. The people look to the sky and the saints to be protected. Each commune builds chapels and oratories at the four corners of its land. While Vence prays, Saint Roch, specialist in epidemics, puts Tourrettes under the protection of Saint Fauste, of whom one can still find the reliquary in the church.

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Antoine II of Villeneuve-Tourrettes succeeds his father Paul in 1471. He marries Madeleine d'Agoult d'Ollières who gives her a son, Antoine and five daughters: Douce, Jeanne, Catherine, Marguerite and Philippe (!).

His son Antoine III pays tribute for All of them in 1507 after the death of his father. He must pay the dowries of his five Sisters who are all married to local lords: Douce and Jeanne are united with lords of the Malvans. In 1519, Antoine is viguier of Saint Paul lès Vence and commander of a coast guard company. He marries Jeanne de Grasse, daughter of the lord of Mas and Callian and the lady of

Escragnoles. She gives him two son and two daughters: Honored successor of his father, and Jacques, squire of Tourrettes who will be at the origin of the branch of the lords of Carros. Her son Annibal, captain and squire de Tourrettes, marrying Julie Giraud, daughter of the Lord of Carros, in 1593, will become same lord of Carros. Antoine's two daughters, Polyxene and Andrivette, will be married one to the lord of Sartoux, the other to a squire of Saint-Paul. Yes, in the Middle Ages, the squire was the young man who aspires to chivalry and, to do this, attaches himself to a knight to wear his shield or shield, thereafter this term will become a qualification attributed to simple gentlemen.

On the death of Antoine III in 1537 his son Honoré II succeeds. In 1534 he had married Madeleine de Castellane, daughter of the lord of Montmeyan, with whom he has 8 enfants.

Claude, the elder, succeeds his father; Honoré and Jacques die before their parents; Francois and Jean are received as Knights of Malta between 1562 and 1565; Pierre is the founder of the cadet branch established in Grasse. With his brother Jacques they are *carcistes*, they fight against the Reformation alongside the Count of Carces. The two daughters Éléonore and Polyxène are married to local lords.

### ***The Knights of Malta***

After the fall of Saint-Jean d'Acre in 1291, we saw the Templars, Knights of the Temple, return to the West and fall under the greed of the King of France, Philippe IV le Bel. The Hospitallers of Saint John of Jerusalem had been installed in the holy city during crusades, to take care of the pilgrims and heal the sick; purely hospitable, the Order will also become military from 1113. Following the example of the Templars, they submit to the vows of poverty, obedience and chastity.

Expelled from the holy places at the end of the 13th century, they took refuge first in Cyprus and then in the island of Rhodes which they fortified. They defend her valiantly against the attacks of the Infidels: the Mamluks of the Sultan of Egypt in 1444, Mehmet II Moorish King of Granada in 1480, and Suleiman the Magnificent, Turkish sultan in 1522. They are then called the Knights of Rhodes; the island is strengthened by the dynamic prior of the Order who is none other than Hélion de Villeneuve-Trans-en-Provence, brother of Saint Roselyne and cousin of Villeneuve Vence et Tourrettes.

Betrayed by one of them, disappointed in his ambitions, these knights of Rhodes are driven from the island by an army of a hundred thousand men. In 1530, Charles-Quint installed them in Malta where they take the name of Knights of Malta. After the great siege of Malta by the Turks in 1565, the building of Valetta makes the island an important European stronghold capital in the Mediterranean.

Many will be the sons of noble families to engage in this Order where they will fight against Islam until death or sometimes slavery.

### ***The saga of Villeneuve (continuation and end)***

Claude de Villeneuve-Tourrettes succeeds to his father around 1575. He embraced the reformed religion like many of his cousins. It is on this date he married Marguerite de Renaud, "Lady of Callian", with whom he has five children:

- Annibal succeeds him
- Pierre becomes provost of the Church of Aix,
- Charles and Claude are Knights of Malta in 1607,
- Françoise is married to Balthazar de Rafêlis, Lord of Broves and Callian in 1615.

In 1621, Claude dies, Hannibal receives the succession of his father: he is lord of Tourrettes and Callian. In 1604 he married Françoise de Villeneuve, daughter of Claude Lord of Thorenc. They have eight children:

- Suzanne was baptized in Callian in 1605; she marries François de Durand, lord of Sartoux and lawyer in 1631.
- César, eldest son, was born in 1607. - Frédéric is prior at Cipieres,
- Alexandre and Claude are received Knights from Malta,
- Françoise was baptized in Callian in 1615 and married to the lord of Auribeau in 1639,
- Delphine will be a nun of the Visitation, and Madeleine will be godmother to Callian in 1630.

On the death of his father, around 1630, César de Villeneuve becomes Lord of Tourrettes and Callian. In 1635 he gave up part of his lands of Callian to his aunt Françoise and in 1643 he sells another part to his cousin Antoine de Villeneuve-des-Arcs.

In 1640 he married Françoise de Blacas, daughter of Scipion de Blacas, lord of Aups and Vérignon, and Louise de Castellane Montmeyer. She died in Tourrettes in 1695 after having given him eight children:

- Scipion heir to his father,
- Louis and Isabeau born in 1643 and 1648 die young,
- Suzanne was baptized in Tourrettes in 1644 and married to Madelon de Ferrier, seigneur d'Auribeau and Saint-Julien.
- Louis born in 1646, Jean born in 1650 and Charles born in 1652 are all three Knights from Malta. Jean will be Commander of

Durbans in Quercy, Charles will be the same in Bordeaux.

- Louise was married in 1664 to Joseph Raimond, lord of Eoulx. She will be there grandmother of Marie-Anne de Raimond who would later marry his brother's grandson.

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July 24, 1694 — “*Burial of noble César de Villeneuve, lord of this present place de Tourrettes, aged eighty-seven, was buried in the limbo of his ancestors, in the presence magistrates and other local individuals. Signed Issaurat - priest, Aussel lieutenant of judge, Isnard consul and Agard consul.*”  
(Archives of Tourrettes)

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In 1680, the count of Vence Alexandre de Villeneuve, takes the title of “Marquis” as a defender of the *marches frontières* of France. Already under the last emperors Romans, the borders were entrusted to military commanders called “*comites limitanei*”, true counts of the marches. These chiefs then take the name of “marchis” according to the Italian *marchese*, then make themselves masters and hereditary possessors of their territories which become *marquisates*. Some of these areas will be turned into *marquisates* by letters patent from the king, as that of Bar-sur-Loup by Louis XIV; but Vence will never be a marquisate. These royal letters, sealed with the seal of the State, were addressed to the Provincial Parliaments for legal application.

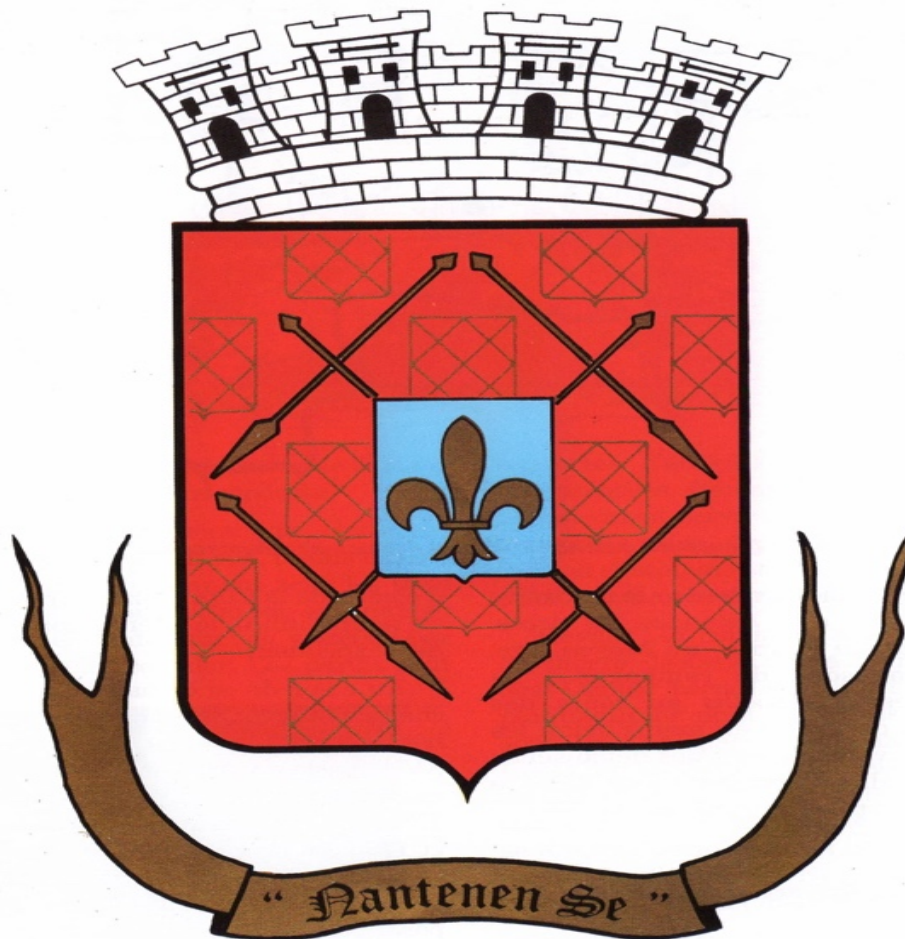
Immediately, the lords of Cagnes and Tourrettes hasten to do the same in order to not to fall... Joseph César de Villeneuve is the first lord of Tourrettes to call himself “Marquis”, from the beginning of the 18th century.

.....

**Intervening chapters 9 to 11  
have not been translated.**

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## *12 Tourrettes and its chateaux.*



Tourrettes has always remained simple, compared to its beautiful neighbours.

Nevertheless, its vast territory has allowed its *seigneurs* to build many *chateaux* which, although modest, have each their own history – these are the chateaux of Caire, Valettes, Courmettes, and that of Villeneuve which we find in the heart of the village.

These castles are spread over the territory of Tourrettes, in order to defend the accesses to the territory. Created “war castles” in the Middle Ages, or simple "country houses", they were restored and embellished over the centuries, passing from hand to hand according to the inheritances or often the dowries of young ladies in marriage.

We will discover their story reconstructed from old documents.



## 12.1. The Chateau of Le Caire



Le Caire is a vast area located in the north of Tourrettes on a shoulder of the mountain. At 825 meters above sea level, it dominates the coastline, the view of which, in good weather, extends from Italy to the cape of Saint-Tropez. The place is wild, about fifteen kilometers bird's eye view over the overcrowded French Riviera. The air there has a taste of infinity, silence allows Nature to speak.

At the heart of this domain slumbers a small castle, all wrinkled, all tired. A body of building resembling a 17th century Provençal farmhouse is flanked by two massive quadrangular towers, set forward, according to the taste of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They bear the dates of 1754 and 1765. On the ground floor, French windows with a stone frame, slightly arched, open onto the vast verdant terrace. The central door, surmounted by an engraved stone indicating 1646, gives into a small entrance from where the staircase leading to the floors starts. On either side of this vestibule, two beautiful halls are places to rest. The one on the left still has a simple but beautiful frescoed ceiling. In the background, a large fireplace separates the living room from the vaulted kitchen set to the rear. The room to the right of the entrance is smaller and above all more modest.

Upstairs, a series of bedrooms open their windows to the view, while a small square opening, under the

three rows of Genoese roof tiles, hides its originality: it is an indoor dovecote; it is accessed by a few steps down the hall. The walls are covered with cells where pigeons nest. These birds were very useful in the past because they could serve as carrier pigeons or be eaten with peas... Their cooing brightened up the chatelaine's house and their flight mingled with that of the doves vibrated the air.



*The pigeon room*

In front of the house, a double staircase of stone descends from the terrace to the Garden des Dames lined with flowering shrubs and a persimmon whose orange fruits in winter are carried by bare branches. The horseshoe staircase frames a small fountain which bears the date of 1769. The water falls into a rounded stone basin and empties into a small basin on the edge in the form of a hug. Between the two arms of the stairs, the floor is paved.

The Jardin des Dames is aptly named. Lilacs and peonies bloom here in the spring. We can well imagine, in this haven of peace and sweetness, the ladies of the chatelaine resting in the shade of leafy trees and chatting, some work in the hand, in the rustle of the air and the murmur of water...

From the large terrace starts a long alley lined with hundred-year-old chestnut trees, supported by a wide *restanque*. This alley leads to the confines of the



estate and borders an exotic wood with rare species, planted by one from the last owners: white large-leaved maples and small-leaved sycamore plunge their roots into the nearby water table; because under the domain, a clayey layer retains a reserve of natural water.

At the back of the castle, an added wing constitutes the chapel. It is accessed by an exterior staircase. The door opens onto a small sacristy. It is surmounted by a marble plaque dated 1892 and two medallions bearing the glorious cross. This plaque bears the following inscription:

*D.G.M.Sanctis que patronis Familiae  
hoc sacellum dedicaverunt  
Anna and Carolus Roustan  
Anno Domini MDCCCXCII*

Meaning: Anne and Charles Roustan assigned this chapel to the saints and patrons of the family in the year 1892.

Under the chapel hide the cellars for the reserves and an old oven, today gone. At the foot of the castle, near the small ravine a spring is born with a regular and precious flow. Large, multi-hundred-year-old vigorous plane trees sink their roots into the moist ground and spread their beneficent shade on the sunny plateau.

The water is collected in a large basin where once a whole network of Canaux started which were used to water the vegetable gardens. Very close to the water reservoir, a farm and a little further a sheepfold constitute the commons domain. This extends from Bouirades valley, limit of the domain of Courmettes, to Touronnet where begins the valley of Notre-Dame which serves as a border with Vence.

## **History**

The first owner of whom we know is Scipion de Villeneuve, lord of Tourrettes, Cagnes, Malvans and Le Caire. He gives tribute to Tourrettes and Malvans on the 25th February 1672 and dies in Aix on April 29, 1706. Le Caire's "country house" bears the dates of 1646 in its central part. It is his father César de Villeneuve, lord of Tourrettes from 1630 to 1672, who built the building. History does not say whether he had bought this estate or if he had inherited it... In 1672, Scipion married Lucrezia de Grimaldi, daughter of Honoré de Grimaldi, baron of Antibes, and Françoise de Grimaldi-Régusse. We find the Grimaldi family even in Tourrettes!

They have three children: - Françoise is baptized in Tourrettes on the 13th November 1674 and died at seventeen. “

*- November 13, 1674 — Baptism of a noble damsel Franson de Villeneuve born on 12 november on the 9 o'clock in the morning, daughter of nobleman and sir Cipion de Villeneuve sieur of Caire and other places and of noble lady Lucrese de Grimaldi d'Antibe. The godfather was Sir Honoré de Grimaldi d'Antibe, Marquis de Courbons, Cayne and other places (the maternal grandfather), and the noble godmother Françoise de Blacas lady of the said Tourrettes (the paternal grandmother) and signed »*

- Joseph Caesar is his father's heir.

*“1679 — Baptism of nobleman Joseph Caesar of Villeneuve de Torrettes, son of a noble sir Scipio de Villeneuve du Caire and Lady noble Lucrese de Grimaldy d'Antibe, baptized July 18, the day of his birth. the godfather is noble César de Villeneuve lord of Tourrettes (the paternal grandfather) and the godmother Françoise de Villeneuve lady of Auribeau » (his paternal aunt).*

(The lords of Tourrettes will often be cited as godfathers and godmothers of children of the notables of the village, but also children of the lord's staff: servants, hunters. We will find them regularly, from generation to generation in the archives of Tourrettes.)

Charlotte Elisabeth, born May 1, 1682, was baptized on January 20, 1687. One can be surprised that the child is only baptized at five years, but for fear of an early death, newborns are often “ondoyés” – emergency baptised by the midwife - at the birth. This blessing serves as a baptism if the child is in mortal danger. The true baptism is regularized later on.

*“January 20, 1687 — Damoiselle Charlotte de Villeneuve, daughter of Cipion de Villeneuve, lord of Tourrettes, and late damsel Lucretse de Grimaldi d'Antibe married, born since May 1, 1682, having since received the baptismal waters by Sir Decormis, vicar of this place and grand vicar of the present diocese for then, received the Holy Chrism and other Church ceremonies today 20 January 1687. The godfather was Messire Charles of Grimaldy of Antibes, Knight Marquis of Cagne and the godmother damoiselle Françon de Villeneuve, sister of Charlotte.*

*Signed Issaurat parish priest Françon de Torrettes  
From Caire Tourrettes M. de Grimaldy”*

On August 16, 1706, she married in Tourrettes Louis Victor, captain of the galleys and knight of Saint Louis, son of Louis, Marquis of Montolieu and himself squadron commander galleys of the king and field marshal, and of Marie du Mas de Manse. Charlotte Elisabeth died in Marseilles in 1712, she was thirty years old.

*"The year one thousand seven hundred and six and the sixteenth of the month of August, the wedding was celebrated by us François (des Bertons) Crillon, bishop and temporal lord of Vence, Broc, Bézaudun, l'Olive, Gattières, abbot of the royal monastery and Lord of Saint-Cézaire, Baron of Chambron (Beat), in front of our holy mother the Church, after a publication made, duly controlled by M<sup>o</sup> Ferran today having dispensed two other publications, between Messire Louis Victor de Montolieu, Knight of the Order of Saint Louis, lieutenant of one of the king's galleys, son of Sir Louis de Montolieu, Marshal of camp of the King's armies, Knight of the said order soldier and first squadron commander of the said galleys and the late lady Marie du Mas de Mance of the city of Marseille on the one hand and damsel Charlotte de Villeneuve, daughter to the late Sir Scipio de Villeneuve, lord of Tourrettes, Caire, Mauvans, Caignes and Feue lady Lucretse de Grimaldi d'Antibe, lady said Tourrettes on the other hand, after he appeared the publication of a ban of the said parties by the vicar of the parish of Saint Martin of the city and the dispensation of two others from the Bishop of the said city, in presence of Sir Elezear de Grimaldy, Abbot of Clausonne, of Sir Nicolas Dhermitte, Lord of Gréasque and Fuveau, of Ch. De Villeneuve, Knight of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Sir Albert de Durand, Lord of Sartoux undersigned.*

*Signed Crillon Bishop of Vence, Montolieu, Villeneuve Tourrettes, the Abbot of Grimaldy, the Knight of Tourrettes, Sartoux, Dhermitte. »*

*“January 19, 1691 — Damsel Francon de Villeneuve de Tourrettes, aged about sixteen years, was buried in the tomb of her ancestors located in the parish church, now 19<sup>o</sup> January 1691 in the presence of his parents and more apparent from the place. Signed Issaurat priest.”*

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Joseph César I of Villeneuve, known as "the Marquis de Tourrettes", was born in 1679 in Tourrettes. He is received as page of the Great King's Stable at eighteen. On the death of his father in 1706, he became Lord of Tourrettes, Baron de Saint-Jeannet, du Castelet, Cagnes, Malvans, Caire, Canadel and coseigneur of Courmes. He pays tribute to Tourrettes and Malvans in 1707 and 1724. In 1710, the 6 November, the inhabitants of Tourrettes must pay homage to their lord before Master Féron, notary in Vence: this is the tribute in all its feudal form. The Tourrettans are scandalized, they will long remember this outdated staging that stretches their dignity to its limit.

