

*SOUFFLENHEIM
THE CITY OF POTTERS*

BY

*PAUL ELCHINGER
&
ALOISE SCHEYDECKER*



1977

FROM THE PAST OF THE POTTERSTOWN

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SOUFFLENHEIM ... The City of Potters

Preface from the Mayor of Soufflenheim

In my capacity as Mayor of the City of SOUFFLENHEIM, it is particularly agreeable to me to preface the present work which retraces, in a fashion well-documented and original, the rich past of our city and its nearby surroundings.

This study, which, to my knowledge, is the first to appear about the matter, can't help arousing a lively interest among those who are sensible of the historic evolution of a region. Moreover, it fits perfectly into the greater context destined to promote the cultural radiance and the attraction for tourists of our community. In this sense, one can point to the creation of the SYNDICATE OF INITIATIVE OF SOUFFLENHEIM, as well as the establishment of the MUSEUM OF POTTERY, for which Mr. Paul GEHRLEIN, Principal of the C.E.S. of Soufflenheim, at the order of Mr. Louis SCHLOSSER, honorary Mayor, had long ago formed the first foundations.

For all these reasons, having in heart (mind?) only the prosperity of our city and the well-being of its inhabitants, I can only wish to the following pages all the success which they merit.

Aloise SCHEYDECKER

INTRODUCTION

The present work, dedicated to the inhabitants of SOUFFLENHEIM as well as to the numerous visitors coming daily to see the potter-artisans at work, is made up of two parts: one in the French language and the other in the German language.

It is due to numerous consultations with Libraries and museums, but most especially to the NATIONAL AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY of STRASBOURG, that it has been possible for me to discover and collect part of the documentation concerning our city. Other articles have kindly been placed at our disposal by Mr. Louis SCHLOSSER, honorary mayor, Mr. Joseph CANSSELL and by other persons who are interested in this work of popularization, to whom we do not want to neglect to express our gratitude. The article on pre-history, by contrast, is a brief summary of an archeological study on the location itself: it gives us some clarification of an epoch not well known as it concerns our region - the pre-history and the Gallo-Roman as well as the time of transition. Other indications, of a more general character, are given with the intention of facilitating the interpretation of related historical events.

If the text in German is relatively abundant, that is because in Alsace they have spoken the German dialect, from which the present dialect is derived, since the high Middle Ages. The French presence in our region was of shorter duration and even during those periods the Alsatian dialect continued to be spoken by the majority of the population. The literature itself shows this. As well a translation of these texts does not seem desirable so as not to remove from them their originality and their very vivid expression.

This documentation would certainly have been more important, if a violent fire had not devastated our city hall with all its medieval archives in 1622.

Paul ELCHINGER

CHAPTER 1

PREHISTORY AND ANCIENT HISTORY OF SOUFFLENHEIM AND AREA

THE LIFE OF PREHISTORIC MAN

The appearance of man goes back more than a million years. Thinly spread at first, the human species suffered difficult conditions of the environment. Of all species of mammals, it is among the least well-armed to battle against unfavourable environmental conditions and to survive. Prehistoric men, according to the skeletons that are known to us, died young: the hoped-for middle age of an individual was only 21 to 25 years. That also explains why we find, in excavations, only skulls with jawbones still having all their teeth.

Nevertheless man differentiated himself from the animal species by his behavior and his reactions to the world around him: by grace of his intelligence he freed himself little by little from certain exterior constraints. While mammals emigrated or suffered profound physical changes because of the variations of climate in the Quaternary, man stood his ground although nature did not make the task easier for him. And not only did he stand his ground, but he multiplied and spread over the whole surface of the globe. He reached new regions and we know quite well that in the lower paleolithic (Old Stone Age) man moved into lands liberated from the great north-European ice cap and that in the upper paleolithic he lived in caves from the time of the retreat of the last glaciers.

Deprived of natural means, more than the majority of animal species, he could only resort to inventions coming out of his mind. By his upright position he had hands free to make use of stone tools which for many thousands of years were the most important element of his existence.

This long period, called "Stone Age", is divided into two principal periods: the first is the Paleolithic era or age of shaped stone and the second is the Neolithic era or age of polished stone. The first, which is subdivided into three distinct periods: the lower Paleolithic, the middle paleolithic and the upper paleolithic, started about 600,000 years B.C. and ended at about 10,000 B.C. The second period commenced about 4000 B.C. to finish at about 2000 years B.C. Between these two periods is the mesolithic, which is characterized by a warming of the climate.

In the course of the paleolithic age man lived in caves, alone or with a family, surrounded by antediluvian beasts. In the mesolithic, the living place evolved, the stone tools had smaller and finer dimensions, such that they are now called microliths. The first pottery appears among the piles of seashells and other kitchen waste.

In the neolithic period the conditions of life became still more agreeable. Man no longer lived in caves but built himself wooden huts. He became permanently settled and started to cultivate the earth and to raise animals. Man no longer lived alone, but in more or less important groups.

The high culture of the neolithic epoch as compared to the paleolithic is shown by the appearance of ceramics rather well-developed from the point of view of technique and artistry. To make them, man did not use any tool, he made them by hand with the addition of a dove colour (pigeon dung?). The clay used was as a rule very plastic (soft) requiring reduction by incorporation in the paste of a certain quantity of sand, of grains of quartz or pieces of broken pottery and sometimes of pulverized seashells. In our time, we use the same process, using a material called "chamotte".

The firing (cooking) of pottery was accomplished in its beginnings on the fire of the domestic hearth, which also served to heat the hut and to cook the food. Later, that is to say at the end of the bronze age, appeared the pottery oven (kiln) with its three principal parts: the alandier (firebox?), the firing chamber and the chimney. The firing temperature hardly got above 800 degrees C. that in an atmosphere reduced or neutral, provoking by this fact the dark grey or blackish tint that we see on the pottery of our actual discoveries.

According to numerous indications, the making of pottery was exclusively the work of the women, that of men being restricted to the provision of the clay and of the necessary firewood.

In the cinders of excavated hearths today, one often finds bits of pottery or of baked clay showing crevices (moulds?): they come from branches of the huts of which the exterior and the interior were covered with a layer of loam(?) or of ash(?) (lehm, pise). Some holes for wooden posts found in the soil allow us to state that the habitations were of round or square form, according to the epoch or the fashion of construction current in the territory of one or the other tribe.

The end of the age of polished stone was followed by an event of enormous importance: the appearance of metal.

The age of metal began about the end of the third millennium B.C. and lasted in all its development up to the time of the Roman domination. It is subdivided into three periods:

- a) the age of copper (from 2200 to 1800 B.C.)
- b) the age of bronze (from 1800 to 800 B.C.)
- c) the age of iron (from 800 to 50 B.C.)

The first potter-artisans did not appear until near the end of the age of bronze, when the needs in this article became more important due to the movements of people in this epoch. The potter-artisans started to make the first kilns and the quality of the pottery improved. The potter's wheel was not known until near the middle of the last thousand years B.C.

It must be remarked that the first ceramics, like the kiln and the potter's wheel came from the Near East and from Egypt, regions where culture developed sooner than in the countries of western Europe, because of the more moderate climate which prevails there. (i.e. in the East).

THE COLONIZATION OF THE REGION OF HAGUENAU AND OF SOUFFLENHEIM IN THE AGES OF BRONZE AND OF IRON

In studying the geographic distribution of the neolithic stone axes found in the neighborhood of Haguenau and conserved in the museum of that city, one notes that the work places are distributed in the south, the east and the west. They are, on the contrary, totally missing to the north and the north-west of that city. Since this neolithic desert coincides exactly with the terrain occupied by the forest of Haguenau, we must conclude that this forest already existed at that time and was as uninhabited as it is today.

If one examines from the same point of view the rich collections of bronze and iron age objects in the same museum, one is led to a completely different conclusion. They have all been discovered in the forest itself, buried in numerous tumuli. The greatest number of these mounds, often grouped in vast cemeteries, are found near the edges, such as those groups of Koenigsbrueck, of Donauberg, or Oberfeld, or Kurzgeland, that is to say, near Soufflenheim itself. Several cemeteries, however, are situated in the interior of the forest, at distances varying from 2 to 5 km from the actual edge.

These latter of the interior of the forest are always found in the immediate neighbourhood of a stream like the Brumbach, the Eberbach, the Halbmuhlbach and the Sauer. This fact seems to indicate that the settlements on which these cemeteries depended were not far from the mounds, because for a cemetery alone the presence of a stream would not have been necessary. The discoveries made in these mounds in the interior of the main part of the forest belong almost exclusively to the bronze age, while those from the cemeteries at the edge of the forest belong to the age of iron.

These conclusions lead us to ask the following questions:

1. Why was the forest of Hagenau not inhabited during the neolithic age?
2. How can we explain the colonization of this forest beginning at the start of the age of bronze?
3. Why were the settlements and the cemeteries of the interior of the forest abandoned in the iron age?

Concerning the first question, the archeologists think of the savage and untrodden character of the forest, which offered men neither the needed place to build a settlement nor sufficient means of subsistence.

Concerning the second, that is to say the causes which permitted bronze age man to establish himself there, one must remark that there are numerous indications that the forest at that time had lost its savage character and furnished the necessary elements to support a fairly numerous population. These were natural causes, such as a change in climatological conditions, which made the forest lose its wild character and rendered it habitable and usable. In fact, the climate at this time became much more dry and much warmer and under the influences of this dryness and warmth the forest became less dense. Admittedly also, by appropriate use of the metal axe becoming current, man could more easily chop for himself a way right to the heart of the forest and there clear the land needed for his permanent settlement.

He made his living by the raising of pigs. At this epoch oak trees made up a greater part of the forest than today and permitted great troops of pigs to be put there to glean (acorns). The distribution of the tumuli and the settlements by little groups scattered in the vast forest and always near a stream supports the idea of this kind of exploitation (of the forest).

If we now ask why the settlements in the interior of the forest were abandoned at the end of the bronze age, we are led to admit that the causes were the reverse of those which gave birth to the colonization of the age of bronze. A return to the wetter "Atlantic" climate re-established the savage character of the forest and made it once more as uninhabitable as it had been in the neolithic age.

In summary, the changes observed in the colonization of our region in the ages of stone, of bronze and of iron, were all due to changes in climate, such as we still have today. In fact, since the end of the First World War, we record a certain change in the seasons, with winters almost without snow and extremely hot summers, interspersed with numerous periods of rain or extreme storms.

We can ask ourselves if we are moving farther away from the last ice age, which took place about 18,000 years ago, or if we are, on the contrary, approaching the next one?

We note at this place that the glaciations of the Quaternary, called also "diluvium" were four in number, know as

the glaciation of GUNZ	lasting 49,000 years
the glaciation of MINDEL	lasting 47,000 years
the glaciation of RISS	lasting 53,000 years
the glaciation of WUERM	lasting 102,000 years

with the interglaciary periods of fairly warm climate of

GUNZ-MINDEL	lasting 65,000 years
MINDEL-RISS	lasting 193,000 years
RISS-WUERM	lasting 65,000 years

THE MOUNDS OF THE FOREST OF HAGUENAU

The well-known archaeologist, F. A. SCHAEFFER, has made a publication in the years 1926 and 1930 on the mounds of the forest of Haguenau, excavated at the end of the 19th century by the former mayor of this city, X. NESSEL.

It concerns mounds of the bronze age and of the iron age, and I must use several extracts from his publication to illustrate this interesting question. In his work he gives all the useful information concerning the tumuli of the forest of Haguenau and its surroundings. It deals with 580; in our days there are not that many, because of successive forestry projects.

Here is the list of mounds marked and excavated in most part by X. NESSEL, situated near Soufflenheim:

in the canton of Wolfswinkel	: 33
in the canton of Deielsberg	: 14
in the canton of Taubenhübel	: 12
in the canton of Eichlach	: 16
in the canton of Fischereck	: 6
in the canton of Hattenerstangen	: 18
in the canton of Dachshübel et Birklach	: 20
in the canton of Beckenmatt	: 31
in the canton of Weissensee Oberfeld	: 63
in the canton of Erzlach	: 7
in the canton of Donauberg	: 14
in the canton of Königsbrueck	: 23
in the canton of Fischerhübel and Kurzgeländ	: 98
in the canton of Schirrheinerweg	: 17
in the canton of Kirchlach	: 120

Next he makes a typological study of the materials discovered and classifies them in chronological order.

The study of the origin of the bronze objects shows that they came at first from the European east and south-east. But from the end of the initial period of the bronze age, there appeared original types from the Jura Souabe and perhaps even from work-shops situated in Alsace. In the middle of the bronze age, regional production surpassed imports. The industrial models, in adapting to local taste and to the technical procedures of indigenous bronze workers, made regional workshops make more or less important changes, which permit us to distinguish between imported objects and those made in the local area.

The study of funeral rites permits us to recognize that the custom of the elevation of the funerary mound was imported into our region at the end of the neolithic age by immigrants coming from the north of our region. The tumuli of the Haguenau region are not, as was formerly believed, family tombs. They were from the beginning individual sepulchres. Later individual mounds were reserved for men and women of note, while people of the middle class or poor people were interred in collective mounds.

To judge from the clothing, women had blouses with short sleeves and equally short skirts. On feast days, they wore many ornaments, but the men apparently did not make such a show of themselves. The axe seems to have been the masculine insignia, it is never found in the tombs of women.

The colonization of the region of Haguenau in the bronze age is greatly different from that of the neolithic epoch. It was no longer the loam, excellent arable land south of Haguenau, which attracted man, but the forest region to the north-east of that city. The population was composed mainly of animal raisers who profited from the gleaning of the vast forest to feed their great herds of pigs. This change correlates with the climate of the bronze age, which according to numerous indications observed in almost all of Europe, was more dry and warmer than in the neolithic age. Then, at the end of the bronze age the climate reverted to the Atlantic, that is to say analogous to the present climate, the settlements situated in the interior of the forest were abandoned and only the cemeteries at the edge of the forest continued to receive dead people during the age of iron. The agriculture on the loam and outside the forest, which under the strong sun of the bronze age had lost its importance, regained its impetus.

The population of the Haguenau forest in the bronze age was able to develop without hindrance and to attain a remarkable degree of civilization. The perfection of the objects, the beauty of the ceramics, the piety and tolerance which were expressed in the funeral rites make it believable that the bronze age civilization was even superior to that of many later epochs, upset by events of war such as the end of the La Tene epoch (Germanic invasions) and those of the Thirty Years War of the seventeenth century, for example.

During the epoch of the iron age, the population having retired from the interior of the main part of the forest, the mounds of the iron age multiplied at the edge of the forest, especially on the east side, towards Koenigsbrueck, Soufflenheim and Schirrhein.

The difference between the mounds of the age of bronze and those of the iron age consists in their actual diameter: those of the bronze age averaging 12 to 15 metres and the iron age tombs 15 to 20 metres. The height varied from .8 to 2 meters.

At the beginning of the epoch of La Tene (500 years B.C.) the tumuli were finally abandoned in all of Alsace and replaced by flat tombs of burial in the manner of the Gauls, who were without doubt the masters of the country.

THE PRE-HISTORIC POTTERY FROM THE BURIAL MOUNDS NEAR SOUFFLENHEIM

Few museums in Europe possess as large and varied a collection of pottery of the ages of metals as that of the Museum of Haguenau. That is thanks to the wisdom of X. NESSEL, who saved the smallest potsherds found in the tumuli and reconstructed as far as possible all the vases that he dug up at a time when pottery was considered of secondary importance; the aspiration of the excavators turned too often only toward objects of bronze or of gold. But it must also be said that the graves under the mounds of the forest of Haguenau were at least in great part, remarkably rich in pottery. The technical perfection of these latter (pots), the quality of the earth employed allows us to suppose that the ceramics industry has known in this region an exceptional prosperity. The cause for this can be found in the layers of rich potter's earth found in the area east of the forest, which helped to build up an important ceramics industry into the Middle Ages and even up to our own time. Is it, moreover, by chance that the cemeteries situated near these clay deposits, like those of Kurzgeland, of Oberfeld-Weissensse, of Kirchlach, are the richest in pottery?

On my part, I have had analyses done of pottery coming from certain of these mounds, and in fact they correspond to those of the clays still used today. After re-firing at a temperature of 1050 degrees C. the tint (colour) of these fragments changes from dark grey or black to whitish-yellow, the colour of our present pottery. By contrast, I have been able to ascertain that potsherds coming from neolithic pottery and found outside the forest changed, after firing at the same temperature, to a red-brick colour. They used, then, a different clay, probably because they did not yet know of the superposition of too weighty a deposit of sand.

In regard to the first Alsatian ceramics, we can affirm that they date from the neolithic epoch in which the vases already present a technique more or less evolved but all the same more primitive than that of the pottery of the metal ages. The pottery found in the forest of Haguenau were then all less ancient than the neolithic pottery found outside the forest.

After this quick summary about the pottery coming from the mounds around Soufflenheim, it remains to present some specimens of these vases. The choice is not easy, because there was from this epoch common pottery for use in cooking, others of larger size for the storage of provisions and even finer pottery for service at the table. These last being almost always decorated perhaps also served as ornaments like the vases and plates that we arrange today on our china cabinets.

The most beautiful vases made are those with an incised design, a technique which brings to mind carving on wood. The vases, after partly drying in the air, were carved with the aid of bronze knives of which one sees traces in the crevices of the design.

It was a delicate work, considering the thinness and fragility of the sides of the vases, which required great skill and a remarkable sureness of hand.

This civilization of the age of metals seems to us, then, hardly to have been very inferior to that of our population today.

THE PREHISTORIC FORTRESS OF HEXENBERG NEAR LEUTENHEIM

In the plain of the Rhine to the west of Leutenheim, there is a kind of enclosure or prehistoric fortress, on a hill near the Eberbach, called "Hexenburg" or "Heidenberg".

In order to draw up an exact plan, the archaeologist R. FORRER undertook in 1920 some important excavations. We are able to conclude that not only a small part of the hill but also the whole complex was fortified by ramparts and ditches and that we are in the presence of one of the most important and most interesting prehistoric fortresses of Alsace. In the foundation of a cabin there, a good number of potsherds and two nearly complete vases dating from the beginnings of the first age of iron (Halstatt) were found. They were associated with pieces of animal bones and a great number of stones moved and blackened by fire, perhaps these stones were used for the cooking of certain food (or) because they were gathered in this hut at the edge of the fortress, to serve as projectiles in case of danger. Some potsherds of the same epoch were found by him and his workers in digging done in the primitive foundation of the ditches, occasionally at 80 l.m. (metres?) below the present surface, which proves that these ramparts were erected at the end of the bronze age and at the beginning of the iron age.

