

## SOUFFLENHEIM, A TOWN IN SEARCH OF ITS HISTORY

Robert Wideen : 2021

Soufflenheim Genealogy Research and History  
[www.soufflenheimgenealogy.com](http://www.soufflenheimgenealogy.com)

*Soufflenheim, Une cité à la recherche de son histoire* (Soufflenheim, A Town in Search of its History) by Lucien Sittler, honorary archivist of the city of Colmar, Marc Elchinger, and Fritz Geissert, in conjunction with the Societe D'Histoire et D'Archeologie du Reid Nord, published by Valblor, Strasbourg, 296 pages, 1987. Translated by Marie-Odile Peres.



View of Soufflenheim from the bridge over the Fallgraben, Jacques Gachot, 1953, Courtesy of Marc Elchinger

## CONTENTS

Soufflenheim, A Town in Search of its History .....	1
Acknowledgments .....	2
A Word from the Mayor .....	3
Foreword.....	5
Geographical Data.....	7
History of Soufflenheim .....	8
From Prehistory to the Middle Ages .....	8
Soufflenheim in the Middle Ages and in the Beginning of Modern Times.....	12
Soufflenheim: French Village in the 17th Century (1660-1715) .....	24
Soufflenheim in the 18th Century .....	41
Soufflenheim during the French Revolution .....	64
Soufflenheim during the 19th Century .....	73
The 20th Century.....	88
Soufflenheim, A Look Back Into the Past.....	106
Crosses of the Evangelists in the Bann of Soufflenheim .....	132

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“History of Soufflenheim” and “A Look Back at the Past” by Lucien Sittler, Honorary Archivist of the city of Colmar, and Marc Elchinger.

“Soufflenheim, Cradle of the Paleontology of the Alsatian Pliocene [not translated] and “Crosses of the Evangelists in the Bann of Soufflenheim”, by Fritz Geissert.

### Important Honorary Members

- Banque Federative du Credit Mutuel : Haguenau
- Commune de Soufflenheim : Soufflenheim
- Credit Mutuel (C.M.D.P.) : Soufflenheim

- Office du Tourisme : Soufflenheim

### **Honorary Members**

- Caisse d'Epargne Ecureuil : Soufflenheim
- Ceramiques ELCHINGER S.A. : Soufflenheim
- Credit Mutuel - Grand'Rue : Haguenau
- PUMA, Chaussures de Sport : Soufflenheim
- Poterie Gerard WEHRLING : Soufflenheim
- Commune jumeele de Kandern (R.F.A.) : Kandern

### **Supporting Members**

- AMBOS Freres et Fils : Soufflenheim
- Banque Populaire : Bischwiller
- Credit Industriel d'Alsace et de Lorraine : Haguenau
- Poterie d'Alsace - Henri SIEGFRIED : Soufflenheim
- Poterie Horticole - Gaston SIEGFRIED : Soufflenheim
- Poterie Henri WITT : Soufflenheim
- Maison Michel ROTH : Soufflenheim
- OSTERTAG Laurent - Electricite Generale : Soufflenheim
- SANDROCK Pierre - Traiteur – Boucherie : Soufflenheim
- Dr Marc Olivier SCHOEPFER : Soufflenheim
- Dr Charles STEINER : Haguenau
- Poterie SCHACKIS : Soufflenheim
- Mlle Octavie ROLL : Soufflenheim

## **A WORD FROM THE MAYOR**

On occasion of the publication of the book issued by the History and Archeology Society of Northern Ried, entitled:

### **“SOUFFLENHEIM, A TOWN IN SEARCH OF ITS HISTORY”**

I want, in name of the town council, of all my fellow-citizens and in my personal name, to thank warmly all those who have participated to the elaboration of this publication.

The Society of History and Archeology of Northern Ried deserves our gratitude and our regard. In devoting a special issue to our "City of Potters", she gives a very important credit to us and undoubtedly takes part to the effulgence of Soufflenheim.

I want to express my specific gratitude to the following persons :

- M. Lucien SITTLER, Honorary Archivist of the town of Colmar
- M. Marc ELCHINGER of Soufflenheim
- M. Fritz GEISSERT from the nearby town of Sessenheim

Thanks to their connected efforts, this started work could be carried into effect. We here consider it as a real work of specialists and historians.