In 1700, he secretly married Marguerite d'Isnard, daughter of Guillaume d'Isnard, squire, doctor of law from the city of Vence, and by Antonine de Barcillon. If she is not noble, Marguerite is nevertheless from a family of notables, it is not a misalliance. However, this marriage is never recognized by the Villeneuve family. In June 1703, he must marry his cousin Élisabeth de Villeneuve, daughter of Claude de Villeneuve known as "the Marquis de la Gaude", lord of Thorenc, Saint-Jeannet, the Castelet, the Gaude, Trigance, the Valettes. . . Elisabeth, born in 1675, is called "the Lady of Saint-Jeannet and Canadel. Unfortunately she cannot have children.

She makes a will in August 1739 in favor of her niece Marie-Anne de Raimond, daughter of his sister Roseline married to the Lord of Eoulx. Elizabeth died in Saint-Paul in 1739.

Not having been able to have a child by his wife legitimate, the "Marquis" of Tourrettes had two children from his secret marriage:

- Scipio Joseph, heir of his father, -

- Françoise, called "Mademoiselle du Caire" whose birth cost the life of her mother. She receives a bequest in the will of her father in 1741.

"January 23, 1752 died and was buried in the tomb of his ancestors located in our parish church, Sir Joseph César de Villeneuve, lord of Tourrettes, Caire, Saint Jannet [sic] and other places, aged 72 1/2 years old, provided with the sacraments..."

This funeral is celebrated in the presence of many priests who benefit from this church, as well as magistrates without forgetting the brothers penitents, the churchwarden of the brotherhoods and inhabitants of the village.

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Scipio Joseph is therefore the natural son of Joseph Caesar. He was born in Gattières in 1702, is baptized the day after his birth and declared "born of unknown parents". But it's according to proprieties, because his father had him brought up and recognizes it by act of June 9, 1727. He does so legitimize by letters patent of the king given at Versailles and recorded in the Parliament of Provence the following year.

In 1732 he married Marie-Anne de Raimond, daughter of the lord of Eoulx and Roseline de Villeneuve, sister of Elisabeth, the wife of his father. By this marriage, he becomes lord of Saint-Jeannet before collecting the estate of his father in 1752. He joined the Light Horses of the king's guard, is received as adviser and king's secretary in the chancellery of Provence in 1738, became colonel of infantry, was appointed lieutenant of the place of Antibes in 1742. He died in Le Caire in 1759.

Marie-Anne died in Tourrettes in 1772. She is by her father César de Raimond the granddaughter of Louise de Villeneuve-Tourrettes, sister of Scipion, lord of

Tourrettes and her husband's grandfather: they are therefore cousins in the second degree.

From his wife, he has nine children:

- Joseph César, born in 1733, who is his heir.

*“July 26, 1733: Baptism of Messire Joseph César de Villeneuve, son of Sir Scipio de Villeneuve and very noble lady Marie de Raimon d'Eoulx his wife, born the second of the month of previous March and rippled the same day in the castle by me vicar. The godfather was his paternal ancestor, high and powerful lord sir Joseph César de Villeneuve, Knight Lord from this place of Tourrettes, Caire, Saint-Jeannet, Mauvans and other places, and the high godmother and powerful lady Élisabeth de Villeneuve, lady said place his wife.*

*Signed: Villeneuve St Jannet, Raymond St Jannet, Tourrettes, Villeneuve Tourrettes, Le Knight of Raymondy d'Eaux. »*

- César Scipion, born and baptized in Tourrettes in 1734, first enters the Jesuit Order then in the secular clergy. In May 1768 he obtains a prebend in Saint-Martin d'Angers, becomes dean of the chapter then vicar general and superior of various communities including the Hospitallers of Beaufort. In 1787 he was received as member of the Academy of Letters of Angers, then elected to the Provincial Assembly of Anjou the next year. In 1792, the Revolution deported him to Spain, the Concordat took over his duties. He died in Angers in 1809.

- Marie Ursule was born and was born in Tourrettes in 1736, baptized in 1738. At twenty- two years, she married Jean-Paul du Puget, baron of Châteauneuf, lord of Clermont, Thorenc... She died in Tourrettes in January 1789, shortly before the Revolution.

- Christophe Alexandre was born and died eight days later in 1737.

- Jean-Christophe was born in 1738 and died in five years. –

- François-Henri will be godfather at Saint-Paul in 1748 and 1749.

- Marie-Madeleine Sophie was born in 1742 in Tourrettes, she was baptized in Vence the same year.

- Scipion Joseph Alexandre, known as "the knight Caire" was born and baptized in Tourrettes in October 1743. At fifteen, he was ensign of the Béarn regiment, lieutenant the year next, captain in command in 1773, aide- major in 1775, major in the infantry regiment d'Artois in 1777. He was named Chevalier de Saint Louis in 1781, lieutenant-colonel two years later, then colonel of this regiment in 1791. He is retired as field marshal the next year.

- Antoine Thérèse was born in 1745, was baptized in Tourrettes and died at age three.

*“March 2, 1759 at half past three of the morning is dead Sir Scipio Joseph of Villeneuve, lord of Tourrettes, Saint Jannet, Caire and other places and the third said was buried in the tomb of his ancestors located in our parish church at one p.m. He was 57 years old years....”*

This burial takes place in the presence of many priests, village magistrates and those of Saint Jeannet, churchwardens brotherhoods and penitent brothers of the parish.

## ***The knights of Saint Louis***

In the Middle Ages, the qualification of *chevalier* - knight - is reserved for those who are aggregated to the knighthood, this is conferred only on nobles. Later, at the end of the feudal regime, chivalry becomes the qualifier of gentlemen of ancient extraction, whether they were titled or not. It is therefore then a "name of quality" which is stated after the name of family. Sometimes the title of knight is carried before their marriage by the cadets

of the great families, before the patronymic name. In addition the cadets of the same family are appointed knight of a domain belonging to the family: le Chevalier du Caire, le Chevalier des Valettes, le Chevalier de Tourrettes...

In 1693, Louis XIV instituted, on the advice of the Marshal of Luxembourg, the Order of Saint Louis, a Royal Military Order. It is granted to officers after twenty-eight years career or after a brilliant action. We find Grand Crosses, Commanders and Knights. This order will be deleted on Revolution in 1793, restored at the Restoration in 1815 and definitively abolished by the "Three Glorious days" of 1830.

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*"On September 19, 1772, at seven o'clock in the in the afternoon, Madame Marie de Raimond d'Eaux, widow of Sir Scipio Joseph of Villeneuve, Saint Jeannet, Lady Marquise of this place of Tourrettes, Caire, Gaude, Trigans, Saint Jeannet, la Malle, le Canadel, died in the castle of Caire depending on our parish, aged about 64, after having been provided with all the sacraments of the Church and the next day at five o'clock in the afternoon, his corpse was buried with the honors due to his rank, in the tomb of the holy lords of this place, located in our parish church, in presence of several priests, of Mrs the officers of justice and of Mrs the mayor and consuls of this place of Tourrettes, and of a numerous competition of his vassals. In testimony of which we undersigned pastor of the parish of Tourrettes have drawn up this deed in the presence of Mr Pierre Escofier secondary priest of this parish and Mr. Louis Laugier parish priest of Saint Jeannet..."*

The last lord of Tourrettes is Joseph Caesar II, Marquis of Tourrettes, Lord of Saint-Jeannet, Caire, Canadel, Gaude, Trigance, Malvans, Courmettes, Courmes. He was born in Tourrettes and was

baptized in 1733. In 1756 in Opio he married Claire Véronique Charlotte de Grasse, daughter of Charles Joseph of Grasse, lord of Valettes and Marie Véronique de Grasse, Lady of the Bar.

In 1772 he was on trial with the chapter of Vence about the priory of Saint-Martin-de- la-Pelote in Tourrettes, and Saint-Étienne in Gaud. The case went to trial in 1774. He has the reputation of a terrible lord: misfortune to whom does not pay his royalties or who is hunting on his land. Moreover, he uses the right of *cuissage* which is an affront to the family, but however a satisfaction for the young bride thus distinguished! They tell me that an old grandmother spent her time crying. After much palaver, she confessed that she had not been "honored" by the lord in her youth and it was for her a shame, all her life...

In 1793 we can read on the walls of the castle of the village the expressions of hatred and anger who explode against this accursed lord, kind of "graffiti" before the age!

During the Revolution, he fled from Tourrettes ais is recognized on Italian territory and assassinated in 1793.

From his wife, he has three children:

- Joseph Guichard Romée, born in 1757 in T u r r e t t e s ,
- Marie Roseline Elisabeth Charlotte, born in Tourrettes in 1758 and married in June 1777 to Pierre Joseph de Constantin, from a family of notables of Nice,
- Marie Émilie Véronique, born in Tourrettes in May 1760, was married in November 1784 to Joseph Annibale Amandric du Chaffaut, son of the lord of Faissoles and co-lord of Thoard.

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Joseph Guichard Romée de Villeneuve Tourrettes was born on May 12, 1757 in Tourrettes and was baptized there on 28 July. He has no time to be the Marquis de Tourrettes because he was driven out by the Revolution. He dies in Paris on February 28, 1848, shortly after the Third Revolution! Thus, he underwent the Great Revolution, the Terror, the Directory, the Consulate, the First Empire, the Restoration with Louis XVIII, the accession of Charles X, the July Revolution with the Three Glories, the reign of Louis-Philippe and finally the Revolution of February 1848 which put an end to his long life...

In 1777, Joseph Guichard Romée married in Vence with Marie-Madeleine Alexandrine- Julie, daughter of the Marquis de Vence. This day is remarkable in the history of the village, because it was a double marriage. The lord of Tourrettes, Joseph Caesar, married his son to the daughter of the lord of Vence, and his daughter Marie Roseline Elisabeth Charlotte to Pierre Joseph of Constantine, this June 3, 1777.

His wife Marie-Madeleine Alexandrine, daughter of Jean-Alexandre Romée de Vence and Angelique Louise de la Rochefoucaud, gives him two daughters:

- Angélique Joséphine Mélanie born and baptized in June 1778 in Aix-en-Provence, is married in 1800 to Joachim Louis Ernest, Count of Hinnisdal, Baron de Fumel. The Count dies in March 1814 and his widow in February 1848 in Paris.

- Sabine Rosalie Oursine Léontine is baptized on 28 May 1786 in Paris, at Saint- Sulpice. She was married in 1810 to François of Hannotel de Cauchy and died in 1819.

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In 1784, Marie-Madeleine Alexandrine Julie de Villeneuve-Vence, married to Joseph Guichard

Romée de Tourrettes, is admitted to royal court honors and named Dame of H.R.H. the Countess of Artois, Maria Teresa of Savoy, wife of the future Charles X. She has the title of Countess of Villeneuve-Tourrettes. She is extraordinarily cultured, a little *bas-bleu* [untranslatable], fine teacher, intelligent and tireless correspondent of the Comte de Thoranne and the Cardinal de Beausset.

During the Revolution, she was arrested with her mother Angelique Louise de la Rochefoucaud, Countess of Vence, with her daughter Angélique Joséphine Melanie, Countess of Hinnisdal, with her step- brother and sister, the Marquis and the Marquise of Perier de Montcavrel. They are all incarcerated in Oiseaux. She is released with her mother and daughter in October 1794.

She died at her daughter's house in Paris in 1827, was first buried at Mont Valérien then at Ferfay en Artois, domain of his son-in-law where his daughter will join it in 1848.

*“January 14, 1789 — Death of Madame la Baroness de Villeneuve de Puget, noble lady Marie Ursule de Villeneuve Tourrettes, wife of Mr. Jean Paul de Puget, knight lord of Châteauneuf and other places, and provided with all the sacraments of the Church, who died on 12 current at one o'clock in the afternoon, in the seigneurial castle of this place, 52 years old and 5 months. She was buried in the cemetery of this parish according to her will contained in its codicil 18 of the current received by Me Isnard, notary of this place, after nevertheless all the funeral honors due to a daughter and sister of marquis lords of this place were returned to her body, whose funeral was attended besides Messieurs the undersigned vicars of the said parish, by several other priests summoned for this, the Messieurs officers of the jurisdiction, the Messieur mayor and consuls of the community also undersigned at with*

*the exception of the second consul who did not informed of this by us inquired, the Rectors of the Holy Sacrament and other parish altars, the brotherhoods of Saint Joseph and penitents whites and a great contest of the inhabitants..."* This unfortunate baroness preferred to disappear before the terrible events of the Revolution, with a certain modesty...

Thus ends the story of the family of Villeneuve de Tourrettes who reigned over the village for four centuries. I cannot prevent myself from telling you what happened to their cousins in the 18th century.

### ***The adventure of Mme de St Vincent***

This is Julie, daughter of Alexandre Gaspard, Marquis de Vence and Madeleine Sophie de Simiane, daughter of the Marquise de Grignan and granddaughter of the Marquise de Sévigné. Julie is born in 1726, she married Jules François Paul de Fauris, Marquis of Saint-Vincent. Married for fifteen years, his union is not happy. Her outrageous behavior obliges her family to lock her up in the Benedictine convent of Milan in 1753, by letter cachet granted by the king. This process thus makes it possible to escape the justice of the ordinary courts, avoiding an infamous appearance. A long lawsuit opposes her to the Duke of Richelieu. Indeed, Julie takes advantage of his semi-freedom to have lovers and debts. *"After fifteen years, she had the idea of writing to the Duc de Richelieu that she had once seen at his father's house. Richelieu, fond of adventures, answered her very kindly. She then confided to him her financial embarrassments, Richelieu sent her a prescription for 3000 livres, quite insufficient. Julie makes a forgery of the banknote raising the sum to 80,000 livres. Creditors beware, Julie manufactured several forgeries for 200,000 livres at various deadlines. Richelieu ends up being informed. A trial begins, Julie is locked up at the Concierge. One of her old friends declares that Julie traced on the window the signature of*

*Richelieu. The latter had to pay the expenses, it cost him 64,000 livres. All Paris laughed at his disappointment and repeated the reply of the intriguer during a confrontation:*

*- "Can I be suspected of having given 400,000 livres to such a figure? " exclaimed Richelieu*

*- "Oh, sir! It's not because of my figure that you gave me this sum, it's because of yours! (According to E. de Juigné of Lassigny)*

### ***Curious reflections of a curate***

In 1761, Savornin, the village priest, noted at the beginning of the Parish Register this original thought which reveals to us the habits of the time : *"The wigs that have become so fashionable would not be liked so much if they did not accompany so well the face and if they only hid ten or twelve good years that they seem to take away from those who wear them. That said, while they are very inconvenient they are loved at all times.*

*A noticeable affectation gives a contrary idea of what one affects. There is no feast like that of a miser. »*

A few years later, in 1777, he made a curious new annotation:

*"As we only know men by their words, you have to believe them before the actions destroy them. Sometimes we find that the people we believe to be enemies are not exactly that ; one is then very ashamed of having been mistaken. It is enough that one is always received at ...(?) when one is allowed to.*

*Our religion is admirable in its maxims, and the fundamental truths it establishes are all divine. In*



*other religions one gives something to reason, a lot to passions and almost everything to nature: in Christianity, we fight the passions, we destroy nature and reason is subjugated. » .*

## ***Under the Revolution***

On May 21, 1792, the commissioner in charge of the inventory of the properties of emigrants rings at the door of the "country house" of Le Caire. He is accompanied by two municipal officers, including the mayor of the municipality, according to the law of April 8 of that same year. The House is looked after by Françoise Teisseire, wife of Georges Gazagnaire. The inventory drawn up makes it possible to judge life in Caire.

Ground- floor, the furniture in the dining room is in white wood ; a table is covered with a tray of marble. In the chapel, two chairs in fabric, four straw chairs and three kneelers furnish the room, a large framed painting gilt tops the altar, four candlesticks, a white wooden confessional and small frameless paintings complete the set. A jarring containing four jars of oil of one hundred rups each gives access to other modestly furnished rooms. east side, a pretty bedroom with a walnut bunk and canopy must belong to the lady of the premises. Five chairs covered in yellow satin, a small drawer desk in walnut, and a writing table add to the charm of the room, decorated with two painted canvas tapestries. A small cabinet is adjoining with bathtub, bidet and bedside table, period comfort.

The south bedroom is well appointed with walnut berth, three-seater sofa and straw chairs, corner, dresser for two walnut drawers and bedside table with its pot. The bathroom is adjoining. others rooms follow one another up to a room with walnut berth and canopy where four "shepherdesses" covered with canvas and fifteen armchairs surround three white wooden tables with drawers: this is probably the

playroom where the household met at nightfall, for a fun evening.

On the top floor, a succession of "nasturtiums", rooms under the roof, with their walnut berth and upholstered armchairs, open onto the hallway.

Above the oven, a reserve contains larch planks, rubble stones from Marseille and abalone wood planks. (ADAM 1Q 35-36)

It's the furniture of a pleasant country house, well-kept, without ostentation, nothing of a rich home, but with a certain comfort and plenty of rooms for one large family or many friends...

## ***On the subject of Masséna***

After the inventory of Caire chateau, the domain is sold in batches to different buyers. On 9 Messidor Year III, Rosalie Constantin Villeneuve, the daughter of the former Lord of Tourrettes, buys from the Nation two lands located in Caire, without power to recover the chatelaine's house.

According to Tourrettan tradition, Masséna came to spend a "holiday" in this place, but no one knows what happened next, because we find this domain in the bequest of the famous marshal. Indeed, by notarial deed of August 27, 1859, we learn of the sale of the domain of Le Caire, in front of the notaries Me Thomas Adolphe Aynaud de Vallauris and Me Sauvaire de Grasse, by proxy, of "Mr. *Honoré Charles Michel Joseph Count Reille, Marshal of France, senator, Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour and member of several foreign orders, residing at Paris in his hotel rue Saint Dominique n° 127 and Mr. Charly Joseph Reille former captain of staff, knight of the Legion of Honour, residing in Paris rue du Luxembourg n° 26...* Marshal Reille had no other wife as Madame Victoire Thècle Masséna, died in Paris on March 18, 1857... M. Charly Joseph

*Reille is single... the estate of Caire located in Tourrettes-lès-Vence, canton du Bar, arrondissement of Grasse, with its dependencies from Honoré Martin Polyeucte, Chevalier Reille, died in Paris on the 19 May 1858, whose appearing parties are the only heirs, each for half. (Act No. 172)*

*"Sellers of Le Caire having picked up the estate of M. le Chevalier Reille, their brother and uncle, of whom they are the sole heirs by notarial deed by Me Charlot et Cie, May 28 1858. Mr. le Chevalier Reille held the estate of Caire of the heirs of Marshal Masséna, Prince d'Essling or Madame Masséna, countess Reille, according to the act of December 19 182?. Notary Gazan in Antibes. (Act No. 173 incomplete).*

In order to better understand these acts, let's take a look at the life of Masséna and his son-in-law Count Reille.