Now at the west of this formidable prehistoric fortress, in the forest of Haguenau are found a great number of tumuli indicating the proximity of several important dwellings dating from the time of the fortress. These were, then, meant to defend the access to this centre against enemies probably coming from the other side of the Rhine. Roman remains and some from the Middle Ages prove that this place continued still later to be used for the same purpose.

According to information from the study of similar fortresses in Alsace, like the pagan wall of Mount Sainte-Odile, the population living in the surrounding area with their families and all their belongings came for refuge to these places and did not come down again until after the departure of the enemy, who often had pillaged and devastated their abandoned homes.

To reach the Hexenburg you must take the forest road from Donauburg - 100 m from the cemetery of SOUFFLENHEIM - to cross then portions 141, 174, 173, to reach the Leutenham Woods, in the middle of which is the fortress.

They say that this fortress was erected by the hand of man, an assertion that is false, because it is made of a natural soil, (gewachsener Boden) separated from the main part (of the woods) by an ancient branch of the Eberbach, which existed since the postglacial times.

THE POPULATION OF LOWER ALSACE IN THE GALLO-ROMAN EPOCH

At the beginning of our era, according to A. RIFF, Lower Alsace presented a historical fact unique in France, the meeting of three civilizations: a Gallic civilization, that of the Medio-matriques, established for several centuries in the region, a Germanic civilization, that of the Triboques, less important because they had been established in our region for only a short time, and last the Roman civilization, which by its duration, its strength and its superiority would later assimilate the two preceding cultures.

A. THE GALLIC EPOCH

Alsace had been settled before the arrival of the Romans by the Gauls, and that for several centuries; we find since the 5th century B.C. the MEDIOMATRIQUES in lower Alsace and the SEQUALES in upper Alsace. Their frontiers can be found at the same place as that which today divides the Departments of Bas-Rhin (lower Rhine) and Haut-Rhin (upper Rhine).

The names of the Vosges (Vosegus) and of the Rhine (Rhenus) are Gallic as are those of most of the rivers, such as the Moder (Matra), the Zorn (Sora), the Bruche (Brusca), the Sauer (Sura).

In about 70 B.C., attracted by the rich soil, bands of Suebes, (Schwaben?) the TRIBOQUES, having crossed the Rhine, infiltrated this Gallic territory, but they only occupied a part of the north of Alsace, near the region of Lauterbourg as far as Strasbourg, then a part of the territory of the Mediomatriques. Their push toward the south soon provoked the intervention of Julius Caesar, who was going to put an end to this constant menace from the Germans. He defeated in the year 58 B.C. the Suebes of Arioviste, in a memorable battle, of which the assembly was situated probably in the Haut-Rhin. In a recent study, Professor J.J. HATT of Strasbourg locates this battle as ASPACH-LE-HAUT. Arioviste was near the Rhine, but Caesar authorized the Triboques to remain in lower Alsace. This victory marked a decisive turning point in the history of the peoples, the Roman legions insuring, by the guard on the Rhine, a peace in these countries which lasted several centuries.

The chief town of the Gauls of our region was not the Argentorate (Strasbourg) which formed at that time only a small town of fishermen and boatmen, but BROCOMAGUS (Brumath), which by its location on the banks of the Zorn, was an important market, towards which were no less than five communicating roads from the north of lower Alsace, those coming from Saverne, from the region of Pfaffenhoffen, from Schweighouse, from Bischwiller and from the plain of the Rhine, as well as adding the two routes from the south, from Strasbourg and from Kochersberg.

THE ROMAN ROAD, BRUMATH - SELTZ

After the Romans had invaded our region, in the middle of the first century B.C., they did not neglect the creation of military and economic establishments, such as the communicating roads across the whole country, using tracks made by the iron age and bronze age inhabitants, improving them and making them run in straighter lines. They were military roads which allowed the movement of war material and supplies for the legions on campaign, even as far as the troops stationed at the advance-posts of the "limes" (the fortified limit of the Roman Empire in Germany).

According to the vestiges still existing today the geographical direction of these roads can be traced; one important route crossed Alsace from south to north from Bale to Kembs, Ehl, Strasbourg, Brumath, Seltz, Lauterbourg, to end at Mayence in Germany. Another took the east-west direction from Sarrebourg, Saverne, Kuttolsheim to Strasbourg.

As is known, Brumath (Brocomagus) was then the capital of the country of the Triboques and became the administrative capital of the region, while Strasbourg (Argentorate) was the Roman military capital. Saltz (Saletio) was one of the military bases near the Rhine, from which the legions left to conquer German territories beyond the Rhine (champs decumates). As already mentioned, these settlements (agglomerations) were not only made up of soldiers but also of civilians who were functionaries and others who did business or worked at resupplying the population and the troops. Roads in good condition, therefore, were needed to satisfy a relatively important traffic.

According to a reconstruction done by myself, the Brumath-Seltz section passed by Soufflenheim and certain parts are still visible on the surface to the south and to the north of our city, notably in the forest lots numbers 11, 10, 9, 26, 141, 175, 216 before Klostergraben, before and after Koenigsbrueck, a part along the D 37 before and the D 297 (Koenigsbrueck-Niederrodern). Its width was uniformly about 4 metres and laid out as much as possible in a straight line; it was constructed of gravel from the Rhine, without other structures that are visible today.

The Romans, while creating in Strasbourg an important military post, maintained during the whole first century this state of things, making Brocomagus the capital of the "Civitas Tribocorum" (state of the Triboques), thus the capital of Alsace, right up to the time when Argentorate, by the permanent occupation of a legion (8000 men) and by the increase of the Roman and the indigenous population, passed Brocomagus in population and by this fact, in importance. But it was not until the end of the Roman Empire in Alsace, around the 4th century, that the civic administration seems to have been transferred from Brocomagus to Argentorate. From there we approach the problems of the Roman epoch.

B. THE ROMAN EPOCH

During the Roman epoch, lower Alsace was not only occupied by the legions, but also by functionaries, merchants, artists, craftsmen, for a total of four hundred years.

The Romans built roads and bridges, organized a postal relay system erected aqueducts and baths, taught the local population how to write and how to build brick and stone houses, roofed with tiles and often having central heating (Hypocausts); their craftsmen perfected the local industries, notably that of ceramics, for example the clays of "terra sigillata" at Ittenwiller and at Heiligenberg; they developed glassworks, stone sculpture, and perfected arts in metal. In short, they created the vast civilization which is today still at the base of our own.

Note that the Gallic potters of our region knew the kiln and the potter's wheel; the potsherds found on the site of the Roman collection of the "Eisenbachel" about which there will later be a question, demonstrate this fact well.

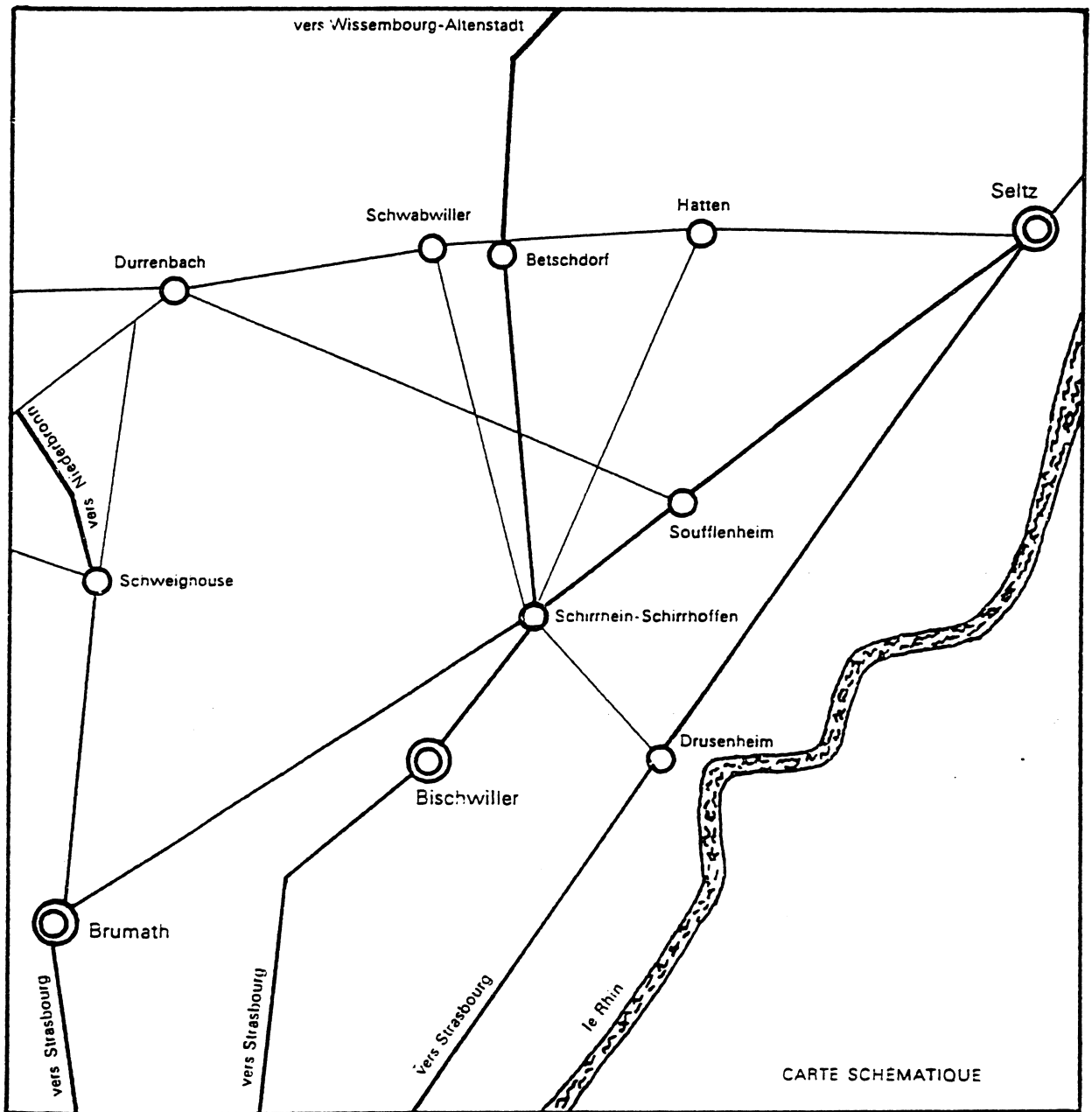
In the defense of the frontiers of the Roman Empire in the 4th century A.D., Alsace played an important role: in 356, the Caesar Julian repelled the Germans near Brumath; the following year, after having repaired the fortified enclosure of Saverne (Tres Tabernae), he inflicted on them a decisive defeat in the memorable battle of Strasbourg (heights of Ittenheim-Oberhausbergen); finally, in 378, The Emperor GRATIAN won a new victory over the same Germans, near Castrum of Argentaria (Horbouurg) in the Haut-Rhin.

But as Rome herself was menaced by barbarians near the end of the 4th century, the legions were obliged to leave for Italy and the Germanic masses, Germans and Franks crossed the Rhine along its whole length, from Cologne to Bale, in the year 405.

That was the end of the Roman occupation of Alsace.

In studying the parts of the road still visible, I was able to observe a troubling particularity: always on the north bank of courses of water all flowing west to east like the Eisenbachel, the Eberbach, the little Brunbachel near the Soufflenheim cemetery, the Klostergraben, the Sauer and two other little streams after Koenigsbrueck, the road possesses still its bridgeheads in the form of raised mounds going right to the end of the water, while on the south side, these earthworks, which normally would exist equally, have disappeared. One gets the impression that the Roman legions, in beating their retreat from the Germanic invasion at the end of the 4th century A.C. would have destroyed the south part of existing bridges to retard or prevent the advance of enemy troops, as was done in Alsace in the 1939-1945 war.

Understand, this is only a supposition on my part and the question could be the object of a more profound study.



VOIES ROMAINES AUTOUR DE SCHIRRHEIN-SCHIRRHOFFEN
 d'après M.-A. BURG
 (ROADS AROUND SCHIRRHEIN-SCHIRRHOFFEN)

THE ROMAN SETTLEMENT OF THE EISENBACHEL NEAR SCHIRRHOFFEN

Exactly mid-way on the Roman road going from Brumath to Seltz is found an important Roman agglomeration on both sides of the Eisenbachel, before arriving at Schirrhoffen.

F. KRAUS pointed out as early as 1876 that at this place one finds numerous bricks and tiles of the Romans, as well as some pottery which came from a tileyard situated in lot 8 of the forest of Haguenau, called "Eschenauerberg" or Gotzenwald".

In fact, after the occupation of the region by the Roman legions, probably as early as the beginning of the first century A.D., they installed at this place a brick - and - tile - works, fairly important, with a clay quarry nearby, which is still visible in our time. In digging in the soil, numerous rejects, strangely designed and fired, are found; the tiles found have exactly the same colour and consistency as those tiles manufactured by a local tileworks between the two world wars, which used the same earth for its products. We can also easily identify these ancient installations by the fact that the trees of this place never grow very big and often perish within a very few years. Furthermore they have poor resistance to strong winds and often fall due to their poorly developed roots.

During the Roman occupation of our country it was the military authorities themselves who exploited the tile - and - brick yards, in order to fulfil their needs for construction material for administrative buildings, the military, villas of notable citizens, bridges, viaducts, hypocausts (furnaces), etc. ... The tiles of Roman type, called "tegula et imbrex," were often made with an engraved seal mentioning the name of the maker, so that it is possible to learn the date of their fabrication. Different works permit us to establish that the 8th legion was present for a long time in Alsace. As for dimensions, the format of the bricks was 30 cm x 20 cm x 4 to 5 cm. and that of the tiles was 50 cm x 30 cm x 3 cm, thus much larger than the present sizes of these projects.

As we also find a great number of scraps of bronze in certain fields on the village side of the Eisenbachel, it is likely that at this place, in the middle of the settlement, there were several bronze foundries.

The fragments of pottery found are of Gallo-Roman type, made on a wheel in a clay firing whitish yellow from the region of Soufflenheim, as well as the type patterned in red (terra Sigillata) which is not of local origin.

WHY DID THE ROMANS CHOOSE TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN THE LOCALITY OF SCHIRRHOFFEN?

To this question, one can give three valid explanations:

1. The presence of an important Gallic population;
2. The presence of clay suitable for the manufacture of bricks and tiles;
3. A geographic situation favorable to a lasting settlement.

We have seen previously that the group of mounds of the canton of Kirchlach, situated quite near Schirrhoffen, numbered 120 units. If we add to them those of Schirrheiner Weg with its 17 mounds we obtain the total of 137. That is the biggest group of mounds in the forest of Haguenau and one can suppose that the number of inhabitants was as consequential. The Romans encountered the descendants of this population on their advance toward the Rhine. If we ask why they did not choose Soufflenheim, around which are found equally numerous mounds in the Kurzgeland, Weissensee-Oberfeld, Erzlach, Donauberg, we can suppose that these inhabitants had disappeared before their arrival. Whether this was following the invasions of the Triboques or those of the Romans themselves, we cannot be sure.

A second reason concerns the place, that is to say in the "Gotzenwald", there was found, at not too deep a level, a clay which was very suitable for making bricks and tiles, an advantage which the Romans knew how to exploit by installing an important tileworks. To put it into action, they needed a qualified work force, steadfast and rugged, which was drawn from the existing population. It is also possible that the inhabitants around Soufflenheim were transplanted to this place to be employed in the brick and tile works.

A third reason is the geographic situation, exactly half-way on the road between Brumath and Seltz. The distance of about 17 km in each direction, which would correspond to a one-day journey for the convoys of horses and soldiers charged with military baggage, on a route which was made only of lightly packed gravel from the Rhine. It was necessary, therefore, to create relays for the resupplying of both men and horses, as well as places for a night's rest. These places, which are vulgarly called "Uesspann", are found all the important Roman roads (mutationes or mansiones). It should be noted that several roads lead out of Schirrhoffen, notably in the direction of Schwabwiller, Betschdorf, Hatten, Drusenheim, Strasbourg, Brumath, and Soufflenheim towards Seltz (A.M. BURG), having served probably for the transportation of bricks and tiles made on the spot.

In following these explanations, one can affirm that there was no interruption in the occupation of these places and that the inhabitants of Schirrhein-Schirrhoffen were the direct descendants of the people of the age of iron. They maintained themselves, then, for about 2400 years, right up to our day. They are of Gallic descent (Mediomatriques), while the inhabitants of Soufflenheim, who disappeared at the time of the Roman occupation, did not repopulate the places until after the Romans left, in the 4th century A.D. It was no longer the autochtones (indigenous?) of the age of iron, but the invaders from beyond the Rhine, the Alamans (Germans).

A little further north the Franks settled, people who can still be distinguished by their language; among other words, for example, house, which to the Franks is Haus and to the Alamans is Huss.

One unique fact about Alsace is that three ethnic groups have cohabited and still cohabit, on the surface of land rather reduced, known as:

- the descendants of the Gauls of Schirrhein-Schirrhoffen,
- the descendants of the Alamans at Soufflenheim and
- the descendants of the Franks to the north of the Haguenau forest.

This presentation is a little schematic (simplified?), but does not prevent the conclusion that there is still in our day a difference of temperament, of character, even of physical appearance, among the three populations.