The reading of the texts let appear the seriousness of research and analysis, the will to go into true and authentic details, based on a rigorous and rich documentation.

Historical events are reported without compliance, the glad and dramatic events recalled with objectivity and realism.

The very many references to original texts in German language of their period allow to build an idea of the linguistic situation of Soufflenheim in the Alsace of the time : Alsatian dialect and Hochdeutsch were the most used languages of our Region.

As teacher and Mayor of Soufflenheim, I allow myself to express three wishes.

First, I wish keenly that this work will figure in the libraries of our teachers, of our elementary schools, and in the Center of Documentation and Information of our College.

To consult it, read it, will allow them to take or resume contact with our local past history, to understand it better and so respect its originality and particularity.

I have no doubt that this booklet will be exploited usefully by pupils and teachers, who are interested in the option of Language and Regional Culture, taught in the Second Degree College.

Then, I keenly invite all my fellow-citizens to have it figure among their personal books.

**SOUFFLENHEIM, A TOWN IN SEARCH OF ITS HISTORY**, is with no doubt an important compilation of our collective memory.

Rediscover one's roots, know and deepen the history of those who have preceded us, gives someone assurance, self-confidence and respect of personal identity.

Finally, I wish success and prosperity to the Society of History and Archeology of Northern Ried, and I encourage deeply her members and responsible persons to pursue their untiring efforts to bring into evidence the riches of our Alsace patrimonial wealth.

Jean-Pierre MEYER

Mayor of Soufflenheim.



## FOREWORD

We express our very strong gratitude to those who wanted to know, more or less, what had happened during the centuries, on the present place where Soufflenheim stands. They have dug with attention into the archives and libraries and examined the archeological treasures of the Alsace museums.

It is always instructive, for a region, a city, to know better its roots. Often the present can be explained by the past. Anyway, we must feel ourselves bound to those who have preceded us and who helped prepare the ground for us.

Is it not interesting to learn that over 2000 years before Jesus Christ, potters lived on our soil, and that Soufflenheim pottery is probably the oldest form of handcraft of Alsace?

This book lets us know the variations of fate that marked our area and which influenced the administrative situation of the village, weighed on the number of people there, on their professional activities and the farming structures. The evolution of history all the same has led to hard trials which had to be endured, and as well as chances of progress that had to be conquered.

These historical researches, however conscientious and captivating as they may be, cannot tell us some particularly important aspects of the life of our city. This refers to all which cannot be accounted by calculable terms, I mean what happened in the heart and conscience of the people there. The Christian traditions that have impregnated the population of our city at least from the XIIth century, have constructed men and women of hard moral and spiritual solidity.

Having been for 27 years in episcopal service in Alsace, I often had the opportunity to admire the human qualities, the deep good sense, the exacting professional conscience, the spirit of devotion and the untiring faith of the residents of our area. How often did I wonder how firm and deep the moral and religious convictions were in our "Seniors" who bore witness of the value of the spiritual patrimony that their ancestors had transmitted to them.

This long and often difficult way of those who have preceded us, stimulate our will to never be cut from our "roots" and to fight so that the cultural and technical mutations who have overwhelmed our modes of life and thought, will not stifle in our contemporaries the values which, over the ages, have formed the soul of Alsace.

So, it is not sufficient to admire the past. We must at the same time look into the future, with clearness of mind and intrepidity, and be convinced that the economic and social crisis of our time is doubled by a profound crisis of man. No industrial and civic consolidation effort can have lasting results without a restructuring of consciousness. My long experience of human problems in Alsace encourages me to emphasize, in order, the importance of a threefold permanent effort : restoring the family community, strengthening the academic community, and the revival of the parochial community.

This is the fervent wish that I form, out of fidelity to my hometown and out of friendship for my compatriots.

Léon Arthur ELCHINGER

Bishop Emeritus of Strasbourg



Coat of Arms of Soufflenheim (1697). Saint Michel in Azure and a Gold Archangel.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The Rhineland plain has formed itself from the tertiary era with the collapse of the hercynian massive mountains. The moles of the Vosges and of the Black Forest were re-erected in consequence of the flexure of the Alps, and a ditch was filled up with the materials carried by the Rhine River and his effluent's. During millions of years, old alluvial deposits dating back to the tertiary era (Pliocene) and quarternary, more and more recently formed the subsoil of the plain : pebbles, gravels, sands of different nature in layers of different thickness, clay underground in the forest of Haguenau which is used by the potters of Soufflenheim.