Born in Nice in 1758, in the kingdom of Sardinia, Andrea Massena is from Piedmont. Orphaned at the age of six, he was raised with his grand-mother in Levens, then with his uncle in Nice. At 13 years, he embarks on a merchant ship and made several trips. At 17, he joined the Royal Italian Regiment, a kind of Foreign Legion for Piedmontese and Italians. Become adjutant, he cannot hope for a command post higher as a result of his commoner origin. He left the army in August 1789, after 14 years on duty. He married Marie Rosalie Lamarre, daughter of a ruined surgeon from Antibes. The young couple opens a grocery store in the old premises from the stepfather, but he is bored and the grocery store not working well. André takes advantage of the Revolution and the creation of the National Guard in Antibes to sign up as an instructor captain in this corps of volunteers. In 1790, the Guard Nationale receives a reinforcement of three officers, a non-commissioned officer and 91 men from the national guards of

Vence, Saint-Paul, Vallauris, Mougins, Tourrettes and Saint-Vallier. (municipal Archives of Antibes H 13-11).

It was then that his 2nd Battalion was sent to Vence to defend the Var border. According to a custom of the Revolution, its soldiers elected him lieutenant-colonel of his company. War against Austria is declared, the French armies are fighting in the mountains of the Alpes Maritimes, where Masséna is pointed out by his superiors and is promoted brigadier general, in 1793. Sent to Toulon, which the royalists had given with its harbour to the English, he helps to liberate the city and meets a certain Napoleone Buonaparte, promoted to head of battalion. It's a rivalry between the two men, where the younger will overtake the oldest. Napoleon said of him:

*"He was strongly built, indefatigable, night and day on horseback among the rocks and mountains... He was determined, brave, intrepid, full of ambition and self-esteem; her distinctive character was stubbornness, never discouraged... His conversation was not interesting but at the first gunshot, in the midst of balls and dangers his thought acquired strength and clarity. beaten, he started again as if he had been victorious. » (According to General Marshall Cornwall).*



Portrait of Masséna in 1789

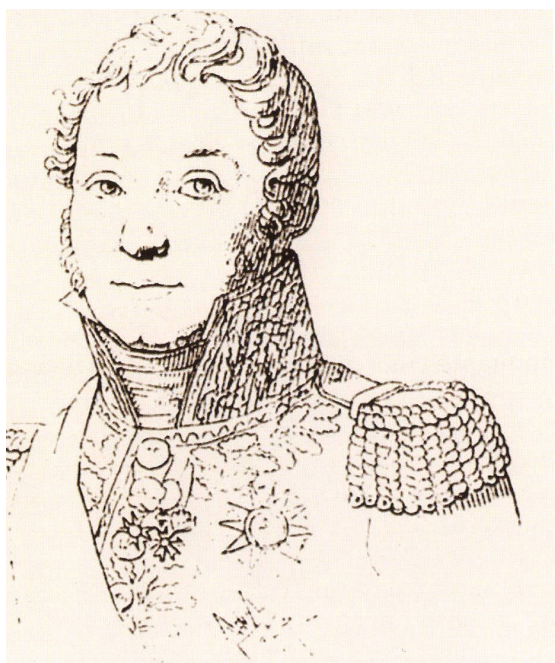
Small in stature, thin and lean, he has neither primary education or instruction. His figure is full of energy and sagacity, he has a look of eagle. He holds his head high with dignity imposing and provocative audacity; her imperative gesture, his unspeakable ardor, his word brief, his lucid thinking make him a grown man for authority and command. In 1796, he was congratulated by letter from the Management Board in the Italian Campaign. He will have a decisive stake in the bridge of Lodi and at Rivoli the year next. Bonaparte's strategic genius is accompanied by the tireless power marching and the dynamic and skilful tactics deployed by Masséna on the battlefield. Received in Paris, at the Luxembourg Palace, in an atmosphere of elegance in manners and clothing, Masséna feels ill at ease; he is named by the Management Board "the darling child of Victory". Refusing to obey orders of the Directory where corruption then reigns and bad administration, Masséna, man in the field, follows his instincts and takes the victory of Zurich with speed of action, his

determination and the ability of his commandment. Bonaparte recognizes his military genius, but is a bit jealous. He entrusts him the Army of Italy where Masséna meets General Reille, an excellent Chief of Staff. Then he asks the emperor to be a part of the Grande Armée against Prussia; there he will work wonders with little means at his disposal: he was named Duke of Rivoli, and later Prince of Essling. Yet, in 1808, during an unfortunate game of hunting with the emperor, his face is riddled by bullets from Napoleon himself, he loses an eye. Bad luck or revenge, history doesn't say ...

If Napoleon likes his subordinate, for his decisiveness and his brilliance in fire, he seeks to demolish it for secondary reasons. On the battlefield, Masséna is an admirable technician in action, and a great leader. He exerts on his troops an electrical influence, an almost supernatural power by the lightning speed of his command. He is everywhere, sees everything, orders the smallest details, wants to do everything himself, shares the misery of his men, what is popular as how to achieve it. But Napoleon lets him fend for himself in uncomfortable assaults, without reinforcement of men or weapons. He is a better leader in combat than administrator; he is blamed for the indiscipline of his troops, of which he bears the responsibility, and his disagreement with his officers who refuse to obey him. Abandoned during the Portuguese campaign, he could not avoid the defeat that Napoleon hastened to criticize. Yet Wellington, against whom he fights, recognizes in him "a rare courage and a remarkable tenacity. He is more popular to his enemies than his leaders. Sick, disappointed, Masséna died in Paris in 1817.

As for Honoré Charles Michel Reille, he served under Masséna as aide camp, then adjutant general. He is in all the glorious battles that built the glory of the Empire: Lodi, Arcole, Rivoli, Zurich, Jena and Friedland where he was Napoleon's aide-de-camp,

Wagram and Waterloo where he covered himself with glory and two wounded horses under him. In 1808 he becomes Count of the Empire. In 1814 he married Victoire, Masséna's only daughter. The fall of the Emperor does not alter his glorious destiny: named Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour in 1815, Commander of the Order of Merit military officer of Bavaria, Knight of the Order of Seraphim of Sweden, of St. Henry of Saxony and of the Iron Crown, raised Peer of France by Louis XVIII in 1819 and gentleman of his chamber in 1820, appointed Marshal of France in 1847 by Louis-Philippe.



*Honoré Charles Michel Reille*

Covered with honors and titles, the Count Reille died in Paris in 1860, after a long life which has known three revolutions, four monarchies, two republics and two empires... His son René will embrace a military career; entered Nice at the head of the first battalion of imperial liberating troops, Captain Reille, grandson of Masséna, received in May 1859 the enthusiastic reception of the jubilant people. Flowers are thrown from all the windows on his detachment, and the young captain turns to pretty young ladies,

particularly eager to greet the French soldiers, answering them:

*“Thank you for your flowers, ladies, thank you. When we return, we will bring you laurels”*. (According to the Municipal Review of Antibes n° 39 December 1994) .

### ***The new owners***

The sale of Caire chateau, August 7 1859, is made for the benefit of three buyers from Tournettes: Mr. Napoleon Merle, farmer, Honoré Carnaval, mason and Barthélémy Valentin Mallet, owner farmer. The domain is cut in two, *sieur* Merle receives half of the property consisting of plowing, meadows, woods, pastures, clearings, farm buildings, houses housing including the castle, the stable, the barn and other outbuildings. Gentlemen Carnaval and Mallet share the other half. The line of separation is drawn north-south, it cuts the castle in two leaving the hall entrance and the common staircase. The East part receives the entire domain from the east to the sheepfold of Jas neuf, that of the West includes the area that extends to the west with the Old Jas, to the valley which separates it from Courmettes. The great reservoir south of the communal fountain remains jointly owned, the water is distributed according to an agreement between the owners concerned, to be distributed according to a precise alternating programme. A pipeline system will be planned for this distribution. A hundred fifty-five abalone and thirty-one poplars are felled and shared in two equal portions then sold in public auctions. The three chestnut trees near of the facade of the house can neither be delimbed nor cut down. At the foot of the spring, one finds a communal “*patecq*” planted with two large chestnut trees which should not be cut. The grass there will be mowed and shared between the two parties... (Domain sharing of le Caire of September 26, 1859)



*Doctor Monod and his wife*

The large domain is shared. It will live a series of successions, sales and even of exchange between Anaïs Roustan, widow Pons, and her brothers, the one who had the plaque engraved above the chapel door. On the east side, it passes to the West; which will later allow doctor Gérard Monod to buy in 1929 the levant tower, when he leaves his post at the Courmettes sanatorium. His grandson, who has become the owner, likes to find this corner of his childhood, in the quiet countryside and the grace of unspoilt nature. In our time, a few horses have taken up residence in this vast area and bring an extra charm instead.

The other half of the castle is falling apart slowly and surely. It would be good if a new owner brings it back to life and restores its splendor of yesteryear...

**Footnote by the translator:**

The Chateau of Le Caire remains standing. It was put up for sale in 2020, but following adverse reaction to attempts to cordon off the land, preventing free access for walkers and riders, it was bought up by the commune of Tourrettes, for the future benefit of the entire community.



## 12.2 The Chateau of Valettes



### Description

From 1024 is mentioned the castrum of Valettes (Castrum Valettis) near that of Tourrettes. So there is already a stronghold near the Passage of the Loup. We remember that in 1224 the Count of Provence, Raymond Bérenger V offers to Hugues Sicard *“the rights of Torretis except the waterfall...”*

In accepting the favours of his overlord, the noble countryman separates from his family to fight against the count's power. He raises against his family castle of Tourrettes that of the Valettes, blocking the road from Vence to Grasse, linking the two neighboring episcopal sees, hence his importance. Hugues Sicard becomes the sole owner by giving up his shares on the castle of Tourrettes.

In 1386, on May 9, Queen Marie de Blois, mother and guardian of the young Count Louis II of Provence, confirms that Bertrand de Grasse, son of Bertrand the *“Recatille”*, the *“badly combed”*, is lord of Bar, Valettes, Courmettes, etc.... in the privileges granted by the Counts Charles Ter, Charles II, Robert and Louis II of Provence to his successive ancestors.

But Bertrand de Grasse du Bar is not the sole owner of Les Valettes since he acquired of Hugon de Saint

Laurent, on May 10, 1390, the quarter of Valettes and on January 19, 1395 he obtained confirmation of this sale by Raimond of Carros, lord of Valettes, who sells him the rest on November 23, 1400. December 4 next, he pays Monet de Saint Laurent the rest of the price of this land by an act where he qualifies himself as *“knight and professor of laws”*.

In January 1414, Louis II gave him *albergue* rights for its domain of Valettes *“which had been depopulated by the wars”*. It is nothing more than a *“vast uninhabited solitude”*. (According to the Marquis de Grasse)

Finally, on December 18, 1421, he received Queen Yolande, wife of King René, the feasts and jurisdictions of its lands of Valletta, Courmes and Courmettes... confirmed by King René himself in 1442.

In 1437, King René ordered him by letter to adjudicate the dispute explained in a petition from Lord Paulet de Villeneuve-Tourrettes, concerning a water source arising at Tourrettes and serving the inhabitants of St.Paul. It is the eternal quarrel between the two neighboring communities...

In the 15th century, the estate was repopulated thanks to the counts. The abandoned fields are taken over by newcomers or by the inhabitants of Bar whose population has increased a lot.

On the death of Count Bertrand, around 1455, the Valettes area will pass through the hands of his third son Charles after the death of his two eldest sons. In 1499, James son of Charles lends homage to the Bar, les Valettes, Canaux, Courmettes... renewed in 1515. He died in 1520. To administer the goods of his children, his widow gives proxy to Antoine Villeneuve-Tourrettes, who had married his cousin Jeanne de Grasse. Claude grandson of Jacques is lord

of Valettes and Courmettes... He made a wil in 1560 and named his cousin Honoré II de Villeneuve-Tourrettes as executor. The family spirit is the strength of the Grands...

But in the 16th century, the cereal fields and vegetables are no longer profitable; they are gradually abandoned, the forest resumes its rights. During the reign of Henri IV, around 1609, the castle of Valettes is restored: a beautiful residence replaces the fortification which protected until then the small bridge over the Loup. We find the ruins of the old building in the cellars of the current castle. Around the estate, the hill is planted with olive trees, orange trees and vines.

In an inheritance contract of June 14, 1638, *“the land and seigneurie of Valettes with all its jurisdiction, high, medium and low justice, land, buildings, Bois du Claux, rights, faculties and outbuildings, is estimated at 7,000 livres”*. This jurisdiction also includes the right to put to death by hanging on a gallows placed to the west from the castle, not far from the road, within sight of the passers-by.

By an act of October 17, 1642, we learn that the Valettes area is in *“insolutumdatio”* - jointly owned; Charles of Bar compromises with his brothers and sisters who are still alive, he cedes this land, for 54,000 livres, to his brother Honoré, author of the Canaux branch of Valettes. In June 1649, this same Charles put on foot, by order of the king, 500 men to form the regiment in the name of "Monsieur de Valettes" his young son.

On July 10, 1671, the inhabitants of Valettes complain officially not to have a chapel on their side of the river. A small chapel is then built, shortly after, at the edge of the road, under the castle.

From generation to generation, the domain of Valettes will remain in the hands of the family of Grasse du Bar until the unique heiress, Claire, Véronique, Charlotte daughter of Charles-Joseph de Grasse du Bar, Lord des Valettes, married the lord of Tourrettes, Joseph César de Villeneuve, July 19 1756. In the estate of Charles Joseph of Grasse, in 1776, the land of Valettes is estimated at 124,180 livres, of which 3,521 livres of income. But it remains in the hands of the Grasse Canaux-Valettes family.

## *The Admiral de Grasse*



At the beginning of the 18th century, François de Grasse, known as “Marquis de Grasse” (1681-1723), lord of the Canaux-Valettes branch and Mauvans, is captain of the regiment of Villegagnon Dragons. He moves into Vence, in 1707, with his fifty dragoons to deliver the city from attack by the Imperials. In 1713 he renounces the land of Mauvans. He married in 1709 Véronique de Villeneuve-Barrême, sister of the countess Margaret of the Bar, of which he has ten children. His daughter Elizabeth Marie Victoire is called “Mademoiselle des Mauvans” while that another of his girls, daisy Veronique, is called “Mademoiselle of Saint Arnoux”. Each child wears then the title of a properties of the lord, which allows us to find the trace of these areas... The tenth child is a boy named François-Joseph, better known as Admiral de Grasse. On his baptismal certificate, we learn that *“François-Joseph-Paul de Grasse, son by François de Grasse and Véronique de Villeneuve, was born on September 13, 1722 and was baptized at Bar on the 14th. Godfather: Joseph de Grasse his brother; godmother: Suzon de Grasse his sister ”.*

In reality, the future admiral was born in Valettes castle, country house of the Grasse du Bar family. This property, located a few leagues from the village, on the other side of the Loup, is part of the parish of Bar. It is a three-storey square building in the typical Provençal style. Oriented at noon, its sunny terraces overlook the small river, it is a peaceful stop in a setting enchanting. All year round, the Grasse family in full inhabits the dark castle Fortified Bar. The mother of the future admiral, Véronique, visits her sister Marguerite the Marquise, widow and owner of the premises, vacationing in Valettes, when she puts the child into the world, “accidentally”. The infant is baptized the next day in the church of Le Bar. This is how François-Joseph is called “Knight of Valettes”. At one year he loses his father. He is a turbulent child who likes to play war and trains a band of young restless boys in the wild gorges of the Loup. He is stubborn and picky; one says of him that he is *“well born but insufficiently whipped”*... He prefers physical and violent efforts and violence to the labours of the mind. (According to Jean- Jacques Antier).

He is brought up by a tutor in the library in the southeast tower of the château du Bar. This medieval castle had been restored in the 17th century by opening large windows which overlooked terraced gardens, covered with flowers and rare trees. Basement rooms with vaulted ceilings, supported by thick pillars, lead to the underground passages the children use to go to the mountain.

During the hunting season, everyone is awakened early to the sound of horns. The beautiful company goes astride the Domaine des Valettes, the ladies Marguerite and Véronique, carrying the baby in her arms, go by carriage. The descent to the Loup is done without incident, the climb from the Verrière to the wood of Courmettes makes the horses pant. The gathering takes place at the intersection of the road



from Tourrettes to Saint-Arnoux, on the domain heights. The ladies stayed at the castle in the countryside, with young children. The *piqueurs* drive down the game, the riders scatter in the wood to force “deer, *cabrolles* and boars”. After the *hallali* – recall - sounded by the horns, the evening begins at Château des Valettes: the game is roasted in the great chimneys, the historical accounts, the poems and songs played on the hunting horns entertain the congregation. The return to the village du Bar is done late at night, by the light of the torches carried by servants.

One cannot pass by in silence the life of this giant of the seas, this emeritus strategist who will give his life and strength in the service of the king and of France, and will be thanked so little for it. His constant struggle against the English fleet, three times better armed than the French Navy, to reconquer the islands of the West Indies producing sugar, indigo and essential cotton to Europe, his aid to young America to obtain its independence, will make him a hero and will win the admiration of his allies and especially... of his enemies!

But this will happen across the Atlantic, far from the Court of Versailles and its splendor, its shenanigans and pirouettes: in short, in another world.

In France, his honesty, his intransigence, his frankness will alienate the king, the Court and all the Navy except a few officer friends faithful and impartial, and will bring about his misfortune...

This great man is a great man: built like an athlete, he measures more than two meters high and does not know his strength. He learns it at his expense by punishing a sailor he sent crashing "from port to starboard" into the ship's bridge. He believes him to be dead, he avoids continuing. Anyway, the crew has understood. His soldiers fear him and love him

because they trust him. In action, de Grasse is radiant, his gunners say of him: "Our captain is 6-foot-3, but it's 6 feet 6 inches that he measures in combat". De Grasse is very authoritarian and demands absolute obedience. His life will be upright and faithful to his values.

\*\*\*\*\*

At eleven, the future admiral was received at the Toulon Navy guards company, ancestor of our Naval School, then he was admitted to the "pagerie" of the Grand Master of the Order of Malta.

He spent three years in Malta where he received practical and theoretical teaching for future Knights. He goes out to sea on galleys to fight the barbarians of the Mediterranean. Three years later, he joins the naval guards school in Toulon and receives baptism of fire at the Battle of Cape Sicie. He becomes Ensign de Vaisseau in 1734, then Lieutenant de Vaisseau in 1754, finally Captain of the Ship and Knight of the Order of Saint-Louis at the age of forty. On board the "Robust", he commands a division of 74 guns at the Battle of Ouessant in 1778. The outcome of the battle is undecided despite the fury of the valiant captain who does not have full command. But the English fleet, all powerful on the seas, realizes that it must take account now of the strength of the French navy that it thought was dying...

Meanwhile, the English and the French dispute the islands of the West Indies, while the Americans want to "push" the English outside their country. At the head of his four ships, François de Grasse rushes to the West Indies to join Admiral d'Estaing. They undermine the English fleet which cautiously escapes. The French have a morale of steel... The American "insurgents" ask for help but bad weather prevents the French fleet from coming to their rescue.