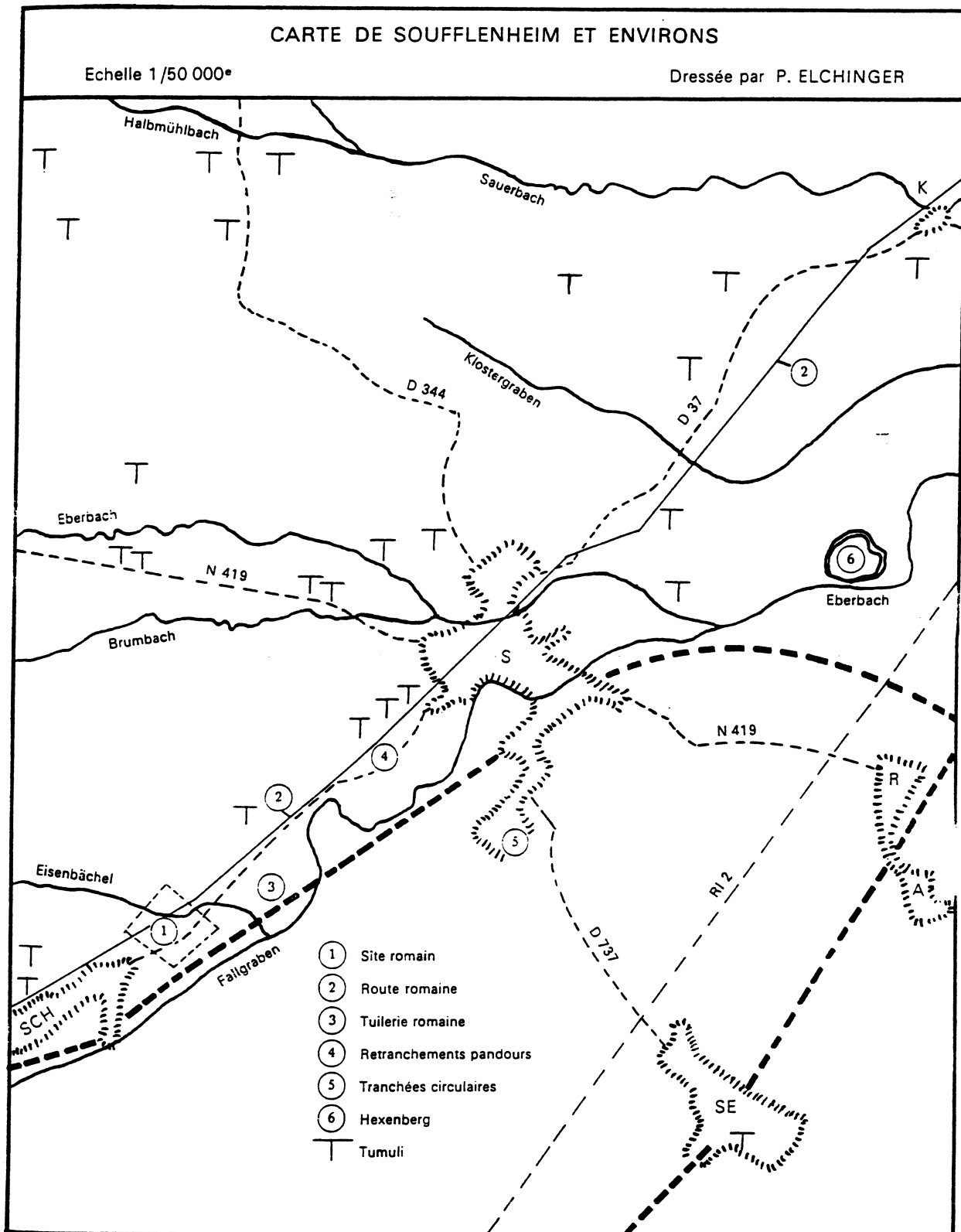
THE POTTERY OF SOUFFLENHEIM IN THE AGE OF TRANSITION

At the time of the Roman invasion, the settlements (of Gauls) around Soufflenheim were no longer in existence, since from the start of this epoch (beginning of the 1st century A.D.) not one trace is found to indicate their presence. It is only in the time of the Merovingian kings and during the Carolingian era (450 to 880 A.D.) that once again fragments of pottery of local manufacture are found. This pottery is characterized by more developed forms and by a decoration of wavy lines either singly or in several rows, incised on the exterior, as well as des motifs bureles tamponnes (stamped designs?). The pots are well turned, well fired, of a whitish yellow tint, thus made of local clay. They are not covered either with engobes (varnish?) or with glaze.

In the 12th century the local pottery makers took a new turn with the making of "bleuie" (Blauhafner) (blueish?) pottery. This new technique differed from the preceding (way) by a firing in reduced atmosphere, limited by damping. After an interval of 3 to 4 thousand years, potters had rediscovered the method of firing used in the age of polished stone, but with specialized kilns in place of the open fires and free air used in that far-off time. According to chemical analysis of the pottery in question, of which several intact specimens were found in a hole from which clay had been taken in the forest lots of Kurzgeland near Soufflenheim, they were pots made of clay extracted on the spot.

Nevertheless, this method of fabrication was equally practised in other centres of Alsace, as can be affirmed at the Notre Dame Museum in Strasbourg, where numerous "bleuie" pots are displayed.

It is also at this same epoch that the Emperor Frederick BARBAROSSA issued a charter that permitted the potters of Soufflenheim to extract freely in the forest of Haguenau all the clay that they needed.



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|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. ROMAN SITE | 2. ROMAN ROUTE | 3. WHERE THEY MADE ROMAN TILES |
| 4. PANDOUR'S FORT | 5. CIRCULAR EXCAVATIONS | 6. HEXENBERG |
| 7. MOUNDS | | |

CHAPTER 2

TWO PROTOHISTORIC (primitive) FINDS MADE IN THE APPROACHES TO SOUFFLENHEIM

In Celtic Alsace, the region of Haguenau seems to have occupied a choice place. It is there particularly that flowered the beautiful civilization of the mid-bronze age and the first iron age. In the second age of iron, Celtic civilization knew a second high point. This is proved by the ewers (oenochoes), (jugs with large handle and long spout made of metal coming from Greece). Five are known up to the present. First were the two ewers from HATTEN. They were found in 1851 under a mound formed of fertile earth brought from elsewhere. These two specimens are kept today in the Museum of Colmar.

In 1880, Professor MARTIN of Strasbourg, excavated the tumulus called "Goethe hugel" at SESSENHEIM. He found there sepulchres of various epochs, some of which had been disturbed. The oldest, however, was intact and contained besides some woman's jewelry, a ewer in very bad condition. The Archeological Museum of Strasbourg keeps this piece today.

One points out two others. Of the one it is know only that it comes from Alsace, while the other comes from BRUMATH.

It is necessary hereafter to add two new specimens which have just enriched the Museum of HAGUENAU.

The first was discovered in a tumulus situated at the eastern exit of SOUFFLENHEIM, in the point formed by the branching of one road going to Sessenheim and the other going to Drusenheim. In the spring of 1950, the community of Soufflenheim, owner of the land in question, granted to the Isidore HABERKORN company the right to extract the gravel from under the surface. The work began with removal of the topsoil to reach the gravel bed. The centre of the site was occupied by a shallow mound of earth foreign to the region of Soufflenheim. When this earth was cleared away two circular trenches were found, one of 24.5 metres diameter and the other of 7.3 metres. The large circle contained in its south half a rectangular ditch of 2 metres by 4 metres and 1.5 metres deep. At the bottom of this ditch the ewer was found.

The dimensions of the ewer of SOUFFLENHEIM were as follows: height up to the point of the spout (beak!): .38 m.; diameter at the base: .10 m.: greatest diameter: 1.5 m. This vase is well-preserved, except for several cracks (figure 1)

Its profile is that of numerous other ewers. The attachment of the handle is terminated by a palmette (boss or projection) surmounted by S-shaped ornaments. Above the "Ses" there are also two symmetrical animal figures. The forked ending is decorated with crouching panthers.

It seems to be from the 5th century B.C., in the age of La Tene 1. The second ewer of the Museum of Haguenau was discovered in 1950, in the cellar of the museum, in a case containing pieces of fired vases coming from the excavations of NESSEL. The inventory that Mr. NESSEL left does not mention this piece, but it can be supposed that it also came from the soil of Haguenau.

Therefore, five of the seven ewers that we have liberated from the soil of Alsace certainly come from the region between Zorn and Seltzbach, of which Haguenau is the centre. So, at the time of La Tene 1, an intense commerce, passing through the Adriatic, the Po, the Tessin, the Swiss lakes and the Rhine, connected the country of Greece with our region, to bring here the products of a more refined civilization.

A ROMAN BROOCH OF THE TYPE OF LA TENE III, COMING FROM SOUFFLENHEIM

Mr. Paul ELCHINGER, member of our society, offered to the Archeological Museum the brooch illustrated (p.26) found 70 cm under the ancient course of the Lindenberg, near which passed the Roman road from Brumath to Seltz.

It is a brooch (fibula) 11 cm long, made with only one bronze wire forming the pin, the spring with bilateral spirals, the arc with its head and its tail (?). This last had the shape of a triangular frame, opened to hold the clasp. This brooch directly derived from a form very current in La Tenne III, found also in Gaul, in Italy under Caesar, in Carinthie (Corinth?), in Hess. In style right up to the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.C., they were made by mass-production, judging by two examples of absolutely identical dimensions found at Koenigshoffen, Gerlinde Street, in a tomb of incineration (cremation?) of the Basse epoch (figure 2)

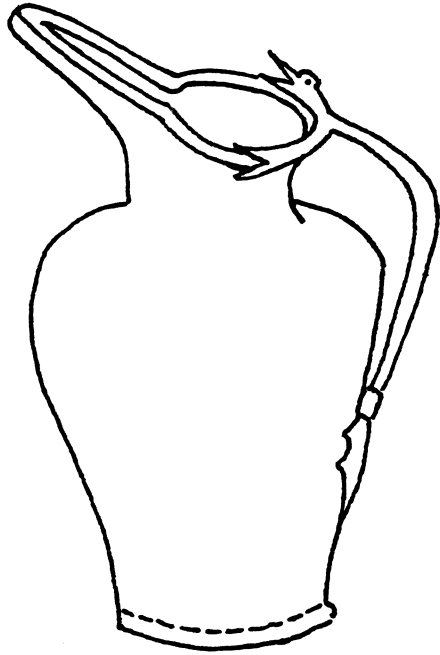


Fig. 1 OENOCHOE DE SOUFFLENHEIM
(EWER OF SOUFFLENHEIM)

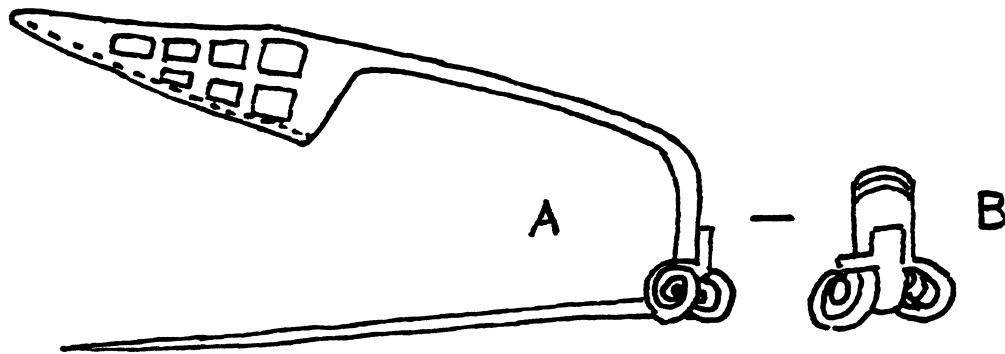


Fig. 2 FIBULE ROMAINE DU TYPE DE LA TENE III
PROVENANT DE SOUFFLENHEIM
(ROMAN BROOCH SIMILAR TO THE TYPE IN TENE III FROM SOUFFLENHEIM)

CHAPTER 3

THE HOLY FOREST OF HAGUENAU

The forest which we designate today as the Forest of Haguenau, constitutes, even in our days, an extended wooded region, covering the whole valley of the Rhine on the left side of the river, from Seltz right to the first slopes of the Vosges where it stops in the territories of the Roman posts of Metzwiller, Mietesheim, Gundershoffen, Woerth, etc. Its length is 35 km from east to west and its greatest width, from north to south in the central part reaches a dozen km.

This immense forest massif, one of the most important that we encounter in our country, such that, as forests go in this land, there are hardly any but the forest of Orleans, that of Caux, and some of the great estate forests around Paris, which surpass it in size, yet it is not mentioned in a single document before the tenth century. The most ancient text mentioning the forest, which has come down to us in a diploma of the Emperor Othon III of 996. Its continuance, in a region of which the population was already large at the beginning of our era is a veritable historic and economic enigma. Why was this vast extent of terrain left as woods while all the surrounding area was cleared and divided into agricultural domains?

All that can be found out is that at the time of the Gallo-Roman epoch, the forest of Haguenau had about the same limits as it has today. About fifty inhabited localities either bordering on the forest or only a short distance from it were already populated in the Gallo-Roman epoch and contain antiquities dating from that era; about ten of them contain monuments from before the Gallo-Roman times. It is probable that, for 19 centuries already, the massif was partially delimited, in its northern part, by the course of the river which the Romans called "Sura", the name which was later Germanized and which is called today the "Sauer". Later, at the beginning of the Frankish period, the forest certainly regained some terrain and was extended, especially towards the south.

Neither Julius CAESAR nor the geographers of the Gallo-Roman epoch nor the texts which have come down to us from the first dynasty of our kings makes any mention of the forest. We know only that at the first time of the appearance of Christianity in Alsace, some pious anchorites established their resident in the forest where they practised the hermit's life. The chronicle of the Abbey of Ebersmunster has conserved for us some details on the hermits who lived in the forest in the Merovingian epoch.

This is what is known about them:

In the time of King Dagobert II, Arbogast, Deodat, Florent and perhaps Hidulphe, Scottish monks came into Alsace to live a hermit's life. Such is, at least, the version of the "Vita Florentii" (Life of Florent) of the Bollandistes. In the "Vita Arbogasti" it is said that Arbogast was originally from Aquitaine and that he came from a noble and rich family. It is also the opinion adopted by the breviary of the diocese of Strasbourg in the office of the feast of Saint Arbogast (July 21), drawn up in 1489 and, in consequence, the official doctrine of the Church of Strasbourg, of which Saint Arbogast is the patron. A history of the bishops of Strasbourg, written in the 16th century, give some supplementary details. Arbogast first settled in the holy forest where he occupied himself with the instruction of a crowd of acolytes gathered around him. Numerous miracles, which God performed at his intercession, spread his fame even to the king, who at that time lived in the villa fiscale (tax centre?) of Rouffach. Dagobert sent for the saint and tried to keep him nearby, but Arbogast refused to move out of his hermitage. Soon, finding himself inconvenienced by the excessive number of visitors, he resolved to bury himself deeper in the forest, and arrived at a place on the banks of the Sura where he constructed, thanks to donations from the king, in honour of St. Martin of Tours, a church beside which he later erected the Benedictine Abbey of Surbourg. A little chapel (reconstructed in 1608) marks the location of his hermitage.

Surbourg is the oldest of the Benedictine monasteries founded on the border of the forest. The rule of St. Benedict was still observed in the time of Louis the Pious, but later relaxation was introduced and the abbey was secularized, transformed into a foundation for canons. This establishment had to suffer a great deal during the Peasants' Revolt and the Thirty Years' War; in 1732, it was transferred to Haguenau and annexed to the Church of St. George.

The church remaining at Surbourg is one of the oldest in Alsace; it dates from the eleventh and perhaps the tenth century. The Abbeys of Seltz (987); Walbourg, founded in 1074 by a Count of Montbellard; Biblisheim, founded a little later by the son of that count; Neubourg (1128), of which the first abbot was a Count of Neufchateau, cousin of St. Bernard; Koenigsbrueck, contemporary of Neubourg; the convent of Marienthal (1220) together, from the tenth to the thirteenth century completed the "belt" of sanctuaries around the forest, which would replace, after the establishment of monasticism, the settlement of anchorites of the first centuries.

The presence of holy men and monks who peopled the forest and its riverbanks gained for it the name of "Holy Forest", by which it was known right to the end of the Middle Ages. After the city of Hagenau, which had become a prosperous, rich and powerful republic, began again to extend its hold over the forest, it was habitually called the Forest of Hagenau, which has been its only name since the beginning of the seventeenth century. In the preamble of the formal declaration of the revision of the limits of 1609, the forest is called "der heilig hagenauer forst". For the local inhabitants, the forest is called "Forst" without any other name.

CHAPTER 4

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF SOUFFLENHEIM

While the chronicle does not mention Soufflenheim until after 1147, it seems to have been established that the actual place of the city was already inhabited in the age of metals. On the other hand, we know that the Roman road linking Brumath and Seltz traversed the locality.

So, Soufflenheim is mentioned for the first time in 1147, in a document coming from Pope Eugene III, dated the 3rd of August, under the name of SUVELHEIM. The convent of Neuenburg, established between 1128 and 1133 possessed property here.

While the Emperor Philippe of Souabe was living in Strasbourg, in 1207, he confirmed several donations made to the Hospital of Haguenau. In 1215, the city was called SUOVILHEIM. Finally, in 1245, the Prior of Seltz sold to the convent of Neuenburg the tithes owed by Sufelnheim.

In the year 1306, Wenert of Sufelnheim participated in court functions at the Tribunal of Haguenau.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, the city was pledge in the capacity of "teichsdorf" to the seigneurs (lords) of Duntzenheim. It was redeemed on September 29, 1334, by the city of Haguenau. In 1358, the Lady Jundta of Sufelnheim bequeathed different properties to the convents and churches of Haguenau.

Already, in 1454, there were (in the city) potters who were called "Schusselmacher" (dishmaker). The right to extract clay and to gather wood was fixed at three pounds a year, payable to the city of Haguenau.

The road linking Sufelnheim and Haguenau was named for the first time in 1478.

On May 8, 1560, Heinrich SCHLIPFER took over the duties of mayor. He was ordered to judge equitably between rich and poor and to fix the hours of judgement according to the possibility of the presence of the latter. The surrounding communities had equal rights of appeal to the tribunal of Sufelnheim.

Gabriel MULLER succeeded SCHLIPFER in 1606. In May, 1622, the city was burned by the soldiers of Mansfeld.

By superior order, the communal territory of SAUFFLENHEIM was restored on Nov. 10, 1658, under Mayor Hans-Heinrich SCHAEFFER. Other modifications took place in 1662, 1688 and 1722.

During the turrenienne war in 1674, many people had to leave the village to find refuge in the Rhenish marshes at Dalhunden and Stattmatten. The community building of that time was situated between the church hill and the street of the mill. (Mill St.?)