In Northern Alsace, from Strasbourg to Lauterbourg, we find from the West and the North-West, towards East : the Low Vosges (350 to 500 m) of height, in front a region of hills, then a slightly undulated plain constituting a terrace of about 140 m height, and finally a flat and uniform plain, the low terrace or Ried (120 m height) extending to the Rhine River.

The terrace bears the forest of Haguenau, one of the largest of France (13,700 hectares nowadays, but larger formerly, covering around 20,000 hectares), whose eastern edge is rather marked and rises ten to fifteen meters height above the Ried. It consists mainly of poor sands, brought by the rivers carrying the sandstone of the Low Vosges, and one part of the subsoil contains in depth of 5-10 m. powerful layers of watertight clay, used for many centuries by the ceramists (1).

The Ried is formed from recent alluvial deposits, of various nature, most of them of a rich value, and relatively moist. However, the proximity of the river makes it a region of fields and meadows.

The edge of the terrace has been appreciated by man who could use the resource of both regions. Very early, men established themselves there and formed villages which are still there in the present time. Among them, Soufflenheim. This locality is sited on the Eberbach river, which is joined by the smaller waters of the Brumbach which go down to the rhenan depression. Further north, the Sauer river constitutes on a dozen of kilometers long, the northern limit of the forest of Haguenau. South, the Moder river, crossing Haguenau, continues its way to the Rhine.

On the site of Soufflenheim, man, sheltered from overflows of the plain, has worked from remote ages, cultivating the ground, breeding cattle, using the forest. There too he knew how to use the clay subsoil, and the craft of pottery has been practiced there for centuries.

Whereas Strasbourg, the main town of Alsace, is over 30 km distance south of the place, Soufflenheim is only 14 km away from the city of Haguenau, on the west, and a dozen of kilometers from the Rhine on the east side. Close to the forest of Haguenau, the large village, central place of 4500 residents, is surrounded in a large circle by the villages of Schirrrhein-Schirrhoffen, Sessenheim, Auenheim, Rountzenheim and Fort-Louis, Leutenheim et Roppenheim, and is separated on the north by the forest of Haguenau from Hatten and Betschdorf.



Map of the course of the Rhine and the surroundings of Fort Louis, Lauterbourg, and Haguenau, 1748, Robert de Vaugondy

## HISTORY OF SOUFFLENHEIM

### FROM PREHISTORY TO THE MIDDLE AGES

#### Chapter One

In the Neolithic period or age of polished stone (from 5000 to 2000 before Jesus Christ), people settled into the region and specifically on the outskirts of the forest, built their huts in small groups, practiced a primitive form of agriculture, looking for fertile land and using the forest for their needs in wood to build houses and heat them.

Progressively, the primitive population still in small number improve their life, mainly in the Age of Bronze (2000 to 1800 before Jesus Christ). They know how to use metals: copper at first, then a mixture (alloy of copper, tin and zinc) the bronze, harder and more resistant than copper. Weapons and tools are no



longer produced on the same place, but come from other regions, and spread all over the territory. At this moment, agriculture is still practiced in the lower region towards the Rhine River, but the forest is also used, mainly for raising pigs. Also places devoted to sepultures are established, where the dead are buried under elevations of ground, hillocks (in latine tumuli), numerous in the surroundings of Soufflenheim. According to the beliefs of the time, the dead receive tools, ornaments and pottery.

The archeologist and renown historian Xavier Nessel, mayor in Haguenau in the last century, dug these tumuli and made a number of discoveries : bones, axes and other utensils, potteries of different size and forms (gathered in the Museum of Haguenau). The eminent Strasbourg archeologist, F.A. Schaeffer, has studied these objects.

In his high-level scientific work (2), he demonstrated that tumuli grouped in twenty, thirty and up to hundred units are found in the forest, preferably close to the edge. Primitive men had thus settled there. It is especially true for Soufflenheim on the edge of a terrace, on the junction of the Brumbach and the Eberbach, where they dominate the depression of the Rhine River. The parcel of land named Kurzgeländ contains 98 tumuli ; the one named Weissensee-Oberfeld has 63. They constitute real necropolis, to which can be added the site of the Donauberg (name derived from the Germanic divinity Donar).