François de Grasse is hit by the fevers, storms make the return long and hard. On his arrival in France, he learns of the death of one of his daughters and that of his second wife. Exhausted, he asks the king for his retirement, he is 59 years old. But Louis XVI refuses this decision, receives him at Versailles February 1, 1781. He had the privilege of offering his arms to Queen Marie-Antoinette to open the ball given in his honour in the Gallery of Ice.

On this occasion the king appoints him Commander of the Order of Saint-Louis and lieutenant general of the naval armies, rank which corresponds to the current one of vice-admiral. He is also responsible for assisting the allies Americans.

With the ardour that we know of de Grasse, in Brest repairs are made in record time of the fleet damaged by the harsh battles, and he recruits crews. At the end of March 1781, de Grasse contemplates with happiness, from the top of the quarterdeck of the superb flagship, the "*Ville de Paris*", armed with 104 guns, the 28 vessels, 6 frigates, 2 corvettes and 2 cutters placed under his command. On March 22, the fleet leaves Brest and heads for the West Indies where it arrives at the end of April after a lightening crossing. It damages six English ships, but the victory is not total because of the indecision of the French rearguard led by Bougainville. The English fleet flees before the French attack! We can say that Grasse is of great worth to the glory of the naval army of that time thanks to his liveliness of action, his spirit of decision, its ardor and enthusiasm.

The Americans call on them for help. Without hesitation, de Grasse answers their call. The English await him in force in New York. De Grasse foils their plan by going to Chesapeake Bay, since abandoned little by the enemy... Washington lets burst its joy. The Battle of Chesapeake is violent. The rushing English gave time to the French to put themselves in

combat order in the best condition, the French fleet is invincible.

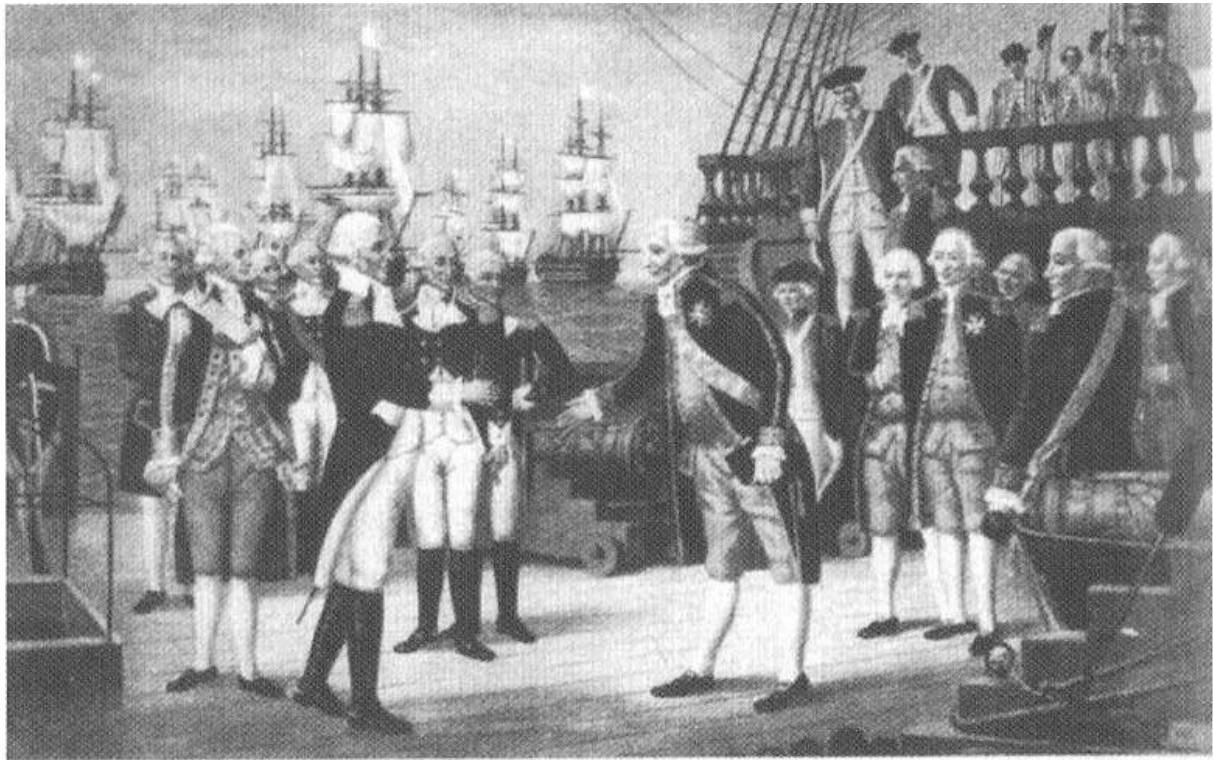
In spite of the orders from Versailles to regain the West Indies, de Grasse chooses to engage in the battle of Yorktown to help Washington. At the end of six days of fierce battle, the English cease combat. Their capitulation is signed on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1781. Two days later, Washington and Lafayette go to edge of the "*Ville de Paris*" to thank the Admiral. Washington will declare more later: "You were the arbiter of the war".



*The "Ville de Paris"*

His mission accomplished, Admiral de Grasse can finally obey the king and make his way to the West Indies in British hands. But the winds changing, the varying currents between the islands and especially the indiscipline of certain officers cause the defeat of the French fleet. The "*Ville de Paris*" is isolated and de-masted under fire of 200 converging guns. De Grasse must surrender. Of the 1100 men of her crew, only 100 men and 3 officers are unscathed. The admiral is taken prisoner, he is transferred to the "*Formidable*", where Rodney, the enemy admiral, receives him with all the honors of a hero and invites him to his table.

Yet defeat is not terrible: only five French ships are lost, while 25 English ships are harmed and 1500 enemy sailors are out of combat. In London, Admiral de Grasse is received with pomp, applauded by the crowd. The king offers him residence in apartments



*The surrender to Admiral Rodney*

at St. James's Royal Palace, which our hero refuses in order to stay with his officers. All costs of the detainees are provided by the government. He is not a prisoner of war but the distinguished guest of whom we celebrate exemplary courage. The King of England gives him his sword, famous artists make his portrait, he is received into the English aristocracy. With the British Prime Minister, he develops a draft peace treaty which he is responsible for presenting to King Louis XVI who accepts it. It is the Treaty of Versailles of September 3, 1783. Meanwhile, America wins its independence.

Admiral de Grasse can finally taste a well-deserved rest in his chateau of Tilly in Ile-de-France. But his fiery character won't leave him. He wants to do himself justice and overwhelms Bougainville *"for not having obeyed to the signals and for having abandoned the admiral ship"*. But these remarks, overwhelming the famous navigator, arouse the wrath of the king and the minister who do not forgive him the scandal raised, even to safeguard his Honour. He

is banished from the court and asked to "return to his province". De Grasse therefore isolates himself in his château de Tilly, where he received testimonies, esteem and friendship on the part of Americans. America sends him four guns captured from the English at the Battle of Yorktown, *"in testimony of the invaluable services... received from him on that memorable day"*. But the admiral is worn out, he dies in Paris on the 14th January 1788 in his house in the rue Saint-Honoré. He is buried in Saint-Roch, his Parisian parish, his heart is placed in the church of Tilly.

We try to forget it, but in 1946, the French Navy gives its name to a cruiser, the "De Grasse" of which the city of Grasse is the godmother, then to a transatlantic ship between Le Havre and New York in 1947 and finally to a frigate in 1974. The cities of Grasse and Bar-sur-Loup are happy to be the place of birth of this great hero of Independence of the United States of America, including Americans who don't forget to celebrate the memory every year in October,

by sending one of their representatives at the commemoration made by these two cities.  
(According to the Association of Friends of the Marine Museum of Grasse).

In June 1966, on the cruiser "De Grasse", the sailors witness the explosion of the bomb nuclear "Antares" on the atoll of Mururoa in the Pacific. On deck, the men are ordered to withdraw inside the ship. But the explosion is greater than expected. Recently, the frigate lost its sonar in the Bay of Biscay, where it lies more than 1000 meters deep...

But the history follows its course. Already roar the cannons of the Revolution. Like all the chateaux, that of Valettes is seized as emigrant property. Five owners different people share the building and leave it degraded. It was in 1962 that a lawyer from London, Mr. Philip Frere, buys it and begins to restore it. After him, Mr. Edward Pineles, completes its restoration, giving it back its splendour of yesteryear.

It was in Levens that we found the portrait of one of Admiral de Grasse's sisters, married to the Count of Levens, Raymond de Chabaud, near another Tourrette du Comté from Nice...

Not far from the superb gate that closes the property, a poor shed hides its misery at the foot of three tall cypresses, at the intersection the roads of Tourrettes and the lower gorges of Loup: maybe it's the remains of this little Saint-Pierre chapel, transformed into a garage during the Revolution, and since abandoned...

**Footnote by the translator:**

The Chateau de Valettes, situated on the Route des Valettes Sud near Pont du Loup, remains in good order and is privately owned.

### 12.3. The Chateau of Courmettes



#### Description

The Courmettes estate is located at 800 meters above sea level, on a shoulder of the pre-Alpine mountain along the course of the Loup. It is a secret and charming place which only discovered when you come out on the plateau after a tough switchback climb from the foot of the mountain. It is dominated by the Pic of Courmettes which culminates at 1248 meters. It extends over a vast plateau of 700 hectares, on two green floors thanks to the presence of sources.

The most important part hides in its heart a small country castle of the 18th century, to which were added more recent constructions. Around the chatelaine house, large meadows are bordered by centuries-old trees.

The other part of the plateau overhangs the Gorges du Loup, limited by an impressive drop. There, some *marnes* retain rainwater in ponds, which allows the breeding of sheep. Just before arriving on the plateau, the road goes along the farm specializing in the manufacture of goat cheese prepared by the shepherd poet Bruno. The bucolic air of the place leads to poetry...

Recent excavations have revealed that man already inhabited this place more than 50,000 years ago. The Camptracier dolmen, near the ponds, is called "the Tomb of the Ancestor" by the Tourrettans. The rectangular *cella* is formed of five limestone slabs opening onto a corridor to the west. The site is very damaged; flint shards and an arrowhead allowing it to be dated from the Chalcolithic period.

Another site has completely disappeared for twenty years; this is the field de l'Eouvière, enclosed in "arc of a circle on *à-pic*", [untranslatable] located not far from a spring. A lookout post has been recently installed there to monitor forest fires. During these works was discovered a grave still containing a skeleton and fragments of vases in terracotta used to store crops, which proves the ancient agricultural activity of the places. The whole is surrounded by ruins of habitats collapsed, proof of the existence of a village in Roman times, in the early days of our era. (According to the heritage inventory of Tourrettes).

Animal bones discovered by paleontologists demonstrate that there were lynxes, cave bears, wolves and panthers in the Mousterian period, or 100,000 to 35,000 years before our era...

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The remains of an old war castle are located on a promontory bordering of the plateau in its western part. He is better known as "Clos de la Ville". A great north-east/south-west dam wall runs along the summit and the northeast flank on a length of 275 meters. It's possible that this castle was built on a site more ancient of the Celto Ligurian type... At the top, the leveled ruins outline a building on the ground rectangular to which is attached a tower square, remains of the building and the keep lordly. Mortar-bound walls betray a medieval building. Around the remains of dwellings cover the eastern flank; there were found fragments of ceramics, sigillated amphoras, tegulae, pieces of flint tools, of a sandstone sleeping wheel and basalt, spindle whorls... These elements show the existence of life since prehistory, the protohistory and medieval times in this place.

At the beginning of the 13th century, the Count of Provence made himself master of the low country of Vence. To counter the castles of his adversaries, he

built fortifications along the Baous line. The fortified castle des Courmettes will block access to that of Courmes. The Count owns the major domain and the rights of *albergue* of 15 sous, the waterfall of 30 sous, of justice, of inquests and of *depaissance*: taxes of that time. (According to surveys on Rights and Revenues of Charles Ter of Anjou in Provence)

We remember that the count of “castra”, made from 1235 to 1244, refers to the “castrum de Cormeta” for Courmettes. According to the study of the demography of Vence, based on the number of “quest fires”, Tourrettes possessed 50 fires corresponding to 250 inhabitants, while that Courmettes had 4, about twenty of inhabitants. Seventy years later, in 1315, Courmettes displayed 13 lights, i.e. three times more, while Tourrettes had only 58, a increase of only forty inhabitants. What had happened?

We know that the bad weather caused famines followed by the Black Death which ravaged the fourteenth century. Have the residents deserted the unhealthy towns to recover health in the countryside? Yet it was the time when Provence was under the reign of the good King of Naples, Robert of Anjou, Count of Provence nicknamed “the Wise” and grandfather of the future Queen Jeanne. Tourrettes was not yet in the hands of the Villeneuves, whose lords shared the Tourrettan territory and gathered as a family in the various fortified castles of the time...

In 1312, there is a question of the priors of Tourrettes, Courmettes and Valettes in the Synod; in 1376, a certain vicar of Tourrettes, of Courmettes and Valettes is quoted in the list of proxies. But at the count of 1471, there is no one left in Courmettes. We can to think that this is the end of this first castle, abandoned for centuries and fallen into permanent ruin.

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In the 14th century, the first lord of Courmettes is Bertrand de Grasse, Count du Bar, lord of Valettes, le Rouret, Canaux, Courmes, Courmettes, of several villages of Estéron, Callian, Seillans, Montauroux, La Colle, Puybresson, Ubraye, Roquefort, Magagnosc, Saint-Paul de Vence, Mouans, Bormes and Saint-Julien... These titles and privileges are confirmed by Queen Mary of Blois, mother of Louis II, Count of Provence, by letters patent of May 9, 1386. Later, Queen Yolande, wife of Count Louis II and mother of King René, will confirm these titles by letters patent of December 18, 1421, renewed by King René in 1442.

In 1455, on March 19, Tanneguy du Châtel, Grand Seneschal of Provence, grants to Bertrand du Bar extension letters a month of the homage he was to pay for his lordship of Courmettes.

After the death of his first wife Marguerite de Forcalquier, daughter of the lord of Céreste, Bertrand du Bar marries Marguerite of Grimaldi, daughter of Luc, lord of Antibes and Yolande de Grimaldi, of whom he will have two children. In third weddings, he will marry with Sillonne des Ferres which will give him six children. Among these, his son Isnard will be bishop of the city of Grasse in 1451, then abbot sponsor of Lérins in 1463, and finally buried in the cathedral of Grasse.

Charles, Bertrand's son, becomes lord du Bar after the death of his two older brothers Montreal and Bertrand; he inherits the land of his father including Courmettes and Valettes. Advisor to King René and Chamberlain, he receives the order, on March 24, 1480, to repair the fortifications of Antibes and Cannes, and put in defense against the Catalans.

Jacques, son of Charles, in turn inherits of his father's lands and pays homage in 1499 then in 1515; he died in 1520.



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His son Claude in 1520 and his grand-son Claude the Reformed in 1540 inherited successively areas of Bar, Courmettes and Valettes.

In 1540, Jeanne, daughter of Claudius II, married Nicolas du Mas de Castellane, baron of Germany in Provence and received the Courmettes in dowry. Her husband was killed during religious wars; reformed, she sees her property seized by the King of France. In 1590 she abjures Protestantism, her goods are returned on condition that they continue to live in the Catholic religion and raise her children there.

From then on, the domain of Courmettes is no longer part of the property of counts of Grasse du Bar. It is in the hands of the Castellanes. However, there are acts of 1652 and 1683 relating to the “*fiedicommis*” – trust - opposing the will of Jacques de Grasse made in 1519 and concerning the Courmettes lands, les Valettes, la Malle, Canaux and le Rouret. This “*fiedicommis*” is a testamentary bequest made in favour of a person who is secretly charged to return it to another. Deals in wills are always tricky...

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In 1699, the pastoral visit of Monsignor Bouchenu, bishop of Vence, indicates the construction of a church in Courmettes...

That same year, Jeanne Millot, lady de Courmettes, daughter of Balthazar Millot de Serrat, Lord of Courmettes, is married to Antibes to the Lord of Vence François Sextius de Villeneuve, heir in 1698 of his father Alexandre, Marquis de Vence who catches the plague at the Battle of Gravelines and must leave his service as captain in the regiment of Harcourt. François Sextius is captain of the coast guard from Provence; he pays homage in 1700 and dies in a duel at Toulon in 1708 against the Chevalier de Grimaldi-Cagnes.

After the great turmoil of the French Revolution and the abolition of privileges, the Convention decrees the seizure of the property of emigratants in 1792. On 9 Messidor of Year III, Rosalie Villeneuve, married Constantin, buys for the Nation a land in Tourrettes for 2,000,000, and another for 4,000,000 sous, numbers 1086 and 1087. This Rosalie is the daughter of the lord de Tourrettes, married to Pierre Joseph Constantin of Nice, in 1777, the same day as his brother, during this lordly double marriage. On the property act of Courmettes, is mentioned the sale of the estate, dated 25 Floréal of the Year XII, or May 15, 1804. The seller is indeed Marie Roseline Elisabeth Charlotte Villeneuve, wife Constantin and daughter of the lord of Tourrettes. His sister-in-law Madeleine Alexandrine Julie Villeneuve-Vence, wife of Joseph Guichard Romée Villeneuve-Tourrettes is co-owner and signs the sale as well.

The buyer is Jacques Emmanuel Maurel of the town of Vence. This Monsieur Maurel will donate the estate to his son Joseph Marcellin Maurel, lawyer and mayor of Vence, donation registered on May 27, 1846. Between time, Mr. Maurel will have acquired the Villars by buying the shares of many Tourrettan owners. In 1878, on June 26, the widow of Marcellin Maurel makes a donation from Courmettes to Aubin François Antoine Emmanuel, “annuitant owner” of the city of Grasse, before dying in 1904. But the history of the Domaine des Courmettes is not finished, it will continue during the Twentieth century...

#### **Footnote by the translator:**

The Domaine des Courmettes is now managed as a Christian centre welcoming churches and individuals for various activities and offering seminars, internships and themed holidays raising environmental awareness.

## 12.4 The Chateau of Villeneuve



### Description

The *Château des Villeneuve* is located at the heart of the village on a square that has long borne his name, then often changed it: it's the castle square or the small place of the old days. At the end of the 18th century, it took the name of Place Mirabeau, in memory of the Count of Provence, great orator at the Assembly Constituent Assembly, then the 20th century dethroned it to honour one of the children of the country who has become Mayor of Tourrettes. So is it with the name places that evolve according to the fashion of centuries...

The chateau is a large provençale building with many tall windows. It encompasses an ancient tower which was certainly originally a watchtower. A old access door has become a window: located nine meters above the courtyard, she was the only opening to enter the dungeon, by means of a drawbridge or a lightweight system allowing access from provisionally. This tower was more or less high depending on the time. Its dilapidated roof was

truncated during the last works and fitted out on a crenellated terrace.