Finally, in 1744, there took place at Soufflenheim the celebrated battle of the "Pandours". At the beginning of July of the same year, the Austrians, reinforced by "Pandours" (Hungarian mercenaries) invaded Alsace by way of Lauterbourg, under the command of Prince Charles of Lorraine. Several division of General "Barenklau" besieged Fort Louis and occupied the villages of Roeschwoog, Leutenheim, Auenheim, Rountzenheim and Soufflenheim. The French troops were obliged to retreat under cover of the cannons of Strasbourg on July 29th. After that, Prince Charles established his general headquarters at Hagueanu. Several detachments arrived before Saverne in passing by Brumath and Pfaffenhoffen. The French, under the command of Marshals NOAILLES and BELLE-ISLE, went to meet them and forced them to retire across the forest of Haguenau. Near Soufflenheim, where the Austrians hastily retrenched, the antagonists met in a bloody battle on August 23rd, in the course of which the enemy lost more that 2000 men. Victory belonged to the French. The Austrians and Pandours replied by burning the village of Auenheim. Near the canal "Vauban" between Auenheim and Roeschwoog, during the same night, they fought the French one last time and after a further loss of 1200 men, the routed Austrians had to retreat to the other side of the Rhine by Fort Louis, Beinheim and Seltz. One fact which merits mention happened during this last confrontation. When the French cavalry arrived in front of the enemy, the latter lit torches and shouted so loudly that the horses were frightened and unseated their riders. This incident incited King Louis 14th to make fun of these officers by calling that day "the day of tumbles", misdirected irony, since the French soldiers had fought courageously and did not deserve that mockery.

In July, 1791, a regrettable incident caused opposition between the communities of Soufflenheim and Sessenheim. The mayor of Sessenheim had taken prisoner several Catholic priests who had fled from the revolution. The pastor of Soufflenheim was told about this, and with the approval of the Mayor, he called the population to arms with the aim of liberating these priests. Soon there was a struggle which caused losses on both sides. Thanks to the level-headedness of a young citizen of Soufflenheim, a more serious confrontation was avoided, because he pointed out that the Mayor of Sessenhim had only done his duty. The inhabitants of Soufflenheim retired.

The school exists at Soufflenheim since 1790. The teachers were institutors or school brothers as they were then called.

Soufflenheim also suffered enormously during the two World Wars of 1914-18 and 1939-45. The people still have bitter memories of them. In 1939, the inhabitants had to be evacuated to Haute-Vienne and on their return in 1940, they found themselves under the rule of the conquerors of the moment. Several of the inhabitants, who opposed the regime, were imprisoned in concentration camps. On the other hand a number of our sons had to make common cause with the enemy, and being conscripted into their armed forces, found death on various fronts.

Through courage all the wounds were dressed and by grace of the dynamism of its population, Soufflenheim rose again quickly and attained to this time its highest level with more than 4000 inhabitants.

CHAPTER 5

THE COAT OF ARMS OF SOUFFLENHEIM

Before the year 1961, the stationery of the City Hall of Soufflenheim showed a coat of arms representing a knight armed with a tourney lance. This design was obviously an arbitrary and in fact fantastic deformation of St. Michael: Soufflenheim was using with pride, without knowing it, a symbol which was not even its own.

It was only in 1961 that the regrettable error was revealed by M.F.J. HIMLY, Director of Archive Services of the lower Rhine, Secretary of the Departmental Commission of Heraldry, before the printing of the definitive manuscript of Volume VI of the work "The Coats of Arms of the Communities of the Lower Rhine", in which Soufflenheim figures.

At that time, the Commission examined the problem of the establishing of official arms of our community and identified the knight of our blazon (shield) which reads thus: "of blue with St. Michael armed with his lance and conquering the dragon, all in gold."

In fact, in 1697, the King of France LOUIS XIV had granted to Soufflenheim the official arms as follows:

"of blue with St. Michael of gold as archangel", as indicated by the original design preserved at the National Library at Parish. This text has been published in the basic work on the arms of Alsace, entitled "Armorial of the Generality of Alsace, Official Collection as drawn up by orders of LOUIS XIV", published by A. de BARTHELEMY, Paris - Colmar - Strasbourg, 1861, page 10, No. 86. The text and the official design of LOUIS XIV has also been found in another reference work which is: J. BAQUOL - P. RISTELHUBER, Ancient and Modern Alsace or Topographical, Historical and Statistical Dictionary of the Higher and Lower Rhine, 3rd Edition, Strasbourg, 1865, Plate VII, No. 12.

Considering these works, no further doubt is possible: the arms of Soufflenheim certainly represent St. Michael. It was important, in consequence, to re-establish the historic and official blazon of Soufflenheim, as it had been granted by LOUIS XIV.

However, as several communities of the Department already had official arms of a gold St. Michael on a blue background (Niederscaffolsheim, Reichstett, Gunstett, Ernolsheim) with or without the dragon, the Director of Services of Archives of the Lower Rhine proposed to the municipality of Soufflenheim that the background be changed from blue to red, to avoid confusion. This substitution of red for blue was absolutely legal and it also agreed with the colours that Soufflenheim's shield was originally.

To sum up, the arms of Soufflenheim are as follows: of gules (red) of Saint Michael the Archangel in gold.



CHAPTER 6

MGR. IGNACE HUMMEL (1870-1924) THIRD VICAR APOSTOLIC OF THE COTE-DE-L'OR (Gold Coast)

Francois-Ignace HUMMEL was born February 14, 1870 at SOUFFLENHEIM. Son of a large family, he started to work after leaving primary school, in a customs house to learn a trade, wishing to earn, in this way, a modest salary so that he could help his family. But at age 18, he decided, under an unknown influence, to become a missionary. He also entered the School for African Missionaries at Glermond-Ferrand. By great effort, he was able to skip one class so that he caught up with other Alsatians who had started a year sooner. On Sept. 27, 1892, he entered the Grand Seminary; after four years of theological studies he was ordained to the priesthood on July 5, 1896. It was a good class which was ordained in 1896, ten Alsatians of whom five came from around Haguenau, four others from the Lower Rhine and only one from the Upper Rhine.

After the joys the first Mass in his birthplace of SOUFFLENHEIM, Father HUMMEL had to make preparations, he was ordered to the Upper Niger. His departure took place on Oct. 1, 1896. One month later, he arrived, accompanied by Father Friedrich MARTIN of Bischoffsheim, at the Cape Coast. The new arrivals made a visit to the superior of the Mission, Father Albert, who had to bless a new cemetery on Nov. 2nd; he ordered them to attend that ceremony; destiny chose Father DARTOIS (future Bishop of Dahomey) and Father HUMMEL, who would be buried there as bishop, twenty-seven years later.

For ten years, Father HUMMEL would be a "broussard" (bush priest?) in the Upper Niger; this was one of the most difficult missions, on the one hand because of the murderous climate and on the other because of the great fear of foreigners. For 20 years this had been almost a complete failure. To Father P. POIRIER, founder of the mission in 1884, nobody spoke a word, and he was refused food and water. Also, in 1898 the missionaries were witnesses to human sacrifices offered in broad daylight in the public square by the feticheur (witchdoctor?). On his arrival, Father HUMMEL was attached to the Mission of Asaba which had been able to register only three adult baptisms during the first eight years of its existence. He stayed there ten years, working mainly with the lepers, who had a settlement in the neighbourhood. In 1898, four missions were pillaged and burned by people of the Ekous-Mekous tribe, but the missionaries were able to escape. In 1900, the English governor organized an expedition into the lands of the Ekous-Mekous; their chiefs and 300 men were put into prison; thus peace was re-established. The situation slowly grew better, partly due to a Protestant convert, Sir James MARSHALL, who functioned as judge at Asaba; he was also a benefactor of the mission. At Christmas, 1903, Father HUMMEL had the joy of celebrating the baptism of 26 adults, a beautiful ceremony which foreshadowed better times. But it took the patience of an angel and heroic self-sacrifice. Father HUMMEL had passed in this hard school.

A little after Easter, 1906, a letter from Rome announced to Father HUMMEL his nomination as Vicar Apostolic of the Gold Coast and titular Bishop of Trapezopolis. The consecration took place at Notre Dame de Fourviere of Lyon, by Cardinal COULLIE, on the 29 of July, 1906. He succeeded Mgr. Klaus ISADORE, dead after a stay of only eight months in Africa.

After the consecration, Father HUMMEL quickly visited his birth-place, SOUFFLENHEIM and Alsace. On Oct. 28, he assisted at the consecration of Mgr. STEINMETZ (from Morschwiller) as Vicar Apostolic of Dahomey. On his arrival in the Gold Coast, Dec. 9, 1906, he received an enthusiastic welcome. He immediately set to work, making contact with the missionaries and the residential stations, in order to study with the missionaries and selected lay persons the program of action to be adopted. At the time, the Vicariate had 19 priests in 5 principal and 13 secondary stations. At Cape-Coast, Elmina and Keta there was also a community of Sisters of Notre Dame des Apotres (Apostles) with a school for girls and an important surgical station. Monseigneur HUMMEL, in February, 1907, opened the cotiere (coastal?) station of Sekondi with Father J. B. THUET (of Ammershwihr) and Joseph MULLER (from Bischwiller); he confided to them also the visitations of localities situated along the new railway as far as Kumasi, capital of the Ashanti. In this city, land was acquired in July 1907, and they commenced the new post which would become an important centre of radiation (communication?) especially towards the north of the Vicariate.

One urgent need in each station was the construction of solid and healthful homes for the Fathers and the Bishop. Mgr. HUMMEL reflected before making a decision. Very soon, he showed himself to be a remarkable administrator, endowed with great strength for working, an inexhaustible energy and a will that passed the test: what he wanted, he wanted at any price. His residence was composed of a first floor with kitchen, dining room and print-shop as well as a second floor with the bishop's office, the archives, a parlour, the private bedroom and chapel of the bishop. The house of the Fathers was separate from that of the Bishop, but very nearby. Similar houses at Axim, Sekondi, etc., were completed in a few years, usually made up of a first floor for classes and a second floor for the Fathers. The health of the missionaries was better protected by these accomodations, which were more hygienic and larger than their old houses.

The work of the catechists was seriously encouraged. At his arrival, there were 49 catechist, in 1915 there were already 189 and at the moment of his death, 334. At the beginning of his episcopate, he had printed a "Rule for the Seconardy Stations of the Gold Coast", a clear directive for the functions of the president of the station, the parish committee (Council?) and the catechists. This code of organization was valuable for the successful development and the proper advancement of evangelism in the Vicariate. The number of secondary stations increased from 13 in 1906 to 500 in 1924. A marvelous conversion success of the west of the Vicariate, bordering the Ivory Coast (Vicariate of Abidjan), took place. In this region, "the Holy Spirit blew up a tornado", a thrust toward the Catholic religion was produced there, due to the action of the "Prophet Harris", a Protestant and polygamous Liberian, who exhorted the pagans with great eloquence to burn their fetishes and to become Christians.

The question of the schools was like an obsession Mgr. HUMMEL. From 17 in 1905, the number of schools in his Vicariate reached 54 in 1915 and 131 in 1924. They merited both their material organization and by the quality of their teaching the congratulations of the official inspectors and the financial support of the government, which gave subsidies to instructional establishments according to their success in examinations. Monseigneur had personal ideas in regard to teaching and education; he intended to give to the students of his schools an instruction which would raise them without having them leave their homes; also he adjoined most of the schools to experimental gardens, which were the beginnings of model farms or professional workshops. He became a member of the Superior Council of Teaching of the colony, where his ideas were in great part shared. The English governor said in 1924: "I deplore the death of the Catholic bishop ... above all because it is a hard blow for the cause of teaching in this country. With him, one of our lights has been extinguished, one of our most active, most devout and most enterprising workers has disappeared."

During the war of 1914-18 Mgr. HUMMEL had no special difficulties; not one of his missionaries was disturbed; the English governor was a practicing Catholic, Sir Hughes CLIFFORD. But in the neighbouring country of Togo, the German Fathers were deported on Jan. 9, 1913 on an English ship, by a formal order from London which neither their governor nor Mgr. HUMMEL could keep from being followed.

He was as shocked at this expulsion as the missionaries were and he ordered them to stay aside (out of sight?) and to keep quiet. Nevertheless, he informed the Congregation of the Propagation (of the Faith) in Rome, in December, 1917, about this projected expulsion. On Jan. 13, 1918, Mgr. HUMMEL received from Rome by cablegram his appointment as Apostolic Administrator of Togo. He went immediately to Rome, celebrated Mass there, introducing to the faithful some priests for the Gold Coast, who would stay until better times returned. Mgr. STEINMETZ of Dahomey did likewise and sent several Fathers into French Togo. This situation lasted until January 1921, when Father CESSOU was named Administrator of Togo.

In July 1921, Mgr. HUMMEL had the happiness of celebrating his twenty-fifth anniversary as a priest, in the midst of great enthusiasm from the inhabitants of his episcopal city.

In the month of August 1922, Mgr. HUMMEL left for France and for Rome; he was greatly in need of rest after ten years sojourn (in Africa). During his visit "ad limina" to Rome, he had to look after certain business affairs of his Vicariate; among other questions was that of the establishment of a new apostolic Vicariate in British Togo, with residence at Kata. Rome acted on this and named Mgr. Herrmann AUG (from Turckheim) as the first Vicar Apostolic of the Lower Volta. When he came on Oct. 12 to pay his respects to Mgr. HUMMEL at Cape-Coast, the latter was ill.

After his convalescence, he started to work again, visiting most of the posts in January, 1924. He also presided over the annual retreat of the Missionaries, followed by a grand pastoral reunion; there he announced the forthcoming construction of the cathedral at Cape-Coast, but regretted that it was not possible to begin building the secondary college. Following a long "Confirmation tour" into the bush in the district of Salpond, he had to take to his bed, suffering from a kidney ailment as well as from the effects of malaria. After several days of suffering, he died on March 13, 1924. At his passing, the whole country mourned deeply.



Le potier au tour.

(THE POTTER AT HIS WHEEL)

CHAPTER 7

THE POTTERY OF SOUFFLENHEIM THROUGH THE AGES

At Soufflenheim, the art of pottery dates from an epoch very remote from our own. Favoured by the presence of a primary, directly usable material, the clay known as "potter's earth", by an abundance of natural fuel, firewood, people did not hesitate to take up residence here. In fact, the neighbouring forest of Haguenau sits on a sub-soil that is rich in potter's earth, that can be shaped, is impermeable, is based on silicate of aluminum and which gives, when mixed with water, a plastic paste which becomes solid and unchangeable when either exposed to the sun or after firing (in a kiln).

The "tumuli" (mounds) situated in the east and north-east part of the holy forest have permitted the bringing to light of diverse objects: jewels, ornaments, weapons, pots and have revealed that men of the bronze age already used vessels which they made with the clay found in the forest. These pots, modeled by hand, were still of irregular shape because the potter's wheel did not appear in our region until about 400 B.C. Mr. F.A. SCHAEFFER, former assistant curator of the Museum of Saint-Germain-en-Laye is convinced that the pottery of Soufflenheim dates from as early as the beginning of the second millennium B.C. by this indication, the pottery of Betschdorf is more recent because the first pots known to be from that locality date from the 17th century. (B.C.?)

By excavating in the cemeteries of mounds in the forest of Haguenau, at the end of the last century, M. NESSEL, then Mayor of Haguenau, was able to put together a magnificent collection of bronze age pottery which he donated to the museum of his city.

After the arrival of the Romans, the Gauls enjoyed peace for about 500 years, "the pax Romana", despite the ever-present danger of Germanic invasions.

Was there any break of continuity in the line of these potters? There is no positive proof. The Roman potsherds discovered in these places do not constitute sufficient evidence. It certainly seems rather unreasonable that in Roman times pottery would have been imported from elsewhere, when good clay was found on the spot. Capable artisans, the Romans permeated the Gallic civilization and gave new momentum to their rudimentary economy. We suppose that the potters were present in that epoch, even though we do not possess documentary evidence. We note that a Roman tileyard with adjacent clay quarry was located not too far from Soufflenheim near the Roman road Brumath-Seltz-Lauterbourg. The size of a Roman brick was about 30 x 20 x 4-5 cm, and that of a tile about 50 x 30 cm.

After the Roman era we remain still for several centuries without direct proof of pottery workshops which would have existed in Soufflenheim. It is not until the twelfth century that we find such (workshops) at Soufflenheim. Even the fact that the locality of Soufflenheim was remembered is only shown for the first time in the archives in the year 1147 under the name of SUVELHEIM.

A strong, widespread tradition says that Soufflenheim had in the twelfth century numerous and skillful potters. The potters of the time made a gift to the Emperor BARBAROSSA of a creche (Christmas "crib") with figurines of baked clay. As a sign of recognition and of his particular benevolence, the Emperor Frederick BARBAROSSA, then in residence at Haguenuau, gave to them and to all their male descendants the perpetual right to extract freely from the soil of the forest of Haguenuau the clay needed for their trade. The imperial parchment justifying this right was lost in the fire of 1622. At the beginning of the last century, after a legal process of 12 years that the potters had brought against the Administration of Waters and Forests when that office would have taken this privilege from them, the Tribunal of Premier Instance (Court of Appeal?) of Strasbourg definitely recognized that the potters of Soufflenheim did have the right to extract from all parts of the forest of Haguenuau the potter's earth necessary for their profession. The archives preserved of this process (departmental archives "Berechtigungen der Geminde unde der Topfer von Sufflenheim im ungeteilten Heiligen Forst bei Haugenan i. Elsass" Extracts of the public conference held at the Palace of the Rohan at Strasbourg March 1, 1937, by M. l'abbe A. ELCHINGER) tells us that on the 6th day of August, 1842 the Tribunal received the deposition of six venerable old men, of whom three originated from Soufflenheim and the other three others from neighbouring villages, Sessenheim, Routzenheim and Leutenheim. The youngest of them was 79 years old, the oldest 86. All, after having declared that they were not relatives, nor connections, nor servants, nor domestics of the potters of Soufflenheim, made, under oath, identical depositions. The first testimony said relating to the right of extraction of the earth: "I heard from my father that his own father already told him that from time immemorial these removals (of clay) took place without obstacles." The testimony of Sessenheim: "The oldest people of Soufflenheim with whom I have often had occasion to speak in my youth, because my father kept an inn, told me that the potters of their community exercised their right from time immemorial." The last began by telling that when he was twelve or thirteen years old, he wanted a closer look to see how an earth quarry was made, but having risked descending there, he at once had to flee with great speed, being frightened by the sight of a potter who emerged from the earth and who, at his approach, put his glasses on his nose". And with regard to the right of "digging" as he called it, he affirmed: "The oldest people said that this right dated from the most ancient times. I have never heard anyone say the contrary."