In these tumuli were found, under many other funeral offerings, many pieces of pottery made out of the nearby layers of clay found close to the village, and still exploited today. The primitive populations had already recognized their quality and made vases, jugs, bowls and dishes, cups and plates. What is striking for us, wrote Monsieur Schaeffer, is the perfection of these pieces of pottery, and their variety, in spite of very limited technical means so far. They are well ornamented using a decoration carved with a knife and show a large skill and a developed artistic sense. They prove a certain degree of civilization, and bear witness of a time of relative prosperity and peace.

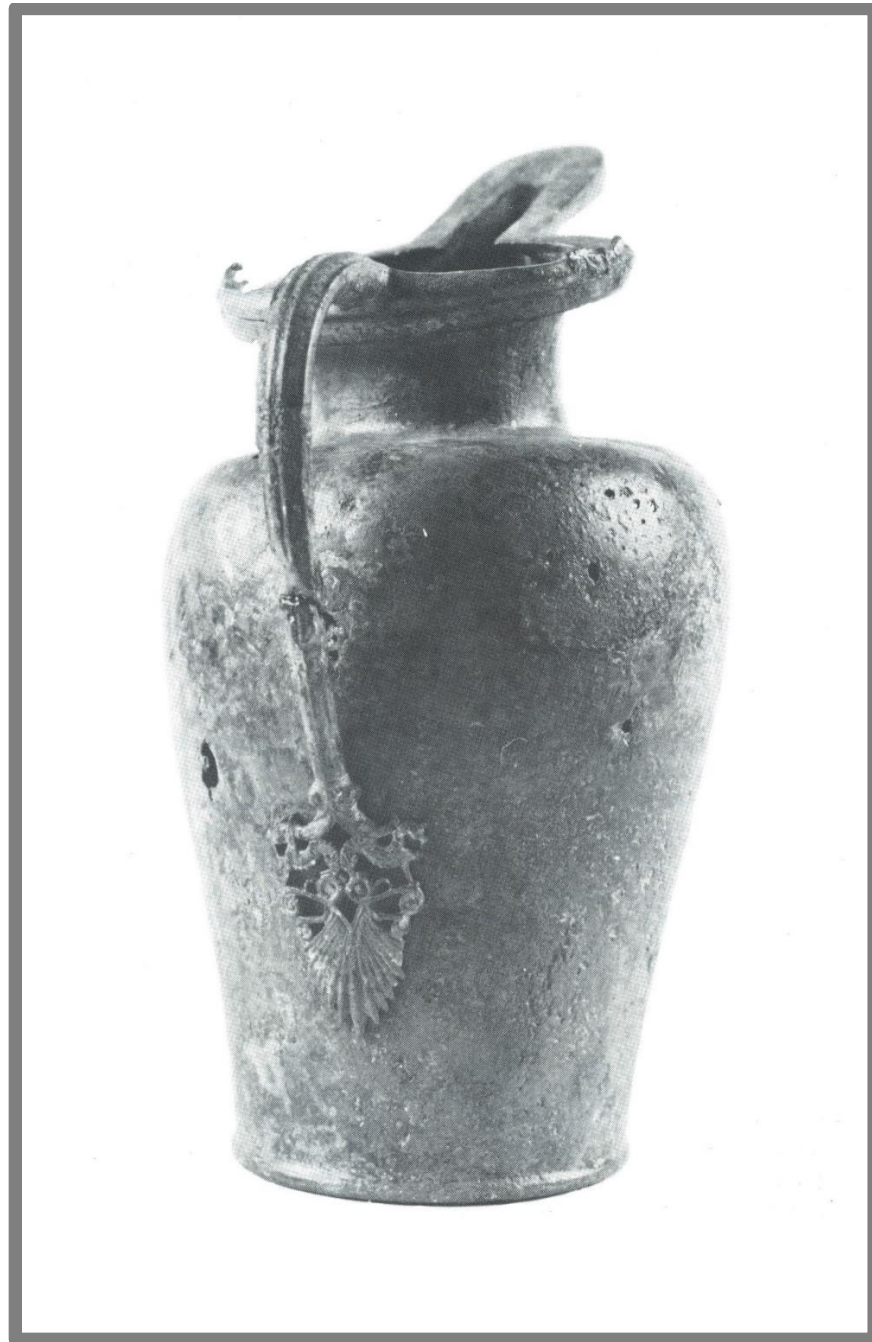
As the weapons and bronze objects found prove, these potteries date back to the Age of Bronze, second millennium before Jesus Christ. So that we can say that pottery in Soufflenheim is the oldest and most authentic handicraft in Alsace.