The old porch opens onto the inner courtyard, separated from the square by a surrounding wall. In the center of the courtyard was placed a fountain with water jet around the 1970s. The door entrance opens onto a large hall at the back from which rises a majestic staircase whose balusters are faithful copies of the balusters 17th century original balusters. This staircase leads to the landings of the floors in a spacious manner and very sonorous were the cries and the laughter of the children of the house. During restoration of the building, the rooms of the first floor located above the entrance, were removed in order to free up space and put add value to the staircase. A huge chandelier in Dutch pewter lights up the set; on the walls, sconces in the same style complete the lighting.

On the ground, the old stone paving is massive and imposing. A hatch reminds of the presence of a cistern under the courtyard which collected rainwater. On the ground floor, a vaulted room opens on the patio and on the square. It has its story. The staircase serves the three floors where large rooms have replaced narrow ones of the seigniorial castle. In this castle, each floor also has its own history which we will try to reconstruct...

### History

We have seen that around the year one thousand, following the insecurity generated, the lords group together the dwellings around a castrum, on a high and fortified site. It is the edification of the first fortified chateau, a war castle, with a dungeon whose door, located nine meters above the ground, is inaccessible to the invader. Gradually, this dungeon is surrounded by the outbuildings necessary for the lives of "*gens-d'armes*" and their stewardship.



This castrum is already important in the 13th century, since it is cited among the many places strong in the region.

In 1378, during the Great Schism, Queen Jeanne wants to reward the faithful knights who fought for her cause, she offered Guichard of Villeneuve, called the Bastard, the castle of Tourrettes with its lordly rights, that the Bastard had defended with the energy of a lion. When he died, his son Antoine inherited the estate; in 1437 he had the castle rebuilt in the style of his century, in the taste of splendor and splendor lords of that time...

There succeed the descendants of the Villeneuve-Tourrettes dynasty. During centuries, the great staircase will resound with cries of children or tears of their premature death. Because there are many births in this great castle and many deaths at an early age: each generation buries infants, toddlers, adolescents, young women in childbirth, in sadness of a life snatched away too soon.

But there are also great rejoicings. Church records inform us of the wedding of *"Lady Charlotte of Villeneuve, daughter of the late Sir Sipion of Villeneuve, lord of Tourrettes, Caire, Mauvans, Caignes and the late Lady Lucretia of Grimaldi d'Antibes, lady of the said Tourrettes"*, with Sir Louis Victor de Montolieu, Knight of the Order of Saint Louis, Lieutenant from one of the king's galleys... This marriage is celebrated on August 15, 1706, by Monsignor Crillon, bishop and temporal lord of Vence, du Broc, Bézaudin, l'Olive (near the Broc), Lord of Saint-Cézaire and Abbot of Royal monastery, in the presence of Sir Elzéar de Grimaldy, abbot of Clausonne, de Messire Nicolas Dhermitte, Lord of Fuveau, of Charles de Villeneuve, Knight of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem and Sir Albert of Durand, Lord of Sartoux, of whom follow the signatures...

This young Charlotte was born in May 1682 and 'undulated' the same day. Her baptism took place five years later. Her godfather was Sir Charles de Grimaldy of Antibes, Knight Marquis of Cagnes and her godmother Francon de Villeneuve, her older sister of eight years. This sister will be buried, at sixteen years, "in the tomb of his ancestors, located in the parish church, January 19, 1691 in the presence of his parents and more apparent of the place ". It is interesting to know the people who were buried in the stately vaults of the church whose wear and tear erased the names on the tombstones.

In the 17th century, the Tourrettan bourgeois are used to choosing the lord of the place, his wife or children as godfather and godmother of their children to whom they give the same first name. This is how we find many infants called Caesar Joseph, Scipio Joseph, Lucretius, Françoise, Charlotte. After the disappearance of her older sister, Charlotte will be asked in her turn, to be the godmother of many children who will bear her first name. This young wife will die at thirty...

In 1679 took place the baptism of *"noble Joseph Caesar de Villeneuve de Torrettes [sic], son of a noble Messire Scipio de Villeneuve of Caire and noble lady Lucretia de Grimaldy d'Antibes, baptized on July 18, the day of his birth. The godfather is the noble César de Villeneuve, lord de Tourrettes (his grandfather) and the godmother Françoise de Villeneuve, lady of Auribeau (his great-aunt)"*. From the age of three, this child will be godfather of newly baptized and thus take lordly service...

In 1684, is cited as godfather children of notables, *"Charley de Villeneuve, Knight of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem"*. The following year, in 1688 and in 1708, this "Charles de Villeneuve, knight of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem" is again cited as

sponsor in the commune: this Charles is the younger brother of lord Scipio, so he stays a certain time in this castle. He signs as "Knight of Tourrettes".

Let us consider for a moment the descendants of the lords of Villeneuve Tourrettes. We notice that :

In the 16th century, Claude, the reformed lord, married to Marguerite de Renaud, lady of Callian, has four boys and a girl, including two knights of Malta.

In the 17th century, Hannibal and Françoise de Villeneuve Thorenc have eight children, including four boys (two are Knights of Malta) and four daughters. César and Françoise de Blacas have in turn eight children: five boys (three of whom are Knights of Malta) and three daughters.

Scipio and Lucretius by Grimaldi d'Antibes have three children: a boy and two girls.

In the 18th century, Joseph Caesar and Elisabeth de Villeneuve Thorenc have no children. Joseph's natural children are raised in Caire chateau. On July 24, 1694, was buried at the age of eighty-seven years old "the noble César of Villeneuve, lord of this place, in the tomb of his ancestors" in the parish church. His son Joseph César will not have the chance to have a child by his wife and cousin Elisabeth de Villeneuve-Thorenc, Lady of Saint-Jeannet and Gaude. The true descendants of the Villeneuve-Tourrettes will stop there. But noble Caesar has a son and a natural girl, whom he will recognize for continue the line. This will be the second bastard branch with Scipio Joseph who will marry his cousin Marie Anne de Raimond, daughter of Lord of Eoulx and Villeneuve by his mother... The story can continue...

Scipio Joseph, recognized by his father and married to Marie Anne de Raimond d'Eoulx gives nine children: seven boys and two girls.

Joseph César II with his wife Claire Véronique Charlotte de Grasse from Le Bar have a boy and two girls, before the death bell of the Revolution rang...

In this great castle, therefore, live many people, both lords and servants, without counting widowed grandmothers, uncles and aunts returned to the house family...

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In 1758, it is the marriage of Marie Ursule which is celebrated in Tourrettes in the castle family. "*The year one thousand seven hundred and fifty eight and the twenty fourth of july wedding was solemnized in front of our mother the Holy Church by me priest perpetual undersigned after two publications banns made at the parish mass on st Sunday both in this parish and in that of the cathedral and parish church of the city of Grasse as it appears from the certificate given by sir Chéry parish priest of the said cathedral dated from the nineteenth of the current, the contracting parties having obtained dispensation from two bans from Monsignor the bishop of Grasse the fifteenth of the current, and of a ban of messire Guévasse vicar general and official of the Bishop of Vence from twenty second aussy of the current month without have discovered no canonical impediment ny civil: between Sir Jean Paul du Puget Lord Baron of Châteauneuf Clermont Thorenc and other places, son of the late Messire Louis of Puget adviser to the king and his seneschal to the Seat and... of the city of Grasse and of the late lady Clere de Puget on the one hand, and noble lady Marie Ursule de Villeneuve daughter of Messire Scipion Joseph de Villeneuve Knight and lady Marie de Raymond d'Eoulx lord and Lady of Tourrettes, Caire, Saint-Jeannet, the Canadel and other places, on the other hand, present and*

*undersigned with the other relatives and witnesses cy after named »*

### ***The double lordly marriage***

.We have seen that in 1777 the Lord of Tourrettes marries the same day his son and his daughter. Some time earlier he had sent the consuls a letter warning them of this double marriage, a missive in which he expressed the desire to see the municipality pay on this occasion the homage due to him himself and his son. The marriage register of the parish church informs us about the religious ceremonies with a surprising courtesy on these high-ups who love pomp first of all. *"The year one thousand seven hundred and seventy seven and the third day of June after being published last Sunday first day of the month at the sermon of the parish mass a ban of the future marriage between very high and very powerful lord Joseph Guichard Romee de Villeneuve Knight Lord Marquis of Torretes and Caire, son of the most high and mighty Lord Joseph Caesar de Villeneuve Marquis de Torretes baron of Saint Jeanet la Gaude Trigans Lord of Cormetes, Male and Canadel, co-lord of Gourmes and of very high and very powerful Madame Clère Véronique Charlotte of Grasse from the Bar of the Princes and Counts of Antibes his wife from the parish of Torretes of a share, and very noble and very illustrious young lady Miss Magdeleine Alexandrine Julie from Villeneuve de Vence, daughter of very high and very powerful Jean Alexandre Romée de Villeneuve Knight Lord Count of Vence Marquis of the Guard Audemar, Baron of Gréolières high and low, lord of Puget thirteen ladies, bastide Saint Laurens,..., Marshal of the camps and armies of the king, and of very high and very powerful lady Madame Angélique Louise de la Rochefoucauld de Surgères his widow of the parish of this town of Vence on the other hand, the parties having obtained an exemption from two other bans and similar publication having been made parish priest Savornin of the parish of To r r e t e s , as he*

*certified to us without there was no impediment, Monsieur l'abbé of Bardonnanche vicar general of the diocese of Aix after drawing the mutual consent parts by words of present and after have observed all the formalities and ceremonies prescribed, gave them the nuptial blessing in the presence of the Most High and Mighty Lord Joseph César de Villeneuve, father of the said Joseph Guichard Romée de Villeneuve and very high and very powerful lady Madame Angélique Louise de la Rochefoucauld de Surgères mother of the said Miss Magdeleine Alexandrine Julie de Vence, very high and very powerful Lords Pierre Marie de Grasse of Bar, of Princes and Counts of Antibes, Knights of the order of Saint John of Jerusalem,... Henri Elzéar de Rochechouart viscount,... ensign of vessels of the king, Pierre Joseph of Constantine de Châteauneuf officer in the regiment of Nice in service of the King of Sardinia and Jean Paul of Lombard de Gordon cavalry officer, witnesses undersigned with the gentlemen parish priests of Vence and of Torretes who have given their consent".*

After the marriage of the son of the lord of Tourrettes follows that of the daughter of the said lord, where we learn the qualifications of the future son-in-law *"the very illustrious lord the lord Pierre Joseph de Constantin de Chateauneuf, officer in the regiment of Nice in the service of the King of Sardinia, son of the most illustrious lord, the Lord Bartholomew of Constantine, Lord partly from the place of Châteauneuf in the region of Nice and the very illustrious lady Madame Marie Rose de Chabaud his wife of the parish of Nice, with the very noble and very illustrious young lady Mademoiselle Marie Rosaline Elisabeth Charlotte de Villeneuve of Torretes, daughter of the very high and very powerful lord, etc.... etc.... The aforesaid marriage was celebrated by Messire de Bardonnanche, vicar general of the diocese of Aix, with the consent of Sir Joseph Savornin, parish priest of Torretes in the*

*cathedral and parish church of Vence, in the presence of the most illustrious lords Bartholomew of Constantin de Chateauneuf, father of the said Sir Pierre Joseph of Constantine from Châteauneuf and very high and very powerful Lord Sir Joseph César de Villeneuve, father of the young lady and Madame Clère Véronique Charlotte de Grasse from the Bar her mother and the very illustrious Lords Joseph Emmanuel de Galaan lord in part of place of Châteauneuf and Alexandre de Constantin squire of the Broc place and very high and very powerful lords Pierre Marie de Grasse from Bar of the counts and princes of Antibes knight of the Order of Malta, Lieutenant of the Vessels du Roy and Jean Paul de Lombard de Gordon cavalry officer”.*

### ***Gift of the relic of St Gregory***

Among the many rooms of the castle, one of them had been chosen on the second floor to be the chapel of the squires. In this oratory, there was in 1755 a reliquary in gilded wood of Saint Gregory the Great, patron saint of the parish church, commissioned by the lords of the place and waiting to be given at the parish. Master Mallet's registers, Royal Notary, specifies this act:

*"The year one thousand seven hundred and fifty five and the ten day of March, afternoon, under the glorious reign of Louis fifteen Emperor of Francis, known to be Sir Sipion Joseph de Villeneuve and Dame Marie de Raymond d'Eaux, lord and lady of the present place of Tourrettes, Caire, Mauvans, Saint Janet, the Canadel and other places, for the greatest glory of God, by a principle of devotion, of piety, and for the zeal they have for the inhabitants of this place of Tourrettes, would have obtained from His Holiness a relic of Saint Gregory the Great, courtesy of expose to the veneration of the faithful in any place they please as it is carried by the said bubble enclosed in the case below named, and having said Lord and Lady de Tourrettes gives said permission to the late Monsignor Jean Baptiste*

*Surian, Bishop of Vence, with a request to give his approval, which he would have granted by his letter attached to the aforesaid bubble, also bearing permission to bless the said relic which had been enshrined in a bust representing the figure of the Saint, and that he has executed on the day of his feast, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty two, and as there was no decent place in the parish church to deposit said relic, it would have been brought back since then in the castle chapel where it was kept with reverence, but having recently said Lord and Lady of Tourrettes built a suitable niche in the said church and in the presbytery, on the eastern side opposite that of Saint Fauste, they would have declared to the Sieur Jean Baptiste Giraud, priest and vicar perpetual of the parish of this place, that subsequently of the said bubble and the permission granted by the said Lord, Bishop of Vence, their intention was to give the said holy relic to the parish of Tourrettes, and to deposit it in said niche so that she can be more conveniently honored and revered by the people, what the said Sieur Vicar adherent would have given his consent that the said Lord and Lady of Tourrettes follow their pious intentions, and to bring more order into what concerns the service of the Lord, it has been agreed between the parties as follows:*

*For this cause, before us Notary Royal of this place of Tourrettes, and witnesses undersigned constituted in their persons, the said Sir Cipion de Villeneuve and Dame Marie of Raymond d'Eaux, Lord and Lady of this place on the one hand, and the said Sir Jean Baptiste Giraud on the other hand, who of their own free will agreed that tomorrow Tuesday eleven of the current, eve of the feast of Saint Gregory the Great, at the most convenient hour to said lord Vicar, the latter will come with his secondary serving the said parish, at the chapel of seigniorial castle take the said relic which they will lead in procession to the church parish church of this place, to be housed in*

*the niche for this purpose, and keep it perpetually to be honored by the people and carried processionaly every year, on the day of his feast day and at the places through which the procession custom to pass and not otherwise.*

*It was further agreed between the parties that the offerings that will be made on that day and in the course of the said holy year will be collected by the rectors of the brotherhood of Saint Grégoire to be employed by them and all the others that it will belong to the expenses that it will agree to do for the Honour of the saint relic or used for charity agreed by the office of the said brotherhood, offerings which the said sir vicar renounces for him and his successors — in case there may be to be entitled in favor of the said saint —*

*It was further agreed that the moveable rectors can only be for one year. That the said lord and the lords of this place or such others proposed by them will be the first rectors. Mr. Vicar and his vicar successors or their nominees, the seconds, and that said two first rectors perpetual with the three removable rectors will be taken and chosen by the former rectors, and than modern rectors, on the presentation elders, will be approved by the said lord and his successors lords of the place, and that a of the three rectors, the most capable will be elected by the Bureau to exercise the office of Treasurer of the said brotherhood, which the Treasurer will make his account at the end of the year in front the said Bureau, the whole thus agreed upon in a pact on purpose, otherwise said relic would not have been given or delivered to the said church, by the said lord and lady of Tourrettes, and so that this be a thing established and forever permanent, for the greater glory of God and the good of inhabitants, the parties have taken note that we have granted them. Done and published in the said Tourrettes, in the seigniorial castle, in the presence of sir André Brezès, lieutenant of judge, sirs Gaspard Consolat*

*and Joseph Mallet consuls, and Thomas Curel treasurer, all from the community of this place, witnesses required and signed with the parties and other main inhabitants.*

*Signed : Villeneuve St Janet, Villeneuve Tourrettes, Raymond Tourrettes, Giraud vicar, Mallet, Brezès, G. Consolat, Curel, Geoffroy, Father Geoffroy rector, Gazagnaire, Spitalier, Isnard, Merle, Isnard, F. Isnard, Mercurin, Isnard, Brezès, C. Mallet, Aubanel, L. Merle, JC. Isnard*  
*And we Royal Notary of this place of Tourrettes undersigned:*

*Malet notary.*

It is therefore on the occasion of this donation that the brotherhood of the holy pope Grégoire was created and clarified the rights and duties of various members of it. But fifty years later, the French Revolution will blow on the regions of France and reverse the cards...

## ***The inventory of the chateau of Villeneuve de Tourrettes***

This inventory is made "*on the eleventh of the month of May of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety two*" by an auditor appointed by the management board of the department of Var in the district of Saint Paul du Var, in accordance with the law relating to property of the Emigrants of April 8, 1792. The man of law is accompanied by two municipal officers including the mayor of the village to proceed to the state places. The latter informs us about the arrangement of rooms in the large building and of the furniture that furnishes it.

So from the entrance, the vestibule is decorated four bad paintings; a room is adjacent to the kitchen, another close by contains a wooden pantry.

On the first floor, bad pans and empty pots furnish a kitchen; In office and bedrooms, tables and boxes made of pine wood, "a copper brazier with its cover weighing eleven pounds", a few copper pots, three tin bowls, fourteen jars contain one hundred rups of oil, a wooden crate contains linens used, are the domain of kitchen people.

Further on, the "dining room" has a pine wood table, two small tables in marble with gilded feet and a wooden sideboard walnut with white earthenware crockery.

The "companion lounge", where a sofa is lined with "*pane*" canvas, is decorated with two paintings of "*paizage*" above the doors, an embroidered "*octolisse*" tapestry and one of green taffeta on the fireplace. In the big room, the fireplace is surmounted by its tapestry green, it contains two double "*échenés*" (endirons. Two tables and two corners in walnut wood, containing a bad set of ladies, form the furniture. The large bedroom adjoining the antechamber has a walnut wood berth with bad straw mattresses and bedding, a bedside table, a wooden commode with its pot and its earthenware cover, a bidet and a tub earthenware, a walnut table with crowbars and drawer, a walnut chest of drawers with its made of marble. Successive small rooms or larger, each with its own mattress or bed, his table with drawer, his bedside table with earthenware pot, its bidet, its basin and its chair covered breakthrough... This is not furniture rich lord, but the furniture looks quite elegant in their simplicity. near the big bedroom, an "entrechaut" serves as a room for the valet with his little mattress and a bell for the service.