This evidence given in 1842 by octogenarians, supported by other evidence of seventy years and emanating from the "oldest people" permits us easily to go back to the end of the seventeenth century.

In consequence, we can affirm with certitude that at the end of the seventeenth century there was a widely established tradition according to which the potters of Soufflenheim possess certain privileges from time immemorial, since the most ancient times. In summary, one estimated at that time that there were at Soufflenheim, for several centuries without doubt, not simply the village potter, like perhaps many other places, but also a fairly large number of potters having important privileges and possessing flourishing pottery workshops.

In the thirteenth century, there were two principal centres for pottery making in Lower Alsace: SOUFFLENHEIM and SELESTAT.

For the fifteenth century, there exist documents that are precise and reliable. Among some discovered objects was a vase bearing the date 1402. Besides, in a forestry ordinance concerning the forest of Haguenau, dated 1435, there is mention of the "Schusselreher" (dish-turner) of Soufflenheim, that is to say the turners of pots, to whom is given again the right of gathering fallen wood. In 1454 they had to pay to the "Landvogtel" (Bailiff?) of Haguenau the sum of three pounds for the firewood which they needed.

From the 16th century we have a similar document dated August 14, 1508, where there is mention of "Hafner" or potters of Soufflenheim (Hafen=pots). According to tradition, they were very numerous at that time and most of the population made their living by this trade or art. The pottery makers of Soufflenheim must have been among the most important of that era.

As for the seventeenth century, we have already related the important evidence which we have learned from the (legal) process which the potters brought against the State and the city of Haguenau. This gives us proof that there were then and in a way continue to be a certain number of potters in the locality. We know as well that at that at that epoch nobody could make or sell pottery in Alsace without being attached to the Corporation and received into the Confraternity of POTTERS, which received its statutes Nov. 9, 1622, from the Emperor Frederick II, statute confirmed by the Sovereign Council of Alsace on March 11, 1682. As the pottery of Soufflenheim passes for the pottery of Alsace, we deduce that the potters of Soufflenheim were then members of that corporation and confraternity.

The statutes of 1622 and of 1682 still exist today and can be read. They show us the means employed then to defend the rights of small businesses.

In the eighteenth century, we know that the corporate organization of the potters continued. In a report of October 27, 1940, the Director of Domains (Orioertues) speaks of a "Corporation of Arts and Trades" which the potters of Soufflenheim had formed under the Old Regime, suppressed like all the others by the Constitution of 1791 and of Year III. (of the Revolution?)

As for objects made in the workshops of that epoch, the Alsatian Museum of Strasbourg possesses a unique collection of them. Some of them are even dated: for example, one can read on them the dates of 1773, 1782, 1790, 1794, 1799.

For the nineteenth century, we have a mass of information, furnished first by numerous dated objects, also conserved in the Alsatian Museum, and above all by a great number of written documents.

Thus, according to a census done in 1837, there were then at Soufflenheim 55 independent potters, so 55 pottery workshops.

Here are some names of master potters who worked in 1835:
BAUER, Jacques; BECK, Ignace; BURGER, Antoine; ELCHINGER, Wendelin;
GOETZ, Michel; HABERKORN, Laurent; HOERDT, Georges; KIEFFER, Joseph;
KIEFFER, Michel; KOENIG, Michel; MARY, Antoine; MARY, Jacques; MARY,
Michel - the elder; MARY, Michel - the younger; SIEGRFRIED, Antoine;
SIEGRFRIED, Jacques, THOMEN, Jean; THOMEN, Michel; VOEGELE, Antoine;
VOEGELE, Michel, WAGNER, Philippe.

In 1872, a report of the General Guard (Foresters) of the Forests of Haguenau only mentions 43 (workshops) and it estimates that the number of persons occupied in these workshops approached 600 out of the 2900 inhabitants. At the beginning of 1891, a report by the mayor of that time, M. SCHLACHTER mentions anew 51 master potters. Since then the number has diminished. The increase of customs tariffs in 1892 reduced by half the possibilities of exporting into France (Alsace was part of Germany from 1871 to 1919 and again from 1940 - 1945 according to Encyclopedia Britannica - SR) Also, the fabrication of objects of enameled plate iron or of aluminum, more easily handled and less fragile, constituted for kitchen pottery an increasing competition. Just before the Great War, there were only 30 potters left in Soufflenheim. Today, there are only about fifteen.

The potters of Soufflenheim, for the most part, are still, today, organized into a grouping called "Syndicate of Authorized Potters", whose members are the only ones who can benefit from the right to extract clay freely from the Forest of Haguenau.

There also exist at Soufflenheim and since very early times some factories for (making) fire-proof products, which remain quite productive and employ even today about 300 workers. But in all times, it is pottery -- kitchen, horticultural and artistic -- which has been considered as the true work of the area.

There could also be a whole study made on the export and sale and on the traveling merchants who went from village to village with their picturesque and traditional carts, full of ordinary dishes and even carrying, to the great joy of children, a few dolls' dishes, figurines, whistles, money-boxes, cocoos, owl, etc. ...

Ordinary pottery is not the only kind of product coming from the workshops. Some artistic pieces have always been found among the dishes of rustic design. But it was at the end of the last century that artistic pottery was really put into production. The first examples, in 1895, were a great success even as far as America. As early as 1892, a young potter of Soufflenheim, Mr. Leon ELCHINGER, was approached for the execution of a ceramic facade for the School of Decorative Arts of Strasbourg. In 1895, there came from the same workshops a large mural fountain for the Museum of Berne in Switzerland. Among the numerous holy water founts preserved at the Alsatian Museum of Strasbourg and in the community collection there is one that is dated 782. From the chapel of the old cemetery of Soufflenheim, there has been saved a group of human figures in fired clay, of natural size, dating from the early nineteenth century and representing the scene of the agony of Jesus at the Mount of Olives. On a tomb in the new cemetery can be seen a little crucifix dated 1818. The Alsatian Museum as well as the Museum of Soufflenheim possesses quite a collection of statues and statuettes of the "Pieta" in fired and glazed clay from 1823, 1838, 1861, 1876, etc. On the "town hall" of Soufflenheim can be admired a representation of the Last Supper after the painting of Leonardo da Vinci, in grand proportions, masterpiece executed by Mr. Leon ELCHINGER.

The walls of the present cemetery are ornamented with bas-reliefs in fired clay executed about 1885 and representing the Way of the Cross, the author of which is Paul MESSNER.

Between 1920 and 1925 Soufflenheim furnished several communities of Alsace with their Monuments to the Dead of the Great War: inscriptions, mosaic designs, framing large bas-reliefs covered with émaux colores (coloured enamel?)

Recognized as masterpieces are the monumental Way of the Cross of Mont Ste. Odile and the Calvary at the southern exit of Soufflenheim. Thus, one finds here a great tradition, not only relating to everyday pottery but also having religious significance.

The creative spirit of our ancient potters was guided unconsciously by folklore, beliefs and changes in the political regimes.

Some design elements are:

- the star of Christmas (of the Magi)
- the doll -- Hansel and Gretel
- the crawfish - symbol of sins of the flesh
- the fish - Christian symbol - Sign of Christ
- the feur de lys (iris) - royal symbol
- the cock - Gallic symbol - symbol of virility
- the hen - symbol of fertility and maternal sentiment
- the lamb - symbol of the Paschal Lamb
- the kougelhopf - (a large cake) symbol of Alsatian tradition
- the heart - symbol of love

These few particular (design) aspects show how greatly even humble pottery can demonstrate sense and life and can merit the respect of the passer-by of today.

This spirit speaks for itself and transmits to us and to future generations the most profound sentiments and convictions of our ancestors.

Here is the potter as seen by a poet: Charles GUERIN.

If you want to see the birth of a vase of beautiful form,
Follow me into the workshop as far as this window
Where the craftsman works, sitting since before dawn.
He throws a lump of greasy clay on his wheel,
Spins it, and, resisting the push of the machine,
Raises between his hands the shivering clay.
With an imperious thumb he courageously attacks,
Hollows it and fashions it to the pleasure of his strength.
See, under the active embrace which guides it,
The vase expands its still-liquid grace.
While he rounds it with his palm on the outside,
His fingers join and curve forming the edges.
... The wheel stops. Then, taking a break,
The humble master, content with his work, smiles.

CHAPTER 8

THE EVACUATION OF THE INHABITANTS OF SOUFFLENHEIM IN 1939

In August 1939, the city council gave to each constituent a refugee ticket and a gas mask. In September the evacuation of the community was officially ordered.

By trains, autos, wagons, the inhabitants were directed to KUTTOLSHEIM and WINTZENHEIM. The Pastor of Kuttolsheim was Abbe KLAYE, old vicar of Soufflenheim. The stay in these localities was in barns, halls and other mass quarters. After 8 days, they departed from MARLENHEIM by two big trains (freight cars) for HAUT-VIENNE. Around 10 to 15% of the population left by their own means, to homes of parents, acquaintances or friends, so did not follow the majority.

The trains arrived at the station of LIMOGES, where the people stayed three days in large garages. After that, the train parted for LINARDS and neighbourhood, MASLEON, ROZIERES - ST. GEORGES and SAINT-MEARD. The head of the convoy was Rector FRIEDRICH with three teaching sisters and two nursing sisters.

The second party was directed to AMBAZAC with the Mayor, the Secretariat, some teaching sisters, two nursing sisters and the school Director, M. FOURNO. Father ROBERT-XAVIER, on leave, being unable to return to the missions, replaced the Rector at the city of Ambazac while Rector FRIEDRICH lived at LINARDS.

The beginning was rude, vulgar soups, (soup kitchens?) collective chance-found lodgings. Little by little each family was allowed to prepare its own food. The receiving communities did their best, as well at Ambazac as in the region of Linards. The offices of the city council of Soufflenheim were given space in the Ambazac city hall. The census of the refugees was made. The allocation of refugees was paid for: 10 francs per adult and 8 francs per child. There was good feeling between the inhabitants and the refugees despite some difficulties of language.

After 5 weeks the Administration put at our disposal four new locations: ST. PAUL D'EYJEAUX, ST. BONNET, BEAUNE-LES-MINES and RILHAC-RACON. The most poorly housed were moved to lodgings that suited the circumstances, everyone was conveniently lodged. In each locality an auxiliary office was installed by the mayor of Soufflenheim. Every Thursday, accompanied by his secretary, the mayor made a tour into each community (9 communities and 200 km distance). On each trip, the savings bank of Soufflenheim was made available to anyone interested. Little by little the men found work, either in the little local factories, in Limoges in the footwear business, on the farms, etc. The MAVEST factory responded by installing (a branch plant?) in a big shed near the station. The old quilters, women and girls began to work again. Allocation accounts (welfare?) reversed and salaries earned helped everyone to make ends meet. The merchants of the region did good business.

Classes were resumed with teaching personnel from our own city.

In spite of the great difficulties encountered on the way, a certain number of refugees succeeded in returning to Soufflenheim to get winter supplies. Numerous wagon loads of retrieved goods were then sent from Soufflenheim to Ambazac and to Linards.

After the Armistice in 1940 the MAVEST enterprise stayed at Ambazac, was developed and become one of the most important businesses in the region.

A whole year passed, followed near the end of 1940 by the occupation of France by the German army. The hour had struck for the return to our native country. In low spirits, most of the refugees took the road back and found their town in a deplorable state. A good number of the houses were destroyed or damaged. The four bridges over the EBERBACH and the FALLGRABEN were completely destroyed. All the houses had been looted of their contents. Due to the general poverty, a great deal of good will and much time was needed for a return to order. Local industries recovered slowly, following the possibilities of the time.

There followed the period of occupation with all its inconveniences. Conscription into the forces of our young compatriots. Concentration camps (Mr. ZILLER and Mr. AMBOS). Deportations, the Volkssturm, etc. The escape of General GIRAUD from the Camp of Koenigstein succeeded with the help of Alsatians.

In the autumn of 1944 came the debacle of the Hilterian empire. Massive bombings of German cities. Allied bombers crossing the Rhine every night with their devastating and mortal cargo. In plain daylight we saw the bombardment of Strasbourg, of the refinery of Pechelbronn. Railway traffic was interrupted after the occupation of Strasbourg by the allies in November, 1944. The electric current failed; all industry stopped.

At the beginning of December the Americans arrived. The population was in the cellars. The situation remained uncertain and at the beginning of January, the firing of the German artillery began again, killing civilian victims. Reply of the Americans over Haguenau. A large part of the population retreated with the Americans or even took refuge in the chambers of the Maginot Line in the nearby forest. It was a new exodus: by every means at hand, by foot in the snow, by bicycle, etc. At MOMMENHEIM a train was put at our disposal to take us to VESOUL (Haute-Saone). We were dispersed through the Department, among other places, to PUISSEY.

On the 19th of March (St. Joseph's Day) we learned from the radio that Soufflenheim had been liberated on March 17th. Great general satisfaction. Return to Soufflenheim by every means and as quickly as possible. It was a deplorable arrival because all the houses had again been damaged and looted of their contents. The percentage damaged by war far exceeded 50%. Around the end of May 1945, the inhabitants had returned, happy in spite of everything to have survived this terrible catastrophe.

CHAPTER 9

THE LIBERATION OF SOUFFLENHEIM BY THE FIRST FRENCH ARMY IN 1945

Fortune siezes at a hair ...

On March 10th, confirming a personal letter which he had sent to me on the 7th, General DEVERS told me his intention to launch an attack with the American 7th Army to reconquer Wissembourg and to join the PATTON Army. Because, since Feb. 22nd, the French troops had been holding the lines from Bischwiller in the south-east of the forest of Haguenau as far as the Rhine at Herrlisheim, he asked me to have our units progress (advance?) in liaison with the American units to cover those along the Rhine as far as its confluence with the Lauter at Lauterbourg.

Oberhoffen-Village, Soufflenheim, Lauterbourg marked the line between the Americans and the French. This limit had the enormous disadvantage of ending in a "whistle", thus preventing our access to Germany at the same frontier. But the operation had in compensation the great advantage of pushing us in the right direction, the only one which brought us nearer a starting point for subsequent action. Because we had not been in action long, to try to free the Rhine in our sector, going out of Alsace, would be a folly. It would be, in fact, to meet, besides the not negligible obstacle of the river itself, the limited plain of Baden, covered with hundreds of works of the "Westwall" (Siegfried Line) as well as the huge Black Forest. To get past these three successive obstacles without ending in a paying position strategically was impossible as well as nonsense.

The only reasonable solution was to take, in the Palatinat, the part of the left bank of the Rhine before which both the Black Forest and the continuous fortifications thin out. There, it was enough to conquer the river and a few widely-spaced blockhouses in order to arrive in front of the pass of Pforzheim, the natural invasion route for Southern Germany. To arrive at Lauterbourg was to arrive in the proximity of the Rhenish fortifications of which I had absolute need as a platform for all our following operations. The hair of fortune ...

But we were not yet to take these fortifications.

To reach its height, it was necessary first that our units not only assure the deceptive possessions of Lauterbourg, but also a first battlement on the Lauter by which they could get into the Palatinat. In other terms, it was necessary to enlarge the zone of action so that they agreed with the initial order of the 6th Army Group in cutting through on their left flank.

Battlements on the Lauter, battlements on the Palatine Rhine ... those two successive conditions were indispensable to the invasion of Germany by the French Army. I repeated them like a litany.

Battlements on the Lauter, battlements on the Palatine Rhine ... To obtain them, I relied a little on the friendly comprehension of General DEVERS, a little on the bon-enfant skill (good child skill?) of General GUILLAUME. The secret instructions that I gave to him (then) yesterday and that I can well reveal today - were not academic: "Theoretically, your front ends on the Lauter in a whistle: get yourself clear so that it ends in a blunderbuss..."

As on another occasion, the honour of attacking went to GUILLAUME and his 3rd Division of Algerian Infantry (3rd D.I.A.) "the division always fresh, always ready", placed for this purpose, with the 6th Combat Command and the 5th D.B. (C.C.6 - Colonel de LAVILEON), at the disposition of the 6th Corps of the American Army of General BROOKS. His plan consisted of throwing his corps, formed of the 103rd and 36th D.I.U.S. and of the 14th D.B U.S. between the Basses-Vosges and the west of the forest of Haguenau toward Wissembourg by way of the pass of Soultz-sous-Forets. The role of the 3rd D.I.A. would be to advance on a parallel between the east of the forest of Haguenau and the Rhine.

In fact, it then was a matter of our elements effecting on their own account a break-through attack, symmetrical with but distinct from the American attack, because their armies were separated by the whole forest of Haguenau, connection being possible only at the north and that by extension towards the right of the 14th D.B.U.S. This "neutralization" especially by the forest of Haguenau, was not without danger for our left flank, open all along this bastion. We could not ignore this because of the risk of counter-attacks. But we had a solution: although the forest was neglected by the Americans, in whose zone it technically lay, nothing prevented us from extending ourselves into it. Even more, we were, from the beginning, obliged to do so.

Powerfully retrenched in the ANNEMARIE line which defended the Camp and the Station of Oberhoffen, all along the Haguenau-Schirrhein railway, the 905th and 257th Volksgrenadiere-Divisionen prevented us from any advance as long as they held the camp of Oberhoffen itself, which flanked the whole western part of the disposif (combat zone?). They did not know how to vacate the village, which was in our sector, without allowing the fall of the camp, which was not. Since the 6th American Corps, completely engaged in the west, was not interested in it, the 3rd D.I.A. had to take it on its own account: thus, the needs of the manoeuvre constrained us, entering into action, to fight at the left of our official limits.

From their observatories dominating the naked plain where we circulated, the enemy did not miss any of the preparations which enforced this general attack. So they were on the alert from 7 a.m., March 15th, when the offensive was launched.