Vases with prints from the Middle Bronze Age found in the burials of the Haguenau Forest (Haguenau Museum)



The populations who lived at this time in Alsace are not well known. Professor J.J. Hatt, archivist of Museum of Archeology in Strasbourg, calls them the Proto Celts (3). They came from the Swabian plateau around 1600 or 1500 before Jesus Christ. They formed important colonies in the forest of Haguenau, devoted less to agriculture than to breeding cattle and their civilization was of an original type. As a result of Monsieur Schaeffer, it also notes the existence of an outstanding ceramics, deeply carved, offering elegant and noble forms.



Haguenau Historical Museum. Oenochoe type with volutes and animal patterns, of the Iron Age (Old Tiene I) 475-400 BC Soufflenheim

Towards the end of the Bronze Age unknown ethnic transformations took place, migrations of tribes come from Wurtemberg and Bavaria, also from the Celtic race. Around 800 before Jesus Christ, these populations brought with them tools and weapons made from iron. Whereas the former populations were mainly occupied with breeding, these newcomers practice more farming. They too lived preferably in the outskirts of forests, on the terrace. Their tombs contain objects out of iron, buckles and armbands, necklaces, plates of belts, also potteries, not as beautiful and carved as those of the Bronze Age.

They are witnesses of the expanding of colonization of the region and also of the potter's handcraft. The spot of Soufflenheim stayed to be a privileged place of colonization, later too. This is due to the presence of layers of clay, constantly in use. To be noticed further, found in tombs of Soufflenheim, a jug with a large handle and long beak, called oenochoe (from Greece) and a buckle, both dating back to the Age of Iron in the Vth century before Jesus Christ.

In Roman times (from the last century before Jesus-Christ), the region was occupied by Celts, to which joined the Triboques, a Germanic tribe whose main residence was in Brocomagus (Brumath). At this time (first century after Jesus Christ), the pottery of the region was less appreciated. Beautiful products were imported from Italy and workshops of terra sigillata created in Alsace itself (Heiligenberg) : but the population certainly also continued to use vases and jugs out of cooked earth, brickmaking and tileries developed close to Schirrhoffen. A Gallo-Roman station was found in the Eisenbaechel where potteries with metal surfaces (IIIrd to IVth centuries). A Roman road linking Brumath to the Roman station of Seltz passed through Soufflenheim.

The Roman epoch ended at the dawn of the Vth century with the violent invasions of Germanic tribes. The Alemanni and the Franks crossed the Rhine rivers several times, and after a long period of insecurity and troubles that made the Gallo-Roman population disappear, they started to establish themselves in the area. The Alemanni occupied the larger part of Alsace up to the forest of Haguenau. The Franks on their side, pushed from North to South and came also in the region of Soufflenheim. Until today, the local language attests of differences between the Alemannic and Frankish speeches.



Haguenau Historical Museum. Burial of the Middle Bronze Age (1550-1200 BC) Haguenau Forest, Donauberg Canton, Tumulus 13, Burial 1

From the VIth century and until the IXth century, from the east to the northeast of the forest of Haguenau and towards the Rhine, several villages were created, on rather favorable places, already often earlier occupied by prehistoric or Gallo-Roman populations. Sepultures containing men with weapons, swords

and axes, women with ornaments, necklaces and armbands were found, also remains of potteries in cooked earth, simply orned cups for instance, in the place named "Kurzgeländ" near the southern side out of Soufflenheim (4).

#### Notes:

- 1) J.A. KOERNER, (de Soufflenheim), (doctorate de l'université d'Erlangen). Beitrag zur Kenntnis det Elsässer Thone, Strasbourg, 1900.
- 2) F.A. SCHAEFFER, *Les tertres funéraires préhistoriques dans la forêt de Haguenau*. Tome 1, *Les Tumuli de l'Age de Bronze*, Haguenau, 1926 : et Tome 