In the study, the fireplace is surmounted by a gilt-framed mirror, a small walnut table, with crowbars and drawer, and a closed table in olive wood with a covered in marble and four closed drawers key must be used as an office. Five armchairs upholstered in

red morocco and four chairs straw beds complete the furniture. The room is decorated with nine framed glass prints gold of mythological inspiration. most surprising yet to come: a small apartment serves as an archive in which there are two pedestal statues and many books dealing with religion, philosophy, history, the universal dictionary of usages in Latin, military art, canon law, privileges of popes, emperors, kings and princes of Christianity, works on the customs of Provence, on the art of riding, on the city of Rome, the armorial mercury, on the treatise on the point of honour, essays on the illnesses, on gallant history. Follow briefs and letters against the municipality of Tourretteson the river trial, for the "pro modo judgeum", for the channel of village fountain, concerning the sizes, the sentence of the ban, against the chapter of Vence... We are in the domain of the lord, very cultured man and very well documented on his rights. Follows a very complete library with books of history, poetry, lives of illustrious men, campaigns of Louis XV, seigniorial rights, dictionaries famous women, insects, wonders, French grammars and Italian ... not to mention the many lawsuits against the Houses of Cagnes, Grasse, Callian, from Montauroux, from Saint Jeannet and Gaude etc.... etc.. A man of taste, to be cultivated, the lord of Tourrettes was a man on trial, in perpetual struggle with everyone, which explains the hatred of his subjects and his sad end.

But the visit is not over. On the second floor, to the left of the chapel, a pretty feminine bedroom is filled with a fireplace with 'lace', a berth in walnut, some armchairs and a *bergère* in taffeta green, an embroidered "*octolisse*" tapestry. A small adjoining cabinet is decorated with prints, straw seats and a backgammon game. Another study follows with its library in white wood, a wardrobe and its commode, its tiled bidet and bathtub and to finish a small "*entrechaut*" with a loom of wooden embroidery communicates with a room on the lower floor via a

small staircase stolen. We are definitely in the domain of the chatelaine. This beautiful apartment adjoins the chapel furnished with two armchairs and four straw chairs. above the altar, a painting of Saint Joseph, three candlesticks in brass and a small crucifix accompany a small marble virgin; two bells and two vases are placed on a white tablecloth. In a niche is a Holy Child Jesus. Under the altar, the cabinet with relics contains some small paintings and a cross glazed with relics. Two kneelers closed store forgotten medications...

On the other side of the chapel are staggered other rooms with their furniture, their commode, their potty and toilet bowl. We discover small cards for combing cotton, pieces of canvas, a mortar of marble with pestle, brass lamps, reels, irons and routers earthenware, small copper chocolate pots or in tin... The staff sleeps not far from the masters so that they can quickly be on place if needed.

The third floor appears to be a floor of work. There are music lockers, wicker baskets, earthen toupins, skeins of "philoselle", "cayers" of music. A row of rooms called "nasturtiums" are decorated with tapestries and paintings with gilded frames and provided with their wardrobe, toilet room, with basin, jug and chamber pot, comfort of the time... A room is called "furniture storage" of the dovecote; it contains an empty chest, baskets filled with cocoons, three barrels empty wooden pots, three earthenware water pots, two chamber pots and an empty leather chest. A wooden chest contains three small scales with their weights. It gives access to the room dovecote with two door screens, a walnut bed, three chairs and a wooden table; this room opens onto the attic where there are 66 cane racks with uprights for worms silk, a few flat baskets for these worms and a double scale. Curiously, another adjoining room is furnished with twenty-five straw chairs: it seems to be the room of "working together". Below this room, is the "laundry"

room for four racks, then the granary with sieve in four-legged wood, made of "rechaud" wire.

On the ground floor, the oil store presents 42 oil jars of 30 *rupes* each, eleven oil urns of 24 *rupes* each, a large copper still and a small, baskets in wood and wicker and adjoining rooms more modest for the staff. In the cellar, three vats of 3, 60 and 80 loads of grapes are full; a second cellar contains nine barrels of eight loads... Clearly it's underground.

This long visit allows us to reconstruct life in this vast castle to the many rooms whose furniture informs us about the place of the occupant and his social situation: master and mistress of house, children, valets and maids, cooks and laborers... The dovecote is at the top of the tower, under the roof. Silkworms are reared under the attic and occupy many people. The hidden stairs allow to move from one floor to another without crossing all the rooms in a row. The furniture is pleasant but remains modest. The lord of places had perhaps good reasons for claim to be paid by those who owed him money, in order to maintain a train of house enough to feed such a large family with servants...

### ***Under the Revolution***

Lord Joseph Caesar assassinated in his flight, the family dispersed, the castle goes to be occupied by the District National Guard, then by the 2nd Battalion of the Volunteers of the Var whose captain instructor is a certain André Masséna, future Prince of Essling and Duke of Rivoli, to defend the border of the Var. There Tourretan tradition remembers the passage of Masséna within its walls without us we found another proof, and yet... today, Marie M. says her house has belonged to this great man: impossible to prove ! War declared against Austria will train the French armies to fight in the mountains of the hinterland of Nice. The Château de Tourrettes will become a military

hospital where wounded soldiers will be cared for repatriated.

Hospital records document the deaths wounded soldiers receiving treatment in Tourrettes, month of nivôse year III. The writing is indecisive, imprecise spelling shows level low intellectual of the public officer in charge records of the civil status of the village. Seen the little means to care for the sick that time, the wounded died quickly within three or four days. These soldiers are from the department or they come from Lyon, Puy de Dôme or Isère. Those who reside in the castle are in convalescence. They occupy themselves by drawing charcoal on the walls of the pali=s of the “graffiti” revolutionaries who have since disappeared but whose images are stored. Restoration of the castle was not made without the opinion of the Fine Arts which unfortunately do not have recognized the interest of this heritage...

### ***In search of the Chateau's underground***

In 1942, young Tourrettans, pushed out of curiosity or boredom, decided to search for the mythical underground in the castle that threatened to become ruins. They engaged in the room on the ground floor which served as saddle storage for one of the owners of the antique remains. Along the left wall, on the floor, a panel, made of disjointed planks, concealed a square hole in the center of which a wooden hatch with two shutters could be guessed to open like doors. This opening gave access to a vaulted cellar low and well made, one could not stand upright. Two stone benches faced each other and allowed the urchins to play cards by candlelight...

On the ground, a stone slab of two meters squares was provided with a central bar, operated by rack, whose system, a little rusty, had not survived for

more than a century. This slab was surrounded by a channel.

The young people decided one day to try adventure; they provided themselves with a mining bar and, using a notch in the stone, managed to lift the slab about 15 centimeters. Through the gap they discerned steps of a staircase which sank into the ground, while the strong smell of the vault took them by the throat. The expedition could go no further: it was necessary to raise the huge tile to allow passage, and above all to overcome the anguish created by this macabre smell. One of the young people remembered the stories from his grandmother, an educated woman, who knew many stories about the country. She never stopped warning her grandson of the risks involved in the underground where, according to her, there would be many ramifications. It was a kind of maze, she would say, with holes where you threw prisoners: it was the “oblivion” of the castle. She also thought there was perhaps in this maze chests filled with important papers, abandoned during the escape of the lord.

Because history says that during the Revolution, the lord of the place fled through this underground passage, to the bottom of the Pascaressa valley, towards the site of the old station, where his faithful servant waited with saddled horses. Not far from there, in the Claus district, there was a seigniorial building, called "Château des Sclos", of which the low vaulted room is reminiscent of a large stable. On the walls, rings sealed in the stone at regular intervals, were to be used to tie up the horses of the count, who liked to horseback riding in the region.

The trusting faithful servant, had made the horses drink. He had helped the count to go up in saddle and, before realizing what was happening, he was shot down by his master who did not want to leave any trace behind him, before disappearing into the



wild. The corpse of the unfortunate was found soon after.

This despicable act raised the anger of the villagers who had been struggling for centuries against their lords with feudal values: they wanted to reign, to impose their right as in the Middle Ages, dealing with people as they wish. Since the disappearance of feudalism, the Tourrettans were thirsty for freedom, in love with their independence that they had had so much trouble getting to the over the centuries, thanks to numerous lawsuits between the municipality and the lord, before the Parliament of Aix-en-Provence.

What became of the lord? Was he accompanied his wife, other people in his family? The story does not say. We think he left go into exile in London, like many nobles of this time. Maybe he wanted to come back a little later by Genoa and Savona? One recounts that when he passed through Ventimiglia, he was recognized by one of his subjects who hastened to kill him. Vengeance was done, and then it was the revolution. (According to H. Salés)

**Footnote by the translator:**

The Chateau is the present Mairie of Tourrettes.

### ***13. Years Of Revolution***

The "great winter" from 1788 to 1789 freezes olive trees, orange trees, and all crops are wiped out. Wheat is missing, bakers have no more bread. On the side of the roads, we lift up corpses of human beings, mouth filled with grass for food. The bread is scarce and expensive, the people are hungry ...

**July 14, 1789:** the cannon thunders in Paris, the taking of the Bastille is the starting point of the Revolution which will bring France to fire and blood. The final bell has sounded for the Old Regime. The tax-crushed people have taken revenge against the haughty aristocracy and the bourgeoisie whose pride increases with acquired power. One like the other are clinging to their prerogatives and fight against the powerful clergy. Voted on the night of August 4, the Abolition Law Privileges will turn the cards upside down. The Declaration of Human Rights makes everyone free and equal citizens in law.

Vence then shelters 2,550 inhabitants in the city and 65 around. These are mostly engaged in agriculture. Households are the owners who operate their own land, helped more or less by workers who only have the strength of their arms. They leave early in the morning "to work the countryside" with the donkey or the mule. They take on the spot the meal brought to them by their wife or one of their children. In the strong heat of in the summer, they take a nap at the *abris* (shelter) and come back late in town after a tiring day. This is the rhythm of life of the whole region of Provence. As for the wealthy classes, they live on their land exploited by farmers or the rent of their properties. Educated, they constitute the class of "*apparents*" who manage the affairs of the municipality.

When the thunder of Paris breaks out in Revolution, the country of Venice does not rise not immediately ; it calmly welcomes Parisian events. Its main concerns are about the difficult daily life. However the election of deputies to the National Assembly causes a stir and begins to shake all of Provence.

During the summer of 1789, the Great Terror crossed France and by Gap, Digne and Castellane reached the Vence region via Roquestéron, Bouyon, Saint-Jeannet and Vence before arriving in Antibes. A troop of 5,000 armed men devastates the villages, looting and burning everything in its path. Saint-Jeannet organizes "a bourgeois guard, composed of all the inhabitants able to wear of weapons, divided into companies of fifty men responsible for watching alternately to guard and public safety " (According to Malaussene). All neighbouring villages set up night surveillance and the formation of a national militia formed of all heads of families: this is the case of Cagnes, Tourrettes, la Gaude, Saint-Jeannet, Coursegoules and Gattières. Everyone is to be on the look-out.

#### ***The Conflict of the Malvans***

By the law of December 14, 1789, it is decreed that every community must have "a municipal body" elected by " active citizens ", at least 25 years old and paying a direct contribution worth at least three days of work. This municipal organization law poses some problems in its application, without however touching the territory of communities. The case of the Malvans awakens a old quarrel between Vençois and Tourrettans. In the 12th century, the community of Malvans was a fiefdom entrusted by the Count of Provence to Lord Pierre de Malvans, and located between the territories of Vence and Tourrettes. It owes its name to the river that crosses it and stretched from the woods of the Sine to Noves, l'Ormée and Garbier. It included the priory of Crottons (today Our Lady of Flowers) and the Saint-Raphaël chapel. The

plague of 1348 had made a deserted territory which had kept its legal existence, since its lands were still cultivated. But these lands are shared between Vençois and Tourrettans who wanted to defend their respective rights.

In 1760, the city of Vence had acquired from the king the rights of high, medium and low justice and thus became "Lord of the Malvans". But this territory of the Malvans fell under the Viguerie de Saint-Paul while Vence was doing part of that of Grasse: the city of Vence does could no longer exercise authority. In February 1790, the municipality of Vence decides that the Malvan community will be represented by the *vençois* owners, although these do not reside there. Tourrettans feel aggrieved, but the "landbook", register of land and royalties owed, shows that the Tourrettan owners represent only the sixth part of the properties of the *vençois*, and moreover, this land concerns "mediocre" soils, sloping and stony. They are also prohibited from grazing the "small livestock" sheep and goats, under penalty of 300 *livres* fine and confiscation of the beasts ... There remains, however, "the right to graze working animals for free" (According to Castellan).

This "*compascuité*", or "right to use", is the reciprocal right of commons to send their cattle to graze on lands of "idle pasture", after the harvests, when the land is empty. But the land proposed is often barren land or not cultivated. Herds of goats and sheep are most suitable for such a scheme. Their fertilizer enriches the land, their meat supplies the butcheries, their wool and milk is useful for all. But the goats, designated as "the poor man's cows," do a lot of damage on wood intended for construction: it is necessary lead them along the paths and borders, and limit their number ..." Once again, Tourrettes must bow in front of its big rival neighbour.

## *The federal camp of Chateauneuf*

In June 1790, the Assembly of Brignoles decides to form a division of National Guard for Provence. Federation Day is fixed for June 20 in Châteauneuf-de-Grasse. All National Guards are invited in the region, between Siagne and Var. Vence sends twenty-five men, a captain, a lieutenant, a warrant officer and a standard bearer. Federal troops regroup at Plan where a mass is celebrated on a wooden altar. The exchange of the federal oath takes place according to the text adopted by Brignoles. Heat and wine raise already existing tensions between the people of Antibes and those of Grasse. A pitched battle breaks out between the two cities. One notes some wounded whose captain helps a major of the guard of Antibes, a certain André Masséna, who received a sabre blow by Courmes, wig maker in Grasse. The case goes back to Paris. (According to Castellan)

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In October 1790, the state ordered the suppression of bishoprics. That of Vence is acquired by the municipality for 14,000 *livres*. It is requisitioned for French troops traveling to Italy. A conflict breaks out between Vence and Saint-Paul, sixty soldiers from the Ardennes regiment are sent to Tourrettes to defend Vence. Looting, robberies and massacres by personal revenge put the village neighbours in turmoil. The state demands church bells to collect bronze for the manufacture of cannons; the church treasures of gold and silver are sent for melting.

In Vence, the succession of battalions Hérault, Rhône and Bouches-du- Rhône brings vandalism. The city closes its doors for the night while the soldiers taken of drink burn the wooden statues of Calvary in a bonfire. They receive the name of "*Brulo Boun Diou*", Burn them Good God! Misery is extreme, everything is lacking: wheat, bread, oats. Typhus is taking its toll. The Villeneuve chateau in Tourrettes is transformed into a military hospital.

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New ideas excite elected officials who feel liberated from the shackles of the old regime. With the abolition of privileges, each city goes there from its grandiloquent speeches to festive assemblies..

In Vence, President Chabert, of the Club Patriotic, harangues the new municipal officers On November 30, 1791: *"The fear of making enemies, even death should not intimidate you, walk with the law in one hand and the sword of the justice on the other ... "*

Then the mayor of Antibes goes wild in his speech of July 14, 1792: *"When foreign despots get together to enslave us, we must tighten the bonds of brotherhood ... let us no longer be enslaved, rather let a glorious death end our career, may our tyrants only reign on corpses and ruins ... Freedom or death is our rallying cry ... "*

In Vence, Mayor Béranger plants "a tree of Liberty ", March 10, 1794 and goes there from his speech: *"Citizens, we planted this tree so that it may flourish under the aegis of the Constitution and let it be a living image of Liberty ... a cherished and lucky tree .. may you grow deep roots, lift your head to the heavens and see us soon under your shade sing the incredible benefits, the miracles of the Revolution and welcome the sweet fruits of the Republic! ... »*

December 19, 1790 the oath of fidelity is instituted in the "Civil Constitution of the Clergy". All priests who refuse to submit to it and who remained on French territory are denounced, arrested, imprisoned and sentenced to death. This oath reads as follows: *"I swear to watch carefully over the faithful of the parish that was entrusted to me, to be faithful to the Nation and to the King, and to maintain with all my power the Constitution decreed by the National Assembly and accepted by the King ".*

As soon as the laws of repression and persecution are applied, the nobles and many members of the clergy feel threatened and flee. Many arrive in Nice, a nearby region belonging to Sardinia. All those who leave are considered irreducible enemies, whatever their status. The laws harden in relation to these "defectors" who are considered to be dangerous traitors. In September 1792 is decided on confiscation then the sale of the goods of emigrants. The people are fighting over these goods uprooted from former lords and notables envied for so long. The next month, it is decreed that any emigrant found carrying arms will be executed. Then follows the life ban of exiles and the death penalty for those who return clandestinely. What will happen to the priest Mars de Vence?

Arrested emigrants are locked up in the Grasse prison, where the Guillotine has just been installed. Indeed, the seat of the "Management Board" of Var department had been set in Toulon by the decree of September 11, 1790. But Toulon remained royalist at heart and made its counter revolution by proclaiming Louis XVII with the support of the English and the Spanish, against the surrender of forts, harbour, arsenal and boats for "mortgage of this loan" by notarial act. This Toulon insurrection involves the transfer of the administration of Var to Grasse. Administrators settle in the "national house dependent on the emigrant Pontevès "on boulevard du Jeu- de-Ballon. Three years later, the French troops liberate Toulon, where Barras, who had already voted for the king's death, will not hesitate to massacre eight hundred Toulon residents. After the slaughter he will cry out, *"Let those who are still living get up, the Republic forgives them "*, but the ruthless deputy of Var will shoot the unhappy survivors. "The infamous Toulon, the execrable Toulon "will now be called "*Port de la Montagne*". It's still in Toulon that Barras will notice a very young officer named Bonaparte, who will become

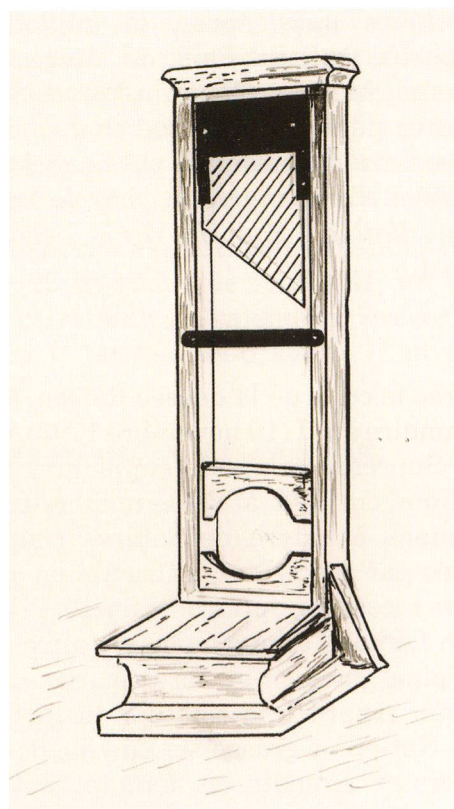
general of brigade and commander of the Army of Italy with headquarters in Nice, and who will not hesitate to overturn his protector during the famous *coup d'etat* of 18 brumaire year VIII (November 9, 1799) ... All cities will celebrate this Toulon liberation around altars of the Fatherland erected on the squares.

In Paris, Danton secures a vote for the Revolutionary Tribunal in 1793, a court without appeal and without recourse to court of *cassation*, to judge "the traitors, conspirators and counter-revolutionaries, enemies of the People". The death penalty is carried out as soon as possible, no defence is considered: *"Every citizen has the right to seize and bring before the magistrates the conspirators and counterrevolutionaries. he is obliged to denounce them as soon as he knows them"*. Denouncers, called "observers" are thanked with a salary. It's an open door to any denunciation.