The order of attack, commanded by Colonel GUILLEBAUD was made up on the 4th Regiment of Tunisian Riflemen (4th R.T.T.), of the 3rd Regiment of Algerian Riflemen (3rd R.T.A.), of the 7th Regiment of African Light Infantry (7th R.C.A.) and several support groups. It was the Tunisians who had the camp for their objective. But, in spite of strong artillery support, all their assaults were broken against a fierce and murderous defense. The 3rd R.T.A. of Colonel AGOSTINI went into action anyway and tried to bypass the obstacle on the east. On a terrain infested with mines and swept by riflefire from the camp and from the borders south of the forest, they were successful in gaining several hundreds of metres and were delayed by the railway embankment. Situation uncomfortable and costly. In less than a day, on March 16th, the attack divided. With the coming together of several tanks of the C.C.6, the 4th R.T.T. finished the capture of the camp of Oberhoffen while the 3rd R.T.A. took Schirrhein by main force; the Annemarie line was broken. It was also broken farther west, in the American sector.

On the night of the 16-17 March, the adversary broke contact, not without having tried to mask their retreat with a lively counter-attack of S.S. (troops) which met corps to corps against the Algerians at Schirrhein. There was immediate pursuit. Impeded more by the unbelievable number of mines than by the firing, the 3rd R.T.A. occupied Soufflenheim and Koenigsbrueck, while the 3rd Regiment of Algerian cavalry (3rd R.S.A.R.) and the C.C.6 took Drusenheim and Fort-Louis, before again making contact at Roeschwoog.

During this time, GUILLAUME sent out against the road from Soufflenheim to Haguenau, in the depth of the forest, the 1st Grouping of the Moroccan Tabors (1st G.T.M. - Colonel LEBLANC). Scorning the mines on which their leaders stepped too often, the goumiers crossed it (the forest) entirely and came out at Rittershoffen - without encountering any other allied forces. Because of this audacious movement, we were 14 km west of the Rhine when the limit of our sector on the map was officially 6 km... This enlargement would be maintained until March 18th. Overthrowing the rear-guards at Oberlauterbach and at Neewiller, the 3rd D.I.A. approached Lauter rapidly. At their left wing, the 2nd echelon of the 3rd R.T.A. saw the arrival of Combat Command "A" of the 14th D.B.U.S. who had received orders to take SCHIEBENHARD. The comrades explained to each other: since we were already in advance, it would be useless for them to go over the same ground in that direction. There was room for everybody. That was exactly the thought of the American C.C. commander, who changed his movement and, arm in arm in arm with us, directed his troops more to the west towards Salmbach, leaving us the frontier between the enclosed village and the Rhine, being about 12 km.

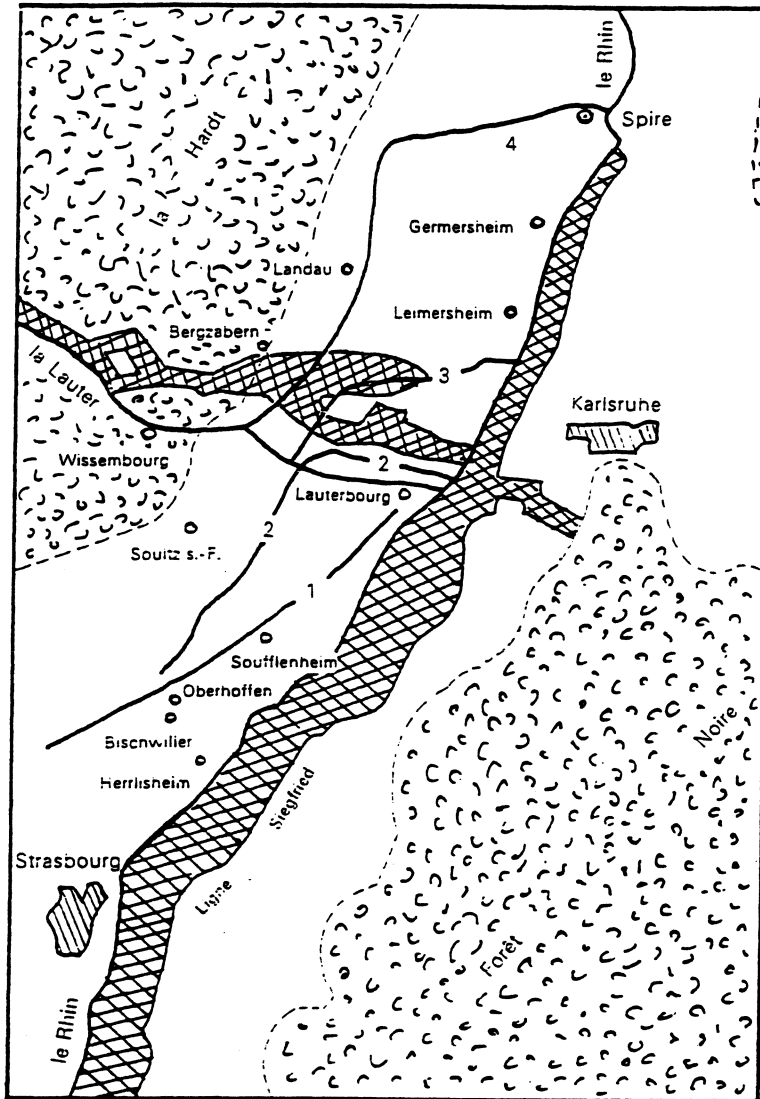
We had it, our fortification on the Lauter! GUILLAUME had gracefully realized the first condition.

Remarks: This narrative was taken from the book by General de LATTRE de TASSIGNY, published in 1949 and entitled: HISTOIRE DE LA PREMIERE ARMEE FRANCAISE "RHINE AND DANUBE". (HISTORY OF THE FRENCH FIRST ARMY "RHINE AND DANUBE")

As it follows from the story of the operations around Soufflenheim, it was because of the audacious movement of the 1st G.T.M., between our city and Rittershoffen, that General de LATTRE de TASSIGNY was able to obtain permission from the American military staff to participate, at the side of the allies, in the invasion of Germany.

Without this important military fact, France would not have been present in Berlin for the signing of the armistice on May 8, 1945 and its history without doubt would have taken a different turn.

Also the community of Soufflenheim was awarded the Order of the Regiment, on November 11, 1948, with attribution of the Croix de Guerre with Bronze Star.



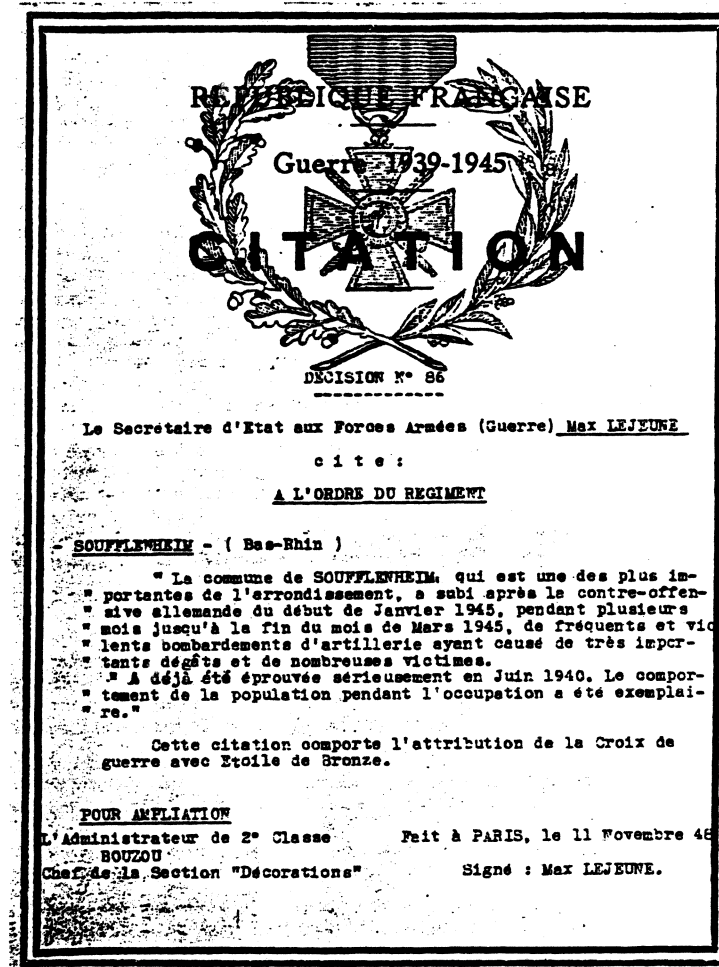
LA CONQUETE DES CRENAUX SUR LE RHIN

1. Limite prévue par le VI^e G. A. U. S. le 15 Mars
2. Front atteint par le Général Guillaume le 19 Mars
3. Limite fixée au Général de Montsabert et atteinte le 25 Mars
4. Limite accordée par le VI^e G. A. U. S. à la 1^{re} Armée le 27 Mars

Text under illustration

THE CONQUEST OF THE FORTIFICATIONS ON THE RHINE

1. Limit foreseen by the 6th G.A.U.S. on March 15th
2. Front gained by General GUILLAUME on March 19th
3. Limit fixed by General de MONTSABERT and gained on March 25th
4. Limit accorded by the 6th G.A.U.A. to the first army (of France) on March 27th.



C I T A T I O N

THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE ARMED FORCES

- SOUFFLENHEIM - (Bas Rhin)

THE COMMUNITY OF SOUFFLENHEIM SUFFERED UNDER THE COUNTER-OFFENSIVE OF THE GERMANS IN JANUARY 45 FOR SEVERAL MONTHS UNTIL THE END OF MARCH 45, FREQUENT AND VIOLENT ARTILLERY BOMBINGS HAVING CAUSED VERY SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE AND VICTIMS.

THE BEHAVIOR OF THE PEOPLE (CITIZENS) DURING THE OCCUPATION WAS EXEMPLARY.

THIS CITATION CARRIES THE CROSS OF THE WAR AND A BRONZE STAR.

CHAPTER 10

The Hagenau Forest & Surrounding Area in Prehistoric Time

- The Hagenauer forest is one of the remaining forests of a huge jungle. This section is 30 x 12 km.
- The cultivated land of today was once forest. More land has been made useful today to accommodate the growing villages.
- How were the villages formed? The early people settled in the woods and cleared the land around them. More land was cleared as the families grew.
- In the early Stone Age, man lived in caves surrounded by prehistoric animals such as the mammoth, (a huge elephant), the cave bears, and the rhinoceros. The climate was similar to the present day tropics.
- In the newer Stone Age, the people had advanced culturally. They lived in huts, learned to farm, tamed the animals, learned to bake clay pots, weaved cloth and fish nets, and lived in tribes. The climate, by this time, had altered to the state in which we find it now, as well as the wildlife.
- These changes were the results of the last Ice Age.
- During this period, man also learned to make tools such as the hammer, and the axe, out of stone.
- Many of these tools could be found still lying in fields. They were believe to be good luck charms created by supernatural forces to guard the home against fire and lightning.
- The Stone Age was ended by the discovery of metal in the Orient. The first metal discovered was copper, and its introduction across Europe changed the culture dramatically.
- Copper was too soft to use for making into tools. The discovery of pewter, mixed with copper at about 10 parts to 90 parts pewter, created a tougher metal which was used for the making of tools. This began a new age in the history of man, known as the Bronze Age.
- This period began approx. 2,000 years before the Roman Empire, and ended at the beginning of it. Within this time, however, the Bronze Age had developed into the first Iron Age, and the second Iron Age.
- It was during this last period, that the Romans began their influx over the Alps and into our countryside.

- According to the local museum, most of the prehistoric tools and skeletons were found in the neighbouring villages, where the land was higher, and not as swampy.
- Later, in the metal ages, when stronger tools were lighter, and easier to carry into the forest, settlers moved in. They have left evidence of their existence in the form of their many grave sites.
- These tribes gradually formed into larger groups along the edges of the forest, which are believed to be the origins of such towns as Soufflenheim, Schirrhein, Schirrhofen, etc.
- We must be grateful to our ancestors for not remaining in the middle of the forest, for if they had, we would not have any forest left today, nor would we have the city of Hagenau.

CHAPTER 11

Early History of Alsace

Roman Culture

- The Iron Age began after the first century A.D.
- It was at this time that the Roman culture invaded the region of the Alsace. This is evident by the many new and very beautiful pieces of art and appliance that the Romans introduced to the area.
- Some advancements resulting from the Roman invasion included the craft of welding, glasswork, building with mortar, enamel, baths, aquaducts, and highways.

The Fall of the Roman Culture

- The Germanic peoples were not very receptive to these new ideas.
- By the advent of Christianity in Rome, the rugged, practical Germanic style had taken over the Roman style in art and craft.

The Tribal Migrations

- In the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D., the struggle between the two cultures was finally won by the Germans, who began to migrate around Europe.

Germanization of the Land

- Archaeologists of this time have discovered German names on the coins from this period.
- German cities seem to have been invaded by the Huns in the year 451 A.D., but seem to have had a rebirth soon after the first year thousand, since Merovingian coins were discovered in the Alsace region.
- Christianity takes over the region, converting many of the old cities based on stone or healing springs. Old temples to Germanic gods were replaced by chapels.
- From Neolithic times, one thing remained constant in this region, despite all the various invasions and cultural impositions. That was the farmer.
- The difference in Soufflenheim itself, was that it was founded in the Bronze Age, instead of the neolithic times.

CHAPTER 12

St. Arbogast Bishop from Strassburg Patron Saint of the Diocese

Life of Saint Arbogast

- The Hagenau forest is the source of great wealth for Hagenau city.
- Referred to as the "Holy Forest" - here lived holy people, one of which was Saint Arbogast.
- He lived on this site and was called from the depths of the woods to the bishops chair in Strasbourg.
- Story we know was told by Bishop Uto as follows:

From the Wounds of the Holy Bishop Arbogast

- His origin not really known - stories told through generations
- Came from Aquitanien in the time of King Dagobert.
- Was befriended by King Dagobert - counselled the king, advised him
- Happening changed this friendship, the king's only son was hunting wild boar in the woods and his horse was attacked, the horse threw his rider and dragged him until his lifeless body was found by fellow hunters.
- Sadness and disbelief filled the people's hearts - the heir to the throne was dead - to help the king over his grief the Bishop was invited - the Bishop was distraught at the news of the death of his friend's son - he went to the king accompanied by many mourners.
- The bishop began to pray along with the king and also the queen.
- The bishop prayed throughout the night for the life of the king's son.
- He prayed to the Mother of Jesus to intervene for his prayers.
- The young boy woke up as if from sleep, shook his head and got up.
- The king and queen were summoned by the cries of joy and disbelief.
- Tears of joy and thankfulness were shed.

- The bishop wanted to hurry home but the king and queen wanted to reward him for his deeds, he ordered gold, silver, jewels to be brought and presented to the bishop - the bishop declined these gifts asking the king instead to give a piece of his kingdom to the Mother of Christ to be used by her followers - this is better than gold for the king and his children.
- Where would this place be?
- The city of RUFACH with its fields, vineyards, forests, meadows, rivers, buildings and inhabitants was worthy of the Mother of God.
- The king dictated a document that RUFACH with all that belonged to the city, villages and surrounding area was to belong to the church in Strasbourg, this contract being unchangeable.
- The bishop left for home - he presented this document to Mary on the altar of his church.
- He lived many more years and did various holy deeds, healing sick, exorcising the devil, settling peace between disagreeing parties.
- As he neared the end of his life he asked for his grave to be prepared on a small hill by St. Michael's church.
- After many years his corpse was removed and brought to the Convent Surburg.
- Bishop Arbogast is revered in Switzerland also.
- His fame spread to Bavaria and Lothringen.
- Song sung at the Chapel to St. Arbogast in Repperweiler.

"In the village, at the edge of the woods
 Known throughout the world
 There was long ago
 A church Arbogast sanctified

Many say his name
 That barely knew the bishop's life
 Though I know a big city
 Where he is highly regarded."

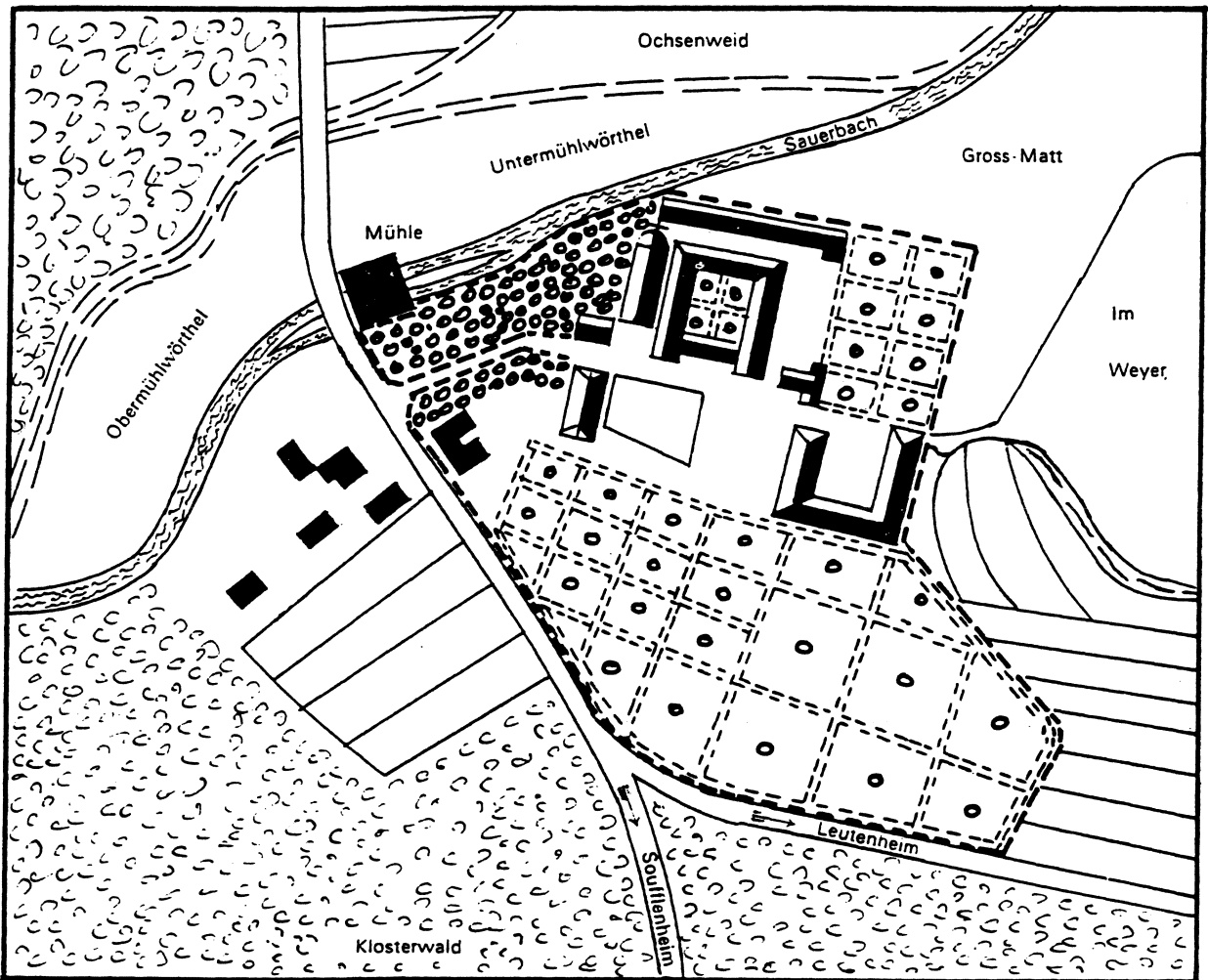
CHAPTER 13

The History of Koenigsbrueck Cloister

- Koenigsbrueck was an abbey for the "gray sisters" in Alsace, established in 1152 by Frederick, Duke of Alsace & Schwaben.
- The cloister had lands in Kesseldorf, Dengolsheim, Offendorf & Weyersheim.
- In 1222 Emperor Henry II gave the cloisters duty-free passage, shipping on the Rhine.
- 1296 Emperor Adolf gave the cloister the right to graze their herds in the forests.
- During the war in 1525 the cloister suffered severe blows.
- Harsh rules imposed - prayer, penance for lay people
 - maids and knaves worked apart
 - Worked long hours - dancing, drinking prohibited
- During Thirty Year War - 1620 - building burned.
- Sisters fled to Hagenau
- In 1671, new cloister built from ruins, completed in 1728.
- During Revolution 1784-1799, 25 sisters left convent, archives moved to Lichtenthal, Baden, lands sold by state.

The Revolution from Rosa Melling from Lichtenthal Cloister

- From 29 June till 23 August 1796.
 - After nuns fled from Lichtenthaler Abbey, 23 remained from Koenigsbrueck Abbey in Alsace.
- *** NOTE: In 1966-69 Mr. Octave LANDWEHRLIN undertook the evacuation and digging on the lands of Koenigsbrueck to find the boundaries of the abbey.
- After long digging they discovered the walls of the original church.
 - Plans found on following page.



LAGEPLAN DES KLOSTERS KOENIGSBRUECK AUS DEM JAHRE 1787

(SITE MAP OF THE KOENIGSBRUECK CONVENT IN THE YEAR 1787)

CHAPTER 14

Tale of Old Bakerjoerg of a Horror Time

The Koenigsbrueck Cloister

- The abbey was located at the junction of the Eberbach & Sauerbach.
- The nuns were good people, loved by the peasants who rented land from them.
- The peasants lived harmoniously as if one big family - the rights of the land passed from father to son.
- The nuns were kind, understanding landlords, helping in need, giving medical aid.
- The peasants benefited without the responsibilities of ownership.
- It was preferred to settle around abbeys rather than other landowners because of the benevolence of the nuns - large villages formed.
- So the parish of Leutenheim was founded on the Eberbach.
- The cloister, occupied by the nuns of St. Bernhard sent nuns over to Lichtenthal at Baden where the lovely monastery was built.
- During the Thirty Years War the monastery was burned.
- After the war the nuns gathered everything together and rebuilt.
- They were much poorer and fewer in number.
- It was always thought abbeys were rich, but this was untrue.
- Compared to to-days incomes there was not much money for the number of people they had to support.
- Little was wasted from generation to the next, thereby increasing wealth was taken from abbeys.
- It was easiest to rob monastaries.
- During the reformation much was taken from abbeys.
- During the French Revolution the peasants were encouraged to go against their landlords and landowners. If the monastery were dissolved, they reasoned, they wouldn't have to pay rent, taxes or conform to the rules of the abbey.

- "Long Live Freedom!"
- Hot blooded patriots were turning public opinion against the nuns - at first they considered robbing the monasteries, then they belittled the church and the saints, finally coming to hate any form of religion.
- It came slowly, but the tide was hard to turn back once the hatred became entrenched.
- Not all people succumbed to greed, some remaining true to the church.
- In 1791 - Peter - kegmaker at the abbey and his wife Liese, were doubting their religion and faithfulness to the abbey. Wouldn't it be nice to be masters at the monastery without the head nun in charge? The enemies of the cloister from the villages of Leutenheim & Betschdorf gathered in the local pub on the first Sunday in December to discuss the situation at hand.
- The villagers encouraged each other to do misdeeds against the nuns.
- They spoke of how the abbey entrusted them with valuables for safe keeping until after the revolution was over and the nuns could safely return to their monastery. These objects were destroyed by the godless villagers.
- Many former employees of the nuns turned against them now that they were not as important anymore.
- The priest at the monastery and Anton - the young boy - hid the holy chalices and monstrance in an underground room. After the days of terror had passed they would be removed again.
- Anton VELTER went with the old priest to the choir room where they lifted a stove from the floor, beneath which they took the chalice.
- The priest declared the boy a man, keeper of a sacred secret.

VELTER's Adventure

- The abbey was taken over by patriots and the possessions of the aristocracy was being auctioned off.
- JOERGL was recognized at an auction as he tried to bid on a chair that once belonged to his father. He was subdued and chased into the woods around Soufflenheim.

- He headed for the VELTER's family in Koenigsbrueck.
- He lost his way in the woods, on edge of the forest at a creek he heard hushed voices and stopped to listen.
- The priest was crossing the river with two young men they were heading for Peter's house, who was ill and was repentant of his godless ways.
- JOERGL identified himself to the group, one of which was Anton VELTER, the other Father GRUMMEICH who was in hiding for two years performing priestly duties among the faithful.
- Father asked JOERGL to send another priest from Rastatt because he felt his time was soon over.
- JOERGL found his way safely to VELTER's house.
- He was awakened by Anton who told him of an ambush and of the patriots following him.
- The patriots came and asked the gardener where the treasures of the monastery were hidden. He could show them everything but the chalice and the monstrance, whose hiding place he didn't know.
- The gardener laughed hideously and desecrated the holy articles.
- Mrs. VELTER's accused him of being false and was viciously hit over the head.
- The patriots were attacked by VELTER's and his three sons - they were almost going to escape as three riders approached. The first rider dragged the lifeless body of the priest behind him.
- JOERGL cried in dismay and was discovered by the patriots.
- They prepared to behead him - he couldn't escape.
- JOERGL started to pray earnestly.
- Because of a vision he was saved and his attacker was killed.
- The other patriots grew frightened of the power of God's wrath and ran away. JOERGL escaped over the Rhine.
- The church was desecrated, the pictures slashed by the peasant's sickle, altars chopped up, a patriot peasant bought the convent for 100 Fr. The VELTER's family reduced to shambles. The lands belonging to the convent were divided amongst the patriots - this was liberty! "Injustice does no good - Devil open your sack."

- People were frightened of the devastated convent, seeing ghosts of murdered nuns and priests praying the rosary. The evil patriots found no peace living there tortured by ghosts. Only the VELTER's family found peace!
- The stories of the several happening went throughout the land, the VELTER's family was spared the ghostly apparitions but not the wrath of the patriots.
- Since the start of the revolution when the enemies of the religion became lord, the life of VELTER's became unbearable. He was taken to Fort Louis with five men and sentenced to his right hand being chopped off because he aided the priest to escape.
- Afterwards he was sentenced to death in Strasbourg court.
- He escaped and hid in the forest.
- Mrs. VELTER's tried to keep house with what she had. She was robbed several more times by patriots, cows taken, beehives emptied.
- She suffered patiently through it all - her sharp tongue saved her many times.
- After 15 months VELTER's returned to his family. He was returned to prison and his wife had to pay 1800 Gulden to get him released. Unfortunately he died soon after his return.
- He gave his blessing to his six children.
- It seemed that those who were true to their belief and religion during the turmoil were blessed with their children, the patriots who desecrated the church were not.

The Emigrants & Saving of the Holy Picture from Marienthal

On the road to Rastatt we met many leaving the villages of Niedorbronn, Reichshoffen, Weissenburg and Soufflenheim.

- Father POINSIGNON travelled between the villages secretly to bring God's word without being caught.
- Aristocratic women travelled the streets hungry, cold and desolate.
- In the valley of Marienthal the Mass was celebrated until it became illegal. Now Marienthal stood empty except for the pictures of Mary. Battle raged around the Church, this being in danger of desecration.

- One morning Mr. SCHACK came to us and asked us to lend him a wagon with which to rescue the holy pictures before the Republicans could destroy them.
- The Mother of God will protect us from danger.
- JOERGL wanted to help to save the Mother of God even though it meant sure danger even death.
- We obtained a pass enabling us to travel freely throughout the city and forest - we were warned of fighting going on around the church and many deaths there.
- We were given an accompaniment of soldiers to protect us in our deed of faith.
- As we neared the church we were spotted by the Republicans and bullets started to buzz around us.
- We arrived at the church, said a short prayer and proceeded to take down the pictures. It was sad to see these picture having to be smuggled away to ensure their safety.
- One picture was put into the cupboard on the wagon, the second would not fit anymore. Suddenly a woman appeared and offered to carry the picture home - even though it was heavy she took it.
- She carried the heavy picture through the gunfire and disappeared below the hill. We quickly returned to the direction of Hagenau. The gatekeeper told us the woman with the picture had already arrived. No one knew who the woman was or where she came from.
- Both pictures, including many valuables of the Church of St. George were taken over the Rhine to Buehl. Many refugees went to Buehl to be near the picture.
- People that had fled across the Rhine dreamed only of returning, as soon as the way was safe again. News would arrive of terrible happenings that would destroy their hopes of return.
- They hoped to return in 3 days, but 12 - 18 months passed before pardon was given. 90,000 Alsatian people lived on strange soil waiting to return home again. News of women being beheaded, a priest killed kept them away.
- Their only hope was in prayer.
- I was employed as a baker, and learned much about the trade, luck followed me and I survived many dangers. The reason for my good fortune was the blessing I received from the Mother of God because I risked my life at Marienthal.
- I am now the old bakerjoerg - proof of what I saw.

CHAPTER 15

History of the Village of Soufflenheim until turn of Century

- In 1128 they had papers saying that Soufflenheim was a village.
- The Emperor Philip Von SCHWABEN in the year 1207 was in Strasbourg.
- In 1426 - 126 people lived in Soufflenheim.
- 1560 - Schutheiss was Heinrich SCFHLIPFER.
- 1606 - Gabriel MUELLER was Schultheiss in Soufflenheim.
- In May 1622 the village burned down by soldiers from Mansfeld.
- Nov. 10, 1658 the government commanded the Soufflenheim boundary as Heinrich SCHAEFER was Schutheiss was renewed.
- The village - 60 farms and gardens.
- The boundary had 511 acres, 291 acres was pasture land and 169 acres highland pasture

- 1674 the Turkish war lots of people left Soufflenheim and went to Reinwosthe, Dalunden & Stallmatten.
- 1688 Hans Jacob SCHAEFFER was Schutheiss made boundary renewed again.
- 1708 - 189 houses and gardens.
- Community house was between Kirchberg & Muehlgasse.
- 1744 was a war with the Pandours.
- A girls school in 1790.
- A boys school in 1869 - 1871.
- The Community house built in 1828 is still there.
- The boundary size is 1313 hectar - 388 hectar is forest.
- Evangelist - Protestant

Teachers:

1793 - Mockers
1812 - Hess
1835 - Giguard
1848 - Bichler
1849 - Buchecker
1850 - Feigel
1851 - Roos
1853 - 1873 - verschiedene Schulbrueder
1873 - Seyler
1880 - Scheydecker
1893 - Alphons Schneider
1909 - Ludwig Ball
1910 - Albert Nussbaum

Mayors:

1800 - Messner, the oldest
1809 - Messner, the youngest
1831 - Messner, Joseph
1837 - Helmer
1843 - Messner
1849 - Brotschy
1855 - Friedmann
1862 - Uhrig
1886 - Burger
1892 - Elchinger
1898 - Schlechter
1902 - Philip Lehmann

Population:

1800 - 1547 people living in Soufflenheim
1812 - 2060 people living in Soufflenheim
1831 - 2982 people living in Soufflenheim
1851 - 3080 people living in Soufflenheim, 36 were Lutheran
1871 - 2931 people living in Soufflenheim
1907 - 3261 people living in Soufflenheim, 52 were Lutheran

CHAPTER 16

Description from Soufflenheim from 1893 - 1909

- Soufflenheim is Eastern Hagenau Forest and is divided into 3 parts - Lower Village, Upper Village & Brunnenberg.
- The Lower Village (Untendorf) is even with the Rhine, 120 above sea level; the other 2 higher, 131 above sea level.
- In the east could see Black Forest and West - Baden.
- Two creeks going through Soufflenheim - they are called Fallgraben & Norden der Eberbach.
- 1845 built a steel construction over Fallgraben first.
- In 1890 built a bathing institution.
- In 1873-1883 they dug 4 field wells outside of Soufflenheim so that when working in the fields they didn't have to return home to get water for themselves or their animals.
- On the forest side there is a thin layer of good top soil, 6 meters sand, 6 to 10 of clay and then sand again. Other side is good top soil, clay (but not good for pottery), gravel.
- The clay is used for pottery and bricks. In the year 1200 written down that the potter can have his clay and wood for free but could not sell either.
- Where they had space near house had a garden. In the fields they grew - wheat, rye, barley, oats, corn, potatoes, beans, clover, turnips, carrots, beets, cabbage, kohlrabi, onions, brussel sprouts and broccoli, hops and hemp. On both sides of the street they plant orchards.
- In 1900 most of the trees were killed through the leaf bug and mayor ordered everything cut down.
- They planted 1378 hector of green foliage trees (today 550 hectors).
- They planted all by hand, no machines.
- In 1900 - 119 horses, 476 cattle, 250 goats, 30 beehives for own production and use.
- The fishing isn't important and they have 4 kinds of fish.
- Hunting is good. Wild pigs, deers, rabbit, pheasant, partridge, snipe and more. In forest they had wild animals too - Marten, polecats, fox, weasel, also squirrels, eagles and snakes.

- All kinds of birds that stayed all year round like the sparrow and crow.
In the winter: wild ducks and wild geese, magpie, lark, woodpeckers.
In summer: cuckoo, swallow, wild doves, wild pigeons, nightingale and more.
- Population 3,082. Houses 736. Catholics 3046. Protestant 36.
- Under the reign of King Louis-Phillippe in 1830 the church was built. The first sod was turned, for the present church in 1826.
- In 1897 made a new ceiling their own ceiling painted with Mary and new roof, gold plated numbers on the clock, tower had 4 bells. The organ came from Seltz.
- The church was in the middle of cemetery and graves of ancestors were around church.
- In 1874 the new cemetery was built on Kingsbridge Street.
- The houses are brick or frame. The houses one story and the gable side all look to the street.
- They earned their living by farming, pottery, making bricks and cutting wood. The women made hair nets, picking strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries.
- Potters 37, brick foundries 8. One of the Potters just made flower pots with a machine. Hotels 17, bakers 15 and butchers 7.
- In Soufflenheim going through main street in 1894 they had train go through. Before, they had daily pony express for mail and one private company that took pottery and brick and hauled wood.
- In 1897 they had a bank. Bank Manager was teacher Mr. BALL - 1901.
- They had 2 doctors and each had one drugstore. The newspaper the "Hagenauer Newspaper" "The Alsacer" "The Nation Messenger" and "The Workman's Friend"
- In 1904 they had a folk club and 1905 they built Catholic club house.
- In 1905 had a bad tornado took off roof's and took down barns and sheds. 100 meters high went roof's threw big beams far away. Took trees out by roots and broke them in orchards. The storm had lots of hail big like chicken eggs and lots of damage in garden and fields. Began at 8:30 and by 9 o'clock the damage was done. Through collection \$3,000 marks was collected and given to those that needed. Was collected outside of village.
- Through the village 2 years less property tax and insurance.

- The potato crop recovered and wasn't directly ruined but the field mice multiplied in big numbers and lots of damage in potatoes and turnips.
- In 1905, 2 big fires. In the morning a house and evening a barn and stables.
- In winter 1909 one brick factory burnt. In 1905 the first saw mill with a steam engine and still there.
- In 1905 they had a tobacco factory and is still there but under different name.
- Volunteer fire department in 1892 but weren't interested, but in 1895 then they were. Hand pump, horse drawn water pump. People had to help with the water buckets.

CHAPTER 17

Country Customs around 1600

Report to the local Government in Hagenau - 1616

- The territory of Reichsdorf was a large portion of the Reichslandvogtei Hagenau.
- According to the report from 1254-1273 there were 45 villages in the surrounding Hagenau; through contract in the course of time some were eliminated.
- Under the jurisdiction of the local government in Hagenau.
- Had to enforce law and order - police under their control.
- In 1616 complaints registered against priests and officials.
- Only four of these complaints have come to the attention of the author.
- Important to establish customs of the times, other entries of lesser interest, text and grammar of olden days.

Soufflenheim submits complaints against Puncten

- Letter sent to Earl, lord and ruler of our land!
- Concerning wedding customs - after leaving the church, the young people run to the saloon and fall onto the table with terrible manners.
- Some eat and drink more than others, yet everyone has to pay the same.
- The young people stay until late at night, the girls often longer than the boys.
- Much swearing and bad language is spoken - should be punished.
- For baptisms it is expected to not only serve a lunch, but a feast lasting up to three days - how can a poor man afford this?
- For wedding the young people spend the day before and after the ceremony at the pub, thus exerting great expense to the parents.

Without date or signature

CHAPTER 18

From The Panduren Disturbances

Local Stories from the Parishes of Soufflenheim, Roeschwoog & Leutenheim (Convent Koenigsbrueck)

FORWARD:

The following report given by Mr. Jean ZINGER, at the national library in Paris about his home town Soufflenheim.