The Grasse revolutionary court is established in the church of the convent of Dominicans, now disappeared. Prisons are improvised everywhere: the chapel Saint Martin of the Black Penitents, the Seminary, the former Common House, the hospital of Charity, "the old jail" or bishopric, and finally the Torre de la Carce, called the Tower, old prison of the XIVth century, with its double floors of underground dungeons near the "Gate of Idlers", demolished in 1884. These jails detain up to five hundred prisoners, in appalling conditions. Humidity and pestilential smells make the detainees sick. These places become real gambling dens where large sums of money are played, and where inmates are sometimes "racketeered" by their jailer! So the poor priest from Vence, Jacques Mars, is indebted after his death by his jailer who addresses a complaint to the directory of the district of Grasse, on Frimaire 29 year II (December 19, 1793), thus let him explain: *"Citizen Charles Jean, guardian of the house, have the*

*honour to point out to you that the so-called Jacques Mars, priest, was put in arrest on October 11, 1793. I handed him over my room for the sum of 40 florins per day. He remained in detention 77 days. He owes me sum of 134 pounds plus 15 days food, at the rate of 3 pounds, which makes the total sum of 179 pounds, without prejudice to food of his keeper and his servant ... I hope, citizen administrators, which you will find my requests that are as fair as they are legitimate, and that you please take them into consideration. I await your response, your fellow citizen. Jean "* (According to Mgr Ghirardi) The jailer will as a result recover the priest's clothes and furniture to cover the costs of his prisoner and his servant Mariane Lions.

### ***The "brave" Doctor Guillotin.***



The guillotine which arrived in Nice was unused. It was loaned to Grasse in December 1793 and installed on the Place du Clavecin, currently Place Fragonard. In Paris the "brave" Doctor Guillotin had been shocked to see with what barbarity the condemned were beheaded with an axe, sometimes in several

attempts. Taken by compassion, he developed a "machine for beheading" whose cutting edge avoided the suffering, with immediate death, "which falls like lightning. Head rolls, blood springs up, the man is no more". The poor doctor could not imagine the use that the Revolution would do his work! The first victim will be a living sheep that will serve as a guinea pig for the death machine. But the unfortunate doctor will not be thanked because, pointed to and abandoned by his clients, he will not find notoriety until 1804 with his position of Professor.

For a year, blood will flow on the square Clavecin thanks to the "national razor": in all thirty victims including a farrier twenty-two years old, a modest shoemaker from Grasse, six priests including poor Vençois Jacques Mars, old and almost blind, four officials, five bourgeois, a doctor, a lawyer, a merchant and a nun, sister Blaise, alias Mademoiselle Théodore de Pontevès; and this at such a speed that the blade will be dull after only a month and a half. Rather than send the object to Nice to sharpen it, Marseille will send a spare guillotine ... To hell with avarice! ... To the executioner named "the avenger of the people" accommodation is provided for a "sergeant of the town", above the Porte du Cours. A few months later, the guillotine is transported to Saint-Paul de Vence whose name was changed to Paul-du-Var, capital of district and seat of a civil and criminal court. To do this, the public accuser claims *"the supply of a cart for transport of guillotine to Paul-du-Var"*... (According to Mgr Ghirardi)

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After the worship of the goddess Reason, established the 20 Brumaire Year II (November 10, 1793), that of the Supreme Being tries to supplant Catholic worship in 1794. But many faithful continue to follow clandestine offices celebrated by refractory priests, income in the incognito country, after their flight abroad. Joseph Olivier, parish priest of Opio, is thus

surprised in the middle of mass and arrested by Honoré Maximin Isnard at the head of the riflemen of the Grasse National Guard. The city of Grasse will honour this Gironde by giving his name to one of its streets.

From 1795, the ex-bishop of Vence, Monsignor Pisani, refugee in Rome, charges Father Blacas, from Venice and becoming vicar at La Gaude, to return to the country to accomplish, in secret, the maintenance of Catholicism. The brave priest, disguised as a peasant, organizes among the good parishioners many celebrations, a religious instruction from the youth and a network of clandestine priests. He must act "with the simplicity of the dove and the caution of the serpent ... "After the Concordat, he continues his itinerant ministry in the diocese of Vence.

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The fate of the emigrants is hardly enviable. From summer 1789, many invaded Nice and Sardinia. There are rumours that Savoyards will invade the country with the help of emigrants. In the cities, the city councillors feel sorry of their lack of weapons and ammunition. The mayor of Vence claims rifles in Antibes or bayonets and if possible "the drums left by the Corsican regiment"! The news from the concentration of troops in Nice frightens the municipalities. Antibes mayor Reille writes to the Var Directory to clarify "our gamisozest of the most flawed, our ramparts are almost without guns and the place has very little ammunition ... We will die if he must, but we will die free" ... When we think Antibes is then the stronghold of the region !

The sad Lord of Tournettes fled as soon as the early days but he was recognized at Ventimiglia and murdered on the spot.

The spell is particularly intense on the fleeing clergy. Some priests are completely stripped at sea by pirates. Others are rescued by residents of Cannes



and led under guard at the Varoise border. While in Antibes, the people demand that they give them the two priests recovered after storm and sheltered in the prisons of the city. Marseille volunteers who barracks in Antibes, arouse the low-level thugs and rush together on the prisons, break the doors, seize the poor, drag them out in the street, chop at them with sabres and hang them from a tree at the gates of the city, before the National Guard has time to react. Several people faint upon seeing these unhappy souls drawn to the ground and crying out for mercy. A woman dying of fear ... After these horrors, the mayor has this statement posted: "Citizens, the homeland is in danger ... the enemies of the public seek to deceive the people. Fatherland children, citizen soldiers, soldiers citizens, drop your hatreds, and let our arrival be a day of triumph for the city and for the citizens of Antibes ".... The maddened citizens regain their calm, rejoice in this proclamation and illuminate the city, in the evening, in sign of rejoicing .... (According to Tisserand)

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In the midst of all these horrors, the revolutionary calendar brings a note of significant freshness. In the heart of French Revolution, the National Convention think to impose a new era by replacing the traditional calendar, known as Gregorian, by a new way of dividing time, so to make a clean sweep of the past. This is as it votes, on October 5, 1793, a decree indicating that in the future the year would begin at the Autumn solstice, September 22 at midnight because the proclamation of the Republic French had taken place on September 22, 1792. The year is thus divided into 12 months of 30 days. and completed with an additional five days not belonging to any month. Every four years, period called "*franciade*", we add a additional day to the so-called leap year. Each month is divided into decades, duration of ten days. The poet Fabre d'Églantine is in charge to name these new months poetic recalling the seasons: these are for autumn, *vendémiaire*, harvest month,

*brumaire*, month of fogs, *frimaire*, month frosts; for winter, *nivôse*, month of snow, rain, rainy month, *ventôse*, month the wind ; for spring, *germinal*, month of sprouts, *floreale*, flower month and *prairial*, prairie month; and finally for the summer, *messidor*, harvest month, *thermidor*, month of heat and *fructidor*, fruit month.

This calendar is only used for twelve years. The 22 fructidor of the Year XIII, a decree abolishes it and restores the Gregorian calendar, from January 1, 1806, or 11 Nivôse Year XIV.

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**Intervening chapters 14 to 15**  
**have not been translated**

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## 16. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The “attachment” – the transfer - from the *Comté* of Nice to France will upset the region close to the old border. By the Treaty of Turin of March 24, 1860, the king of Sardinia gives up Nice for him and for his successors, as well as to its rights and titles in this territory, in favor of the Emperor of the French, Napoleon III. But it won't happen without the agreement of the population concerned. That must be expressed by vote on their meeting to France. The plebiscite takes place on 15 and 16 April of the same year, it is the success of a almost absolute majority... Consequently the Alpes Maritimes department is created, by decree of October 24, 1860, by adding the district of Grasse, detached itself from the Var department.

This new department is not unknown: it had already been constituted in February 1793 until the Sardinian Restoration of 1814. But it only included the three districts of Nice, Menton and Puget-Théniers, plus that of San Remo added in year XIII.

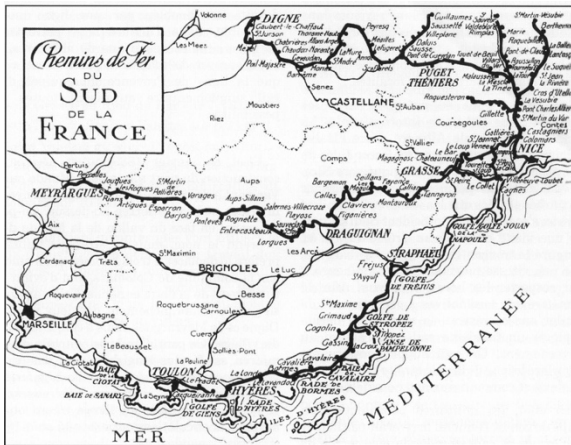
This attachment is not to the taste of the city of Grasse, because it involves difficulties integrating into the new departmental system with the city of Nice. Indeed, by virtue of its situation and its relief, Nice is at the end of the territory of the Piedmont and feels forgotten by the Piedmontese administration. To speed up this integration, the new department receives many government credits to encourage the development of the local economy. The right bank of the Var is Provençal, it is "la Française", the left bank is Niçoise, she is "the comtadine" and everything separates them: the way of life, traditions, vocabulary, state of mind and even humour... Nice is chosen as the "capital" of the department, which bodes the worst for Grasse, already capital of perfumes. The *Comté* of Nice remains equal to

himself, to "particular mores" characteristics of border provinces and separatists. Left bank - right bank, "partit dou ris - partit dou pebre", (side of laughter, side of the pepper — of the grimace), it is the eternal question of the neighbors opposite. By way of problems the territorial boundaries are constantly jostled, the political borders poorly laid out, in addition to that of the almost non-existent road network and rail service which has not yet arrived in Cagnes.

Influential Grasse politicians put all their joint efforts to defend their local interests; it's not about politics anymore, but management. The town of Grasse, a small provincial town, has become one of the biggest merchants of France, with its flowers and its perfumes. Business in Grasse requires an increase in the nearby road network of the old border, on the hillsides and in the plains between Siagne and Loup, where its scale and density had been reduced until then. The arriving Railway Project in Nice makes these gentlemen dream, but the dream becomes a nightmare when the government chooses the coastal route, abandoning the main Var towns in the interior to their sad isolation. From 1853, Grasse learns that the line will not pass through her house. She put all her forces in battle. At the visit of the Emperor in Nice, August 18, 1860, Grasse gets only a branch line to the big coastline granted to her, because: *"It is necessary that Grasse inaugurates its railway the same day that Nice will inaugurate its own"* claim local elected officials. This railroad will take thirty years to be realized...

### *The Great Works*

Finally the southern line or “Alps network” is built at the time when the nation's effort entirely concerns the opening up of most remote regions. It consists of two lines of a set of 349 kilometers of long: the railways of the South of France (SF) and the railroads of Provence (CP).



This network connects Nice to Digne (SF) and to Meyrargues (CP) near Pertuis in Provence. On one side or the other, this funny little old-fashioned and winded train is mocked by the people of Nice with its locomotive spewing its smoke from coal and not always able to climb the hills. Fine minds call it "the Train des Pignes", because it is said that in difficult slopes, travelers have time to get off the wagons to pick up the pine cones on the sides of the track. It is compared to a child's toy made up of pine cones tied together by a string that the kids shoot behind them imitating the sound of a locomotive! This nickname will stay with him with tenderness when, after hours painful, the people of Nice will remember it and the services it has rendered to the country.

From 1845, the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia decides to carry out consolidation work along the banks of the Var, a formidable river with violent floods, by building dykes. For these works, a railway line was installed along the left bank.

In 1852, it was decided to extend the "imperial line" Paris-Marseille by the coast, to the Var, border at the time. The recriminations of the "forgotten" cities of the center from the Var department will give birth to the "Central Var" line project which will serve the towns of Draguignan and Grasse as well as many villages in Haut-Var. The fall of the Second Empire will still delay the work... From 1882, the ministers

who succeed one another in the Public Works ministry make the decision to adopt the metric line, narrow gauge, for the construction of additional lines of the Freycinet plan in the whole of France. This way reduces half the budget for the works by limiting the number of works of art. Its outline is more winding but serves more localities.

Matters will precipitate with the international political events. The "*Triplice*", or Triple Alliance between Italy, Germany and Austria will reinforce the idea of the need for a strategic network to Nice. The metre gauge makes it easier to negotiate tight curves than normal routes. The work is accelerating, President Sadi Carnot pays an official visit to the prefect of Var and inaugurates the Draguignan-Meyrargues section, with an average speed of 39 km/hour... to respect the planned schedules! In order to allow standard gauge locomotives to circulate on this network, the company decides to place a third rail with the agreement of the government. An additional rail is therefore placed alongside the narrow gauge and a rail line becomes common to the two departments.

Indeed, the military think that in time of conflict the enemy would arrive by sea with army and guns, so the railroad of the Estérel, very vulnerable because it is close to the shore, was to be doubled by a less accessible line, in the hinterland, allowing circulation of trains of soldiers, passengers and goods... This is how the line of Provence was equipped with a additional rail allowing all these possibilities.

It was in January 1889 that the decision was made on the construction of the mixed bridge of La Manda on the Var, a double-decker bridge for level road lower and the railway line above. This bridge is planned in front of the valley of the Manda from which it takes the name, but the military strategy prefer to move it three kilometers upstream, in the municipality of

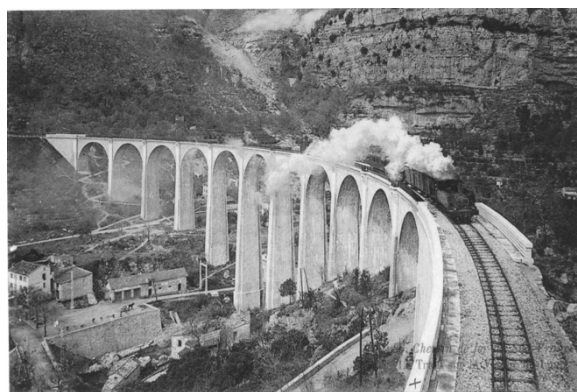
Colomars, in order to avoid direct fire from the enemy fleet. Colomars will have its station at the junction of the two tracks of Digne and Meyrargues, but five kilometers from the village! This bridge with a total span of 400 meters, is the longest of the Alps network, a veritable "mechanical tunnel, a gallery to clerestory depicting a lying Eiffel Tower". It is built in record time and is opened to road traffic on August 15, 1890. (According to Banaudo José)

From there everything will move very quickly. The network is divided into sections entrusted to businesses spread across the line. On the Grasse section that interests us, the land was acquired in 1890 and the works awarded in five lots:

- from Grasse to Riou du Bar over 7.3 km
- from Riou du Bar to Valettes over 6.7 km
- from Valettes to West Malvan for 6 km
- from West Malvan to West Cagne over 6 km
- from La Cagne west to the junction of Colomars for 10 km.

These gigantic projects will use the local workforce giving work to villager. In Tourrettes, a quarry cut the rocky hill of the current cemetery. Abandoned nowadays, the bare rock shows its location facing the village...

The works are carried out in a very rugged terrain, with many hills and deep valleys that require construction of many important "works of art". The Peyron de Saint-Jeannet tunnel is the longest long with its 800 meters; the two viaducts de la Cagne and du Loup are curved, their construction was delayed in 1891 by a storm that knocked down the scaffolding of the piles. The section between the village of Tourrettes and Pont du Loup crosses a wild and wooded site, and requires the construction of several bridges.



*The viaduct of Pont du Loup*

Between the village of Bar and the town of Vence, are counted several important works:

- the Loup viaduct with eleven masonry arches 20 meters long, i.e. 310 meters in total (at kilometer 37+655);
- the Loup tunnel 60m. long (37+642);
- the Clare viaduct in four arches of 8 m. (33+772);
- the viaduct of Saint-Antoine with seven arches of 8 m. (32+661);
- the Pascaressa viaduct with eight arches of 12 m. ( 30+535);
- the Cassan viaduct with seven arches of 16m. (30+220);
- the Téolière viaduct at eight 8m arches. (29+100);
- the Malvan viaduct with seven arches of 16 m. (27+237); and that of
- the Lubiane with three arches of 16 m. (25+968), not far beyond Vence station.

This last one is provided with a sidewalk for pedestrians, quite narrow and dangerous. The claimed public gateway to cross the Lubiane valley will be established only forty years later... to these majestic works it is necessary to add two "blind" bridges of three 6-meter arches, real support bridges with arches solid on the side backing onto the ground and open on the valley side.

## ***Extracts from the Journal of Grasse***

**The baptism of the Loup viaduct.** When opening the newspaper, Thursday, April 14, 1892, readers learned that the Baptism of the viaduct of the Loup was the occasion for a banquet bringing together workers, engineers and contractors who have realized this gigantic work. the excellent lunch was served by Mr. Muraour, well known to foreign visitors to the Gorges du Wolf. At dessert, the civil engineer Mr. Louis Otto gave a speech ending with a quip full of humor and wit: *"Following the ancient usage of the old railway workers, we all come here to celebrate with joy the baptism of the viaduct of the Wolf. Work admirable, its robust and majestic form can defy eternity and the angry winds will no longer be able to caress it with their powerful breath. Its gracefully shaped piles will always be able to admire themselves in the clear water and limpid of the Howling Wolf. He will see, happy immortal, bloom every spring the orange tree and the violet. Under its great shadow will come lovers from all over the world and little girls from Bar-sur-Loup, going to see the good Saint Arnoux, will not be able to easily hang up their cornets... Honour to those who designed it!... Honour also to those who executed it! That the wine of the Bar united with the piquet of Tourrettes flows in our glasses! Let's drink to the prosperity of the Southern Company!"*

**Journal of May 26, 1892.** The report of the Assembly Board of Directors General of April 29, 1892 announces that the line from Draguignan to Grasse was delivered to operation on November 8, 1890. The works consolidation of trenches and embankments completed, the condition of the line is satisfactory. As for the line from Grasse to La Manda, 36 kilometres long, work started in the

course of the year 1890 and conducted with a great a5imi89ihave just been finished. *"Despite the difficulties encountered in the execution of this work which does not include less than 18 major viaducts and eight tunnels, despite the incidents that were difficult to predict, such as the cyclone that swept away the scaffolding and hangers of the Loup viaduct and the flooding of the Saint-Jeannet tunnel by groundwater, this line was carried out within the time indicated... The installation of the way ends and we are assured that the line can be delivered to operations before the end of next May."*

### **Inauguration of the line Grasse-La Manda.**

The newspaper of Thursday June 2, 1892 tells us about the departure of the train from Nice at 8 morning hours, he first goes to the station de la Tinée and returns to La Manda at 11.15 a.m. He arrives at Pont-du-Loup at noon. The viaduct is built by contractors Quintaret and Otto; it is 315 Meters long, 55 meters wide high, the radius of its curve is 200 meters; it took 20,000 cubic meters of masonry for its construction, which lasted a year. The foundations reach the depth of 16 meters. Its arches of 20 meters of void are built in white limestone from Tourrettes-de-Vence. It has five hangers of 70 meters cubes each, to "unbend" the sagging was only 2 millimeters!

At the lunch break, everyone gets off and will eat in the vast room prepared of Monsieur Muraour de Grasse: he is a shed elegantly decorated with flowers and foliage. 140 covers are prepared and taken by assault. The meal is quickly served by Mr. Muraour himself, and enlivened by a little improvised orchestra. In champagne, the wishes and thanks are exchanged between officials.

The train leaves at 2 a.m. 15 to Grasse with stop at Bar, Magagnosc and arrive at 3 am. To Gare du Sud, on the Sainte-Marthe plateau. A crowd of onlookers gained access to the wharf for the sum of 10 cents per person. Around 5 a.m. the train whistle sounded and the guests of Nice *"return to their city, delighted with their lovely trip. The official inauguration will take place at the end of the month with its implementation operation."*

To obtain the construction of the station, the municipality had to carry out the work necessary to bring water to the basin tank for motor cars. The station of Tourrettes was inaugurated in 1892, on June 8, with great enthusiasm.



*The old station of Tourrettes*

Generally speaking, the station houses contain upstairs an apartment with kitchen, on the ground floor a waiting room for travelers, a luggage room and an office for the station master. On the main facade, a clock indicates the time, a sign bears the name of the locality. With its two bays of doors and windows, that of Tourrettes is a train station third class. The walls are made of cement, the corner stones present an alternation of red and white rubble forming decoration. Attached to the house, the goods hall has an overhanging roof forming an awning to accommodate vehicles in progress loading. For strategic reasons, special arrangements have been made to facilitate military transport. Like the stations of Saint-Jeannet, Bar and Grasse, its neighbours, that of Tourrettes has very long sidings, from 250 to 300

meters, in order to allow the simultaneous circulation of several convoys normal way. The Loup stopover, at the outlet of the Pont du Loup viaduct, is a simple fourth-class building, guard maisonette with an office and a waiting room joined. At the Valettes level crossing, a simple halt with the house of the barrier guard can still be seen today. This will later serve the sanatorium of Courmettes, during the second world war.

To access the station, a route is drawn for the transport by cart of luggage, goods and flowers in bouquets which already make the reputation of the village. To do this, expropriations of land are carried out throughout the course. (See Annex 2)

Bridges span cut trenches in the lava, in order to allow the access of either side of the railway line.

In a difficult political context, winter 1896 saw the collapse of the embankments of the track near the Bar and at the entrance to Magagnosc by seepage water; traffic is interrupted during many days. Sometimes the train hangs along the way of surprised pedestrians by the railway novelty. Sometimes these are beasts that the machine crushes: dogs strays, boars or any kind of animals wild. The driver and the mechanic do not fail to stop the train to pick up the victim, if it's edible...

Track monitoring must be regular. Rockfalls, incidents that occurred locally, material wear, sagging of the platform are the object of constant care. Local roadmenders make "rounds" on the route assigned to them. In 1888, these rounds are daily, then they become weekly with enhanced monitoring after heavy rain, frost, heat which expands the rails and deforms them, or other possible bad weather. Sometimes the locomotive spits cinders which cause fires along the network during periods of drought.

In the spring, it is necessary to weed the way because the grass can cause the wheels to spin on the sides.

This work is often given to women: it's about pulling the grass by hand on a strip of thirty centimeters on either side of the rails. Sometimes it's the *processionaries* caterpillars invading the path railway, in this country where the many pines drop their needles which also cause the wheels to spin. The cleaning gutters, ballast supplies for the raising of the leveling, the maintenance of the fences and buildings provide work for the whole year.

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In the summer of 1900, officials inspect on the Nice-Tourrettes section, then return to Vence and Nice, with a 030T locomotive and a train of wagons with a load of 60 tons. A speed of 25 km/hour is maintained mean. From the village, the Tourrettans can see with emotion, from their balcony, pass the train below on the Cassan viaduct.

On November 25, another test is carried out with a more powerful machine for the ribs steep from Nice and Gattières. Paddle then carries a load of 65 tons. The train is going in Grasse to Seillans and comes back two days then it's a success.

For villages like Tourrettes, this train is a godsend because it allows you to "go down" to Nice for shopping or to bring the vegetables and other foodstuffs produced here, in Malaussena market, including the famous bouquets of violets and other flowers. The train station is more than a kilometer from the village by the gravel road, where the one risks the carts pulled by hand or pulled by mules. There is a shortcut from the village to Portail-Neuf and follows the Roman road for a while leading on one side to the city of Saint-Paul, on the other to that of La Colle sur Loup. But it is not than a narrow and stony path which passes under the Pascaressa viaduct.

Sometimes pedestrians dare to walk along the lane on the great viaduct, at their own risk, because they can be surprised by the train and the noisy inferno of the machine terrifies them. Balconies are fitted on the major bridges in order to allow walkers to take refuge in the passage of the trains. They cannot be surprised because the locomotive whistles and spits its smoke, you can hear it from afar. But the proximity and the breath of the passing convoys thrill more than one daring person, and add to the adventure...

## *A famous earthquake*

The Journal de Grasse of Thursday, February 24 1887 recounts the earthquake felt the day before in the Grasse region. On the next day Mardi Gras, after the festivities of Carnival, the awakening is brutal and frightening for many people. *"At 6 a.m. on Wednesday at the very moment when the merry balls ended and where everyone, saturated with a gaiety that suits to the fervent followers of Madness, withdrew, ready to enjoy a very salutary rest, a terrible, long shock, shook our houses, moving the smallest objects and chilling with terror, in the silence of the night, our miserable beings so atrociously awakened.*

*At first it seemed like a violent gust shaking our shutters, a crackle similar to that which precedes a fire having long brooded; then from all sides, we jump on our beds subjected to an oscillatory movement most pronounced, the doors slam, the furniture makes you hear frightful whining, the walls seem to moan and one feels the house rising from east to west. The pendulums, placed in the direction of the current, stop short and, a curious phenomenon, the stations see the hands of their dials remain set at 5:47 am.*

*It will be impossible to describe the general panic. The tremor lasted almost a minute but felt as long as a century. Some fireplaces fell, the houses cracked.*



*This shock was followed by another after a few minutes of calm, as strong and frightening as the previous one.*

*At 6:20 a.m., a second tremor struck felt, weaker and lasting only 15 seconds.*

*At 8:25 a tremor as terrifying as the first, but very short took place involving a general rescue that renews the morning panic. The waters of La Foux are blackish then yellow and finally exit clear, but warmer than before.”*

Some damage is observed in the city de Grasse: the fall of a wall, from the crevasses to the parish; a house in the square of the new Poissonnerie is evacuated from its inhabitants by the police for fear of collapse.

In Châteauneuf, there are cracked walls and the collapse of a house that the tenant had just left five minutes ago!

At Le Broc, the same tremors cause cracks in houses and the fall of a part of the vault of the church. For Tournettes nothing is reported, but some cracks must have seen the day...

The most affected village is that of Bar sur Loup. The newspaper says: “*At the Bar, from 7 a.m., the authorities of Grasse, led by the Sous-préfet, went to the village to see the damage: the old tower flanked at the corner of the old castle detached and fell on the village, crushing the neighboring houses. A few unfortunate inhabitants could be quickly freed from the rubble. Some collapsed walls reveal an eight-year-old girl, still in her bed at the third floor, on the edge of the precipice and saved by a brave citizen. Were also damaged the mayor's house and its jarrerie, the convent of the Trinitarian sisters and the church of village with an internal pillar was cracked*

*from top to bottom. Some inhabitants died suffocated under the rubble, other bodies are searched for..*

*Result: two dead and three wounded. At the second tremor at 8:30, another part of the “murder tower” collapsed, narrowly missing the brave rescuers...”*

Already in 1854, an earthquake had made itself felt in Menton and Genoa. Grasse was outside the seismic current which had then followed the coast towards the East. At this time already the tower of the castle of Bar had been cracked but no repair had been made..

### ***The story of the gendarmes.***

Two gendarmes are attacked by Piedmontese. Multiple shots kill one and one is injured. This is how the journal du Petit Nice from Sunday December 28, 1890 us recounts the scene:

*“Gendarmerie posts had been claimed by several advisers during from a meeting of the General Council to the last session, in the localities of the mountain, served by the new railway line.*

*In these places that are usually so peaceful hundreds of workers settled Piedmontese busy with work on the line railway. Unfortunately, not following the request of the honorable advisers, which means that the public security service leaves a lot to be desired in the countryside.*

*Several examples have proven this because many times we had to record brawls bloodshed, assaults and robberies.*

*Here is a new case more serious than all that have taken place.*

*The day before yesterday, two gendarmes were passing the main road, near Tournettes de Vence, when they saw themselves assailed by a gang*

*Piedmontese workers. The stones were falling as hail around the representatives of authority who nevertheless hesitated to use of their weapons.*

*But one of these brave soldiers, having received a stone to the head, took out his revolver and fired. Two of the Piedmontese collapsed; one had was killed instantly, the other had been shot in the leg. Needless to add that seeing two of them on the floor, the Piedmontese fled.*

*Yesterday morning, the investigating judge, the Prosecutor of the Republic of Grasse and the Captain of gendarmerie left for Tourrettes to to carry out an investigation. More details tomorrow if applicable.”*

## ***The end of the Century***

At the end of the century, the construction of the Nice-Meyrargues railway line will transform the region and the lives of its inhabitants. The work is rough but the immense hope is of opening up the *Moyen Pays* and the Var department, again very far from the towns of the coast, where civilization already concentrates.

As early as 1891, the new cemetery was decided on for the greatest comfort of the village. It is inaugurated on April 15, 1895 by C. Tajasque mayor, according to the engraved stones that surround the access portal. A recent stele recalls the date of 1895 when the last bones are gathered in the new ossuary. the old necropolis will long serve as a reserve for carts of all kinds and other bric-a-brac, according to old postcards.

On June 4, 1893, the Municipal Council of Tourrettes-de-Vence, so named at the time, in the Arrondissement of Grasse, makes a village name substitution request to that of Tourrettes-sur-Loup. The director des Postes agrees with this change,

because the old denomination involved confusion with villages such as Tourrette- Levens or other Tourettes in the department. Likewise, the General Council supports this request by the deliberation of August 25 1893. This new name is justified by the presence of the Loup, a small coastal river which delimits the Tourrettan territory to the West and to the south, for many kilometres. And then, Tourrettes is not sorry to get out of the tutelage of Vence which weighed on her for several centuries. Many indeed were the squabbles and lawsuits that existed between the two neighboring towns...

The affair goes back to Paris; the President of the Republic instructs the Minister of the Interior to execute the decree accepting the change of the name of the municipality. The order is given on January 27, 1894 and signed by President Carnot, the ancestor one of many pharmacists who will come to settle in this village at the end of the following century. (See document in Annex 3)

In the village, the men got used to meet in groups at the end of the day. There they play cards, drink, talk more or less harshly. There is a circle of "gentlemen", in the Tajasque garden, and that of the workers at the ascent of Saint-Jean. The latter often bursts into shouts and disputes, the spirits warmed up by drink and the game of "*Mourre*" which gives the rural warden a hard time. Decrees are needed to limit the overflows of noise and invasion of the public place by the chairs of the players. (See in Annex 1 of the document)

The water arrives at the village fountain on July 22, 1900. It will become the meeting point of Tourrettans.

The end of the century is very disturbed. 1st January 1900, the Nice newspapers — l'Éclaireur and the Petit Niçois — report on the troubles that shake

France with its internal struggles. This is the case of Fashoda who, in 1898 at Sudan, rekindles tensions between England and France on the African continent. France gives way to avoid an armed encounter with her eternal rival. England at war in the Transvaal afflicts European opinion, which applauds the courageous resistance of the Boers, because it is the triumph of right (independence) against strength.

Added to this is the Dreyfus affair which splits opinion in two: the pros and the anti. Clashes at the heart of the Government conservatives, republicans, intellectuals, radicals, socialists, anti-Semites... Great men collide in passing: Clémenceau, Jaurès, Zola... The spirits are in turmoil and endanger the government in place. Stupor comes to a head with the death of the President Félix Faure, sudden and unexpected.

The future looks worrying in Europe; failure of the Peace Congress proves that the great nations are not ready to lay down their arms. Peace will only be achieved with a strengthening of the armament of countries.

France is preparing the Festival of Peace and Labor by inviting all peoples to its Exhibition of 1900. While admiring the marvels of its industry, it has an interest in "forging its sword". Its motto risks becoming "*Ense et aratro*" - by sword and plough.

Already the dawn of the 20th century is emerging.

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**This ends the translation of selected chapters of the book *Tourrettes sur Loup en son pays* by Mme Nicole Andrisi, a wide ranging and comprehensive work, even poetic in parts, the result of many years of research and exploration of the region.**

**The book is on sale in the local shops.**

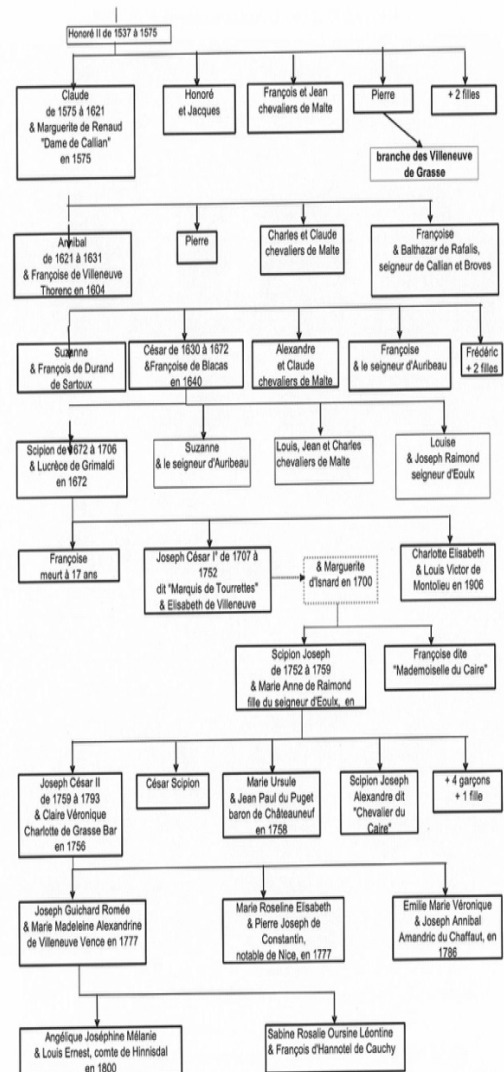
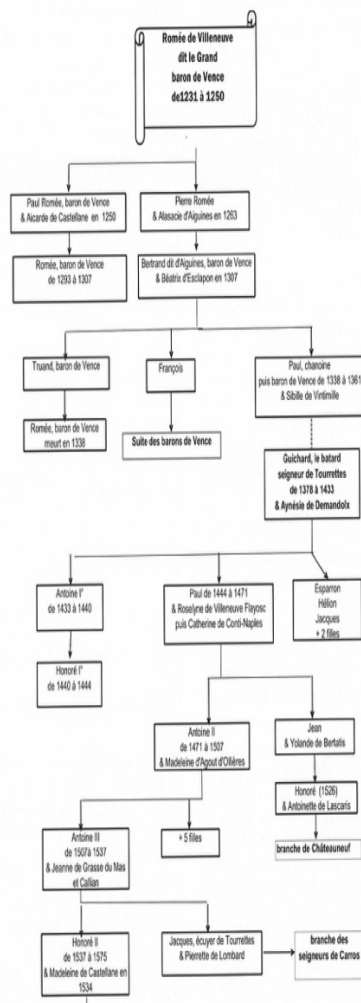
**A copy of this translation has been lodged with the Historical Society of Tourrettes.**

*Richard Bird*  
July 2023

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## 17. Genealogy of the lords of Tournettes

### 17. Généalogie des seigneurs de Tournettes.



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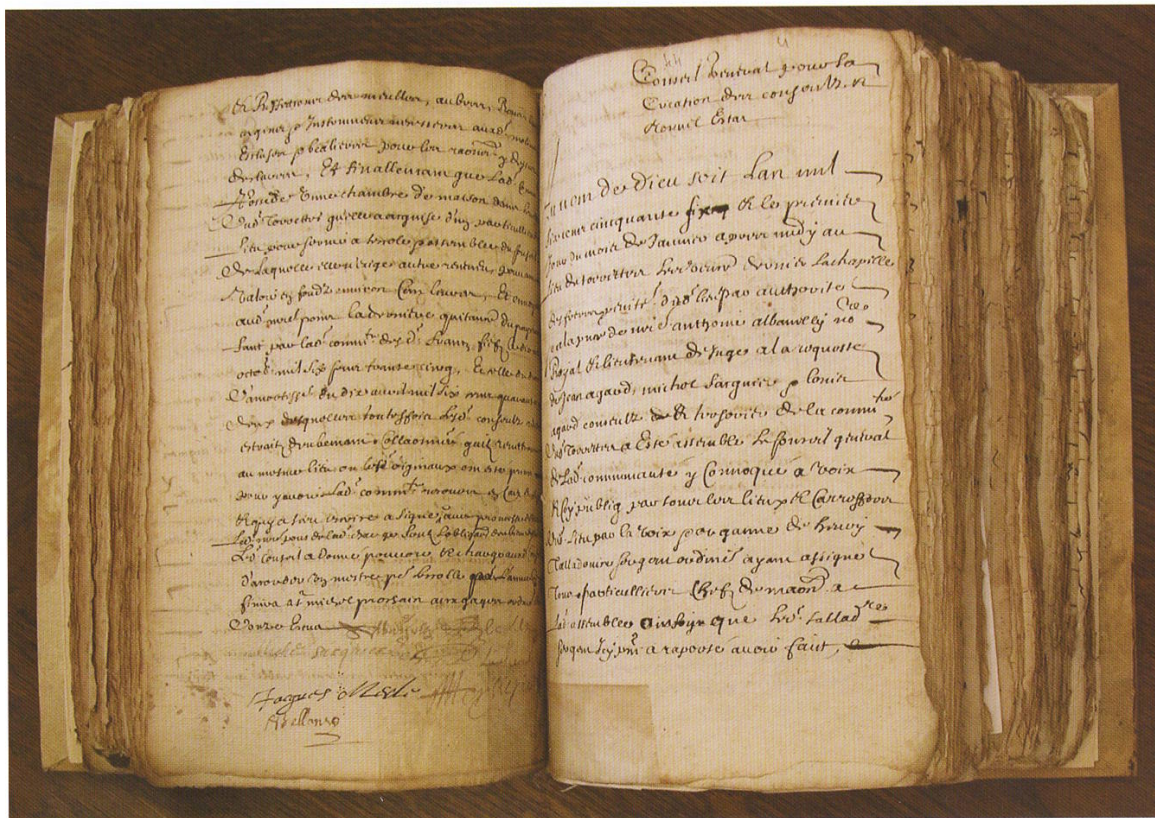
## 19. Bibliography



*Carte de 1860*

## 20. Map of ancient ways, from 1860





## The Archives of Turrettes