Condensed and edited by the author J. CREDE.

Soufflenheim, November 8, 1905.

Invasions of the Austrians in Alsace and the March to Soufflenheim

- In the year 1744, 80,000 Austrians under the leadership of Karl Von LOTHRINGEN, brother-in-law of Empress Maria Theresia from Austrian-Hungarian Empire invaded Alsace.
- Also accompanied by numerous, irregular troops of Hungarian's and Panduren's.
- The Panduren's left a horrible impression, still remembered today.
- The Austrians coveted Alsace for its lush valleys and fields.
- Early June, Lauterburg & Weissenburg fell into Austrian hands.
- This enabled them to cross the Weissenburg line and drive inland.
- Cross the Rhine - declared Alsace-Lorraine as Austrian domain.
- All those that didn't conform willingly would be driven by sword & fire.
- The Panduren's began to pillage the countryside.
- There were few French troops - 30,000 and a few Bavarian regiments to defend the area.
- The French commander, de COIGNY notified the King of the great danger and marched his troops toward Weissenburg.
- He regained and lost the city again, retreated over Hagenau to Strasbourg.
- Prepared to defend the city and wait for relief troops from the Netherlands.

The Panduren, their origin, goals and appearance

- The origin of the name Panduren is uncertain.
- One who belonged to the Austrian army during 17-18 century, coming from the Slavish-Romanian southern Hungary area.
- Army formed under Franz von TRENCK, notorious for terrible deeds.
- von TRENCK, born in 1711 - spent time in labour camp, upon release offered his services to Empress Maria-Theresia, commissioned him to form an army.
- He gathered 300 former inmates, thus forming a corps for his army.
- Name Panduren may be derived from village from whence they came.
- An army lives off the spoils of the land, the horrendous stories told about this army lives on from one generation to the next.
- Their dress - oriental headdress, long flowing coats, fur and leather accessories, high leather boots, long swords and sabres at their belt - invoked fear in all who came upon them.
- Rode half-wild horse, killing and maiming anyone in their way, cut people up, limb by limb, tortured their victims - cut people's stomach's open, inserting live cats; killed small children in front of their mothers, crushing the heads of newborn babies with their boots, fleeing farmers were overtaken and smoked out of their hiding places.
- The Panduren's were likened to the Swedes that invaded this land a hundred years ago ravaging the countryside - "wild Swede", "wild Panduren."

War Cry of the Panduren's

- On July 2, 1744 troops of 60,000 Panduren's and 30,000 army under leadership of Prince Karl of Lothringen crossed the Rhine into Alsace, captured Lautenburg and Weissenburg.
- A few days later army arrived in Beinheim, stayed two weeks.
- When news of this invasion spread the documents of the monastery were packed into boxes and brought to the Convent at Jung-St. Peter
 - other treasurers were taken to hidden caves.
- A letter was sent to the convent asking for bread and money.

- The priest returned to the army with the reply - the nuns were calmed by this request - when the letter was read to the soldiers it was destroyed. He was to return to the prince and ask for a new letter.
- Request was accepted together with promise of protection for the convent.
- Protected by soldiers against invasion of daily 30-40 Panduren's
- The General brought visitors to the convent - friendly relations.
- Convent was not attacked - many hateful things said about it though.
- Only one personal attack, on the Mother Superior - money demanded.
- A 70 year old shepherd was beaten in the fields.
- Priest threatened by soldier - talked his way out of certain death.
- People were hidden in convent for fear of attackers - took valuables to be kept there for safe-keeping - animals, grain brought to nuns.
- After seven weeks of uproar the Panduren's were driven back to the Rhine by the French people.
- 7000 retreated on 24 August through Soufflenheim, felling trees in their path, cried for bread and money.
- At the monastery, the troops got some flour and bread.
- They destroyed the bridges to slow down the French troops and retreated hastily toward Drusenheim where they crossed the Rhine.
- The nuns at the convent thanked God for their safe deliverance.
- The nuns gave what supplies they had to help the villagers.
- The fields were devastated so no crops were harvested this year.
- The oxen brought by the Panduren's spread a disease amongst the cows, oxen and horses of the area - the convent lost all their animals.

French Defense of the Alsace against the Austrians

- The news travelled slowly about the invasion - troops sent, King Ludwig XV sent troops, came himself - was taken ill in Metz, feared he wouldn't survive - all France prayed for his recovery.
- He recovered - became known as the "much loved king."
- Marshall de NOAILLES headed his troops into Alsace - drove the Austrians back to the Zorn (river?) - came upon the camp of Prince Karl but found it abandoned - had he retreated further or was this to be an ambush?
- Troops advanced - battle ensued.

Battle at Soufflenheim on 23 August 1744

- Encountered Panduren troops - driven from hill still known as "Pandurenhead."
- In Soufflenheim the Austrians and Panduren's gathered at the defence position.
- French troops rallied to attack Soufflenheim - after canon fire from the Austrian troops the French regrouped and continued.
- The French broke into the city and the Panduren's were sent fleeing they were hunted down, killed and taken prisoner, much hated because of their terrible deeds.
- The people of Soufflenheim thanked their rescuers.
- The surrounding farmers took sickles and scythes as weapons, chased and killed the Panduren's heartlessly.
- Few Panduren's survived.
- Hills surrounding Soufflenheim are burial spots of the Celts, and the Panduren's - nature has covered them in grass.

Push Forward of the French over Auenheim to Roeschwoog Disoriented Beginning and Heated Battle

- While Soufflenheim was being freed other troops marched through streets of Drusenheim toward Roeschwoog.
- After news of victory at Soufflenheim reached troops they headed toward Fort Louis.

- After laying waste the town of Auenheim the combined troops marched toward Roeschwoog.
- Troops were ambushed as they were going to cross the bridge into the town
 - the French horses startled by the noise escaped their ranks, throwing their riders and running into the swamps.
- Such confusion and noise followed, drummers called to re-group troops
 - French realized the Austrians were entrenched in the ditches a longside the roads.
- French were to be misled and attacked by Austrians.
- French troops plunged into battle with bayonets, darkness surrounded battling troops - within an hour 1200 Austrians littered the battlefield - the cavalry regrouped and chased the deserters and returned them as prisoners.

The Austrian Retreat at Fort Louis across the Rhine

- 20 August the French troops arrived at Fort Louis
- Austrians given up the fort, crossed the Rhine and burned the bridges in retreat - the same happened at Beinheim & Seltz.
- So Alsace was freed from the enemies.
- The place of the bloody night-time battle still seen today.
- The canal has been reduced to a large creek, fields surround the area.

Report of Marshall de NOAILLES to the War Minister

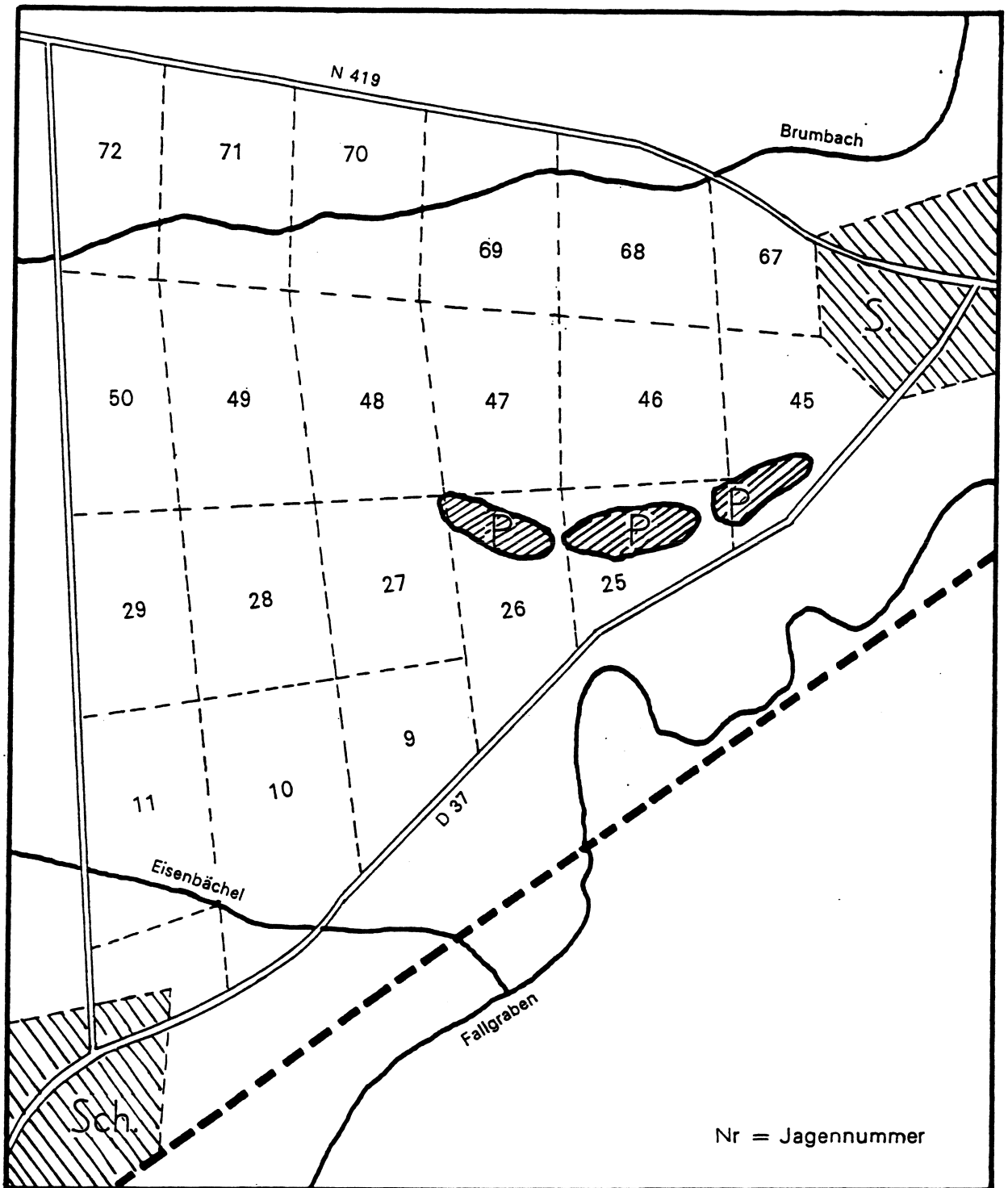
- Never had a more exciting battle taken place executed with such coverage and perseverance.
- As thank you for the success of this battle all churches of the landed ordered to pray for the dead and sing the Gloria.
- The Marshall felt obliged to mention the courage of the troops.
- Soldiers found joy in their victories, kept them going onward.
- Secretly laughed at the chaos created by the escaping, bewildered horses, throwing their riders into the ditches.

Frederick the Great displeased at the outcome of the Battle at Soufflenheim

- Prince Karl von LOTHRINGEN was not present at the battle
 - apparently he was so drunk he couldn't take part.
- Prince Karl's incompetence blamed for retreat and defeat.
- Frederick unhappy with Prince Karl, also with French - he hoped this battle would weaken Empress Maria-Theresia's might and help him in achieving power in Schleswig.
- Anger of Frederick reached the French court, even King Ludwig XV was reprimanded.
- He thought the entire battle of 1744 should have been a military picnic for the French troops.
- Empress Maria-Theresia had lost a great number of her troops, the officers were ashamed of their hasty retreat, at having to come all the way from Hungary to loose a battle in Alsace.

Ludwig XV recognizes the significance of the Battle against the Austrians

- French officers reprimanded by their own King.
- Thought they were doing the King's command, fighting and dying for his cause - hoped to help his healthy recovery with news of their win.
- King only joked about the chaos of that night.
- People of Soufflenheim thankful to be free from the Panduren's, unconcerned how the battle was won.
- Panduren terror has become an adventure in the history of the country.



PANDURENSCHANZEN BEI SUFFLENHEIM

(PANDUREN BARRICADES NEAR SOUFFLENHEIM)

CHAPTER 19

The Autobiography of Paul Messner 1823 - 1886

- Very famous man in the village - people speak well of him, streets named after him.
- Paul Messner born in Soufflenheim on April 15, 1823 - only child in the family - early wish to become priest.
- Parents unwilling to have only child become a priest, needed help at home.
- Returned home after studying to help parents - worked to offer his life to God, remained unmarried.
- After death of his parents he retained only as much land as he could manage alone - spent time in prayer and study - was a gifted author and artist.
- Architect - designed chapel, stations of the cross - paintings, relief.
- Without much education he was expert in many areas, used the talents given him by God - was very involved in church and parish.
- His ability to heal and help sick people made him renowned throughout the area.
- He was friendly to all, people came from far and wide.
- Success attributed more to prayer than knowledge.
- Hopeless cases brought to him to heal - believed in prayer.
- Never took any payment for his help - did it for the love of God.
- Came to him with their problems for counsel and advice.
- Was accepted into the Franciscan order - went to Mass daily, prayed the rosary, prayed to Sorrowful Mother, St. Francis and St. Michael, patron saint of Soufflenheim.
- Of his diary only the year 1878 remains.
- "Life of penance, seldom ate meat, slept on a wooden cot, did penance, generous to everyone around him" - housekeeper.
- Never left Soufflenheim in case someone who needed him would come.
- Upon his death he wanted only a small wooden cross.
- Wanted to be buried at the fourth station of the cross.

- He was tall, handsome man, simple and friendly to all - anyone who looked into his kind eyes wouldn't forget it - no picture exists.
- Wouldn't let himself be photographed or drawn.
- Considered to be holy by those who knew him.
- After his death he was criticized by some as selfish and untrue.
- Plagued by sicknesses - lived seven months longer.
- Died 23 February 1886.
- Soufflenheim gave him a royal burial.
- People came from far and wide, Catholics and Protestants alike.

CHAPTER 20

The Soufflenheim Potter Digging Rights in the Hagenau Forest

- The Soufflenheim pottery industry is one of the most well known and steadfast in the area - known for artistic ceramic works throughout Europe.
- Already in the 12th century the Blauhaefner union was strong in Soufflenheim.
- Over 500 potters were active in and around the city.
- The Hagenau forest supplied the clay necessary.
- As a gift from the Emperor BARBARORSA the potters and their descendants were allowed to take clay without payment.
- Unfortunately the documents containing these rights were destroyed in 1600 by a fire in the parish hall in Soufflenheim.
- These rights were passed on by word of mouth from one generation to the next.
- The pottery industry supplied much of the work for the area, more than later - from the 12th to the 19th century - because less steel, enamel or aluminum was produced.
- In 1829 the potters wanted to have their right to take clay legally documented - meanwhile the city Hagenau had requested a rent of 300 Franks yearly for the clay rights.
- A legal battle waged for 12 years over the rental request.
- The state and the city of Hagenau came to no conclusion, elderly witnesses were called to testify to the rights given to their forefathers.
- 1 July 1843 - rights to dig were returned to the potters, although only 20 of the 55 potters were allowed.
- These rights were also recognized by the German government in 1870.
- Big brick industries asked for the rights to the clay in the Hagenau forest but the governing people recognized the long standing rights of the potters and ruled against it.
- Sandier clay was recommended for the brick foundries.

CHAPTER 21

Craftsmen in the old art of Soufflenheim - Pottery

- Hagenau - on the Moder River, a tributary of the Rhine, is the wealthiest parish of Alsace.
- Their wealth comes from the forest surrounding the city - 14,000 hectares called the "holy forest."
- The government of the day always collected revenues from the forest - the state and the city divided the income.
- The cities along the outer edges of the forest felt entitled to the forest revenues also.
- Soufflenheim is located on the north-east edge of the forest.
- This city, population 4000, main industry being pottery, is dependent on the forest for the clay used for their ceramics.
- The parish Soufflenheim, settled in 13 hundred from the convent Neuenburg, had the right to retrieve the clay without cost.
- Even today the potters must fight for this right.
- Evidence exists of Roman inhabitants, as early as 1,000 - urns, tools, money.
- Pottery has been discovered bearing the year 1403 - much more delicate and finer quality than today, only the best clay used.
- Today not much of the good quality clay exists, must be used sparingly.
- Only household items produced - techniques and shape haven't changed much.
- Few potters did more than average work to be sold for everyday use.
- The greatest example exists in the cemetery in Soufflenheim - situated beside the church in the middle of the village.
- A small chapel contains a scene from the New Testament where Jesus is kneeling in the Garden of Eden and three sleeping apostles are depicted lifesize in clay - along the side wall is depicted the angel that appeared holding the chalice - also in clay.
- These figures, although primitive, show us that the working man still had ideals of beauty and a desire to portray them - all we know is that he was a God-fearing man who worked for years completing these pieces.

- These practical, hardworking people developed the pottery industry to a lucrative business including a few brick foundries to use the lesser quality clay.
- This was a productive time - daily wagons left carrying household clay items to Baden, Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Lothringen and into France.
- New technology unfortunately hindered the industry - newer vessels were discovered and invented - enamel pottery tools over from the clay.
- The potters wheel is still the main tool of the potter.
- Circular shapes were formed, using the feet to propel the wheel upon which the clay was shaped.
- The pots were air-dried, painted and then fired.
- Even today pottery is sold from the houses or from wagons travelling through the countryside.
- Clay dishes are not as sturdy as enamel.
- Now more objects of art and beauty are designed using various shapes and colours.
- A well known "art pottery" business has established itself at various art exhibits in Strasbourg, Paris and Turin.
- Our small city has secured a place in the world of art with its ceramic creations.

CHAPTER 22

PRAISING SONG OF THE POTTER

THE POTTER

I am the Potters youngest son
Formed from his Father's clay
Through his Mother's hand.

In summer I dig ground proudly
In the winter I cut wood
For our stove's fire

The ground's mud I stir
So I can cut and stamp
The ground is very cunning

The colour grain I grind them fine
This should be a feast garment
For pots and for pitchers

And when the disk lively rolls
Then command the pottery art
With fingers, hand and eyes

So force I to the good end
The form out the element
I'm self a little creator

Come then the fire out, ovens glow
So shines off every table good
By the poor and by rich

So practice in old faithful
The Father's hand art ever new
Until my blessed end

If this dead stand before me
My life in fragments going
Will I calmly leave

Then leave I clay and colour and element
And go in my ancestors land
To my great Master

Humbly I'm going to the throne
And say "I'm the Potter's Son,
Lord, let me by You stay"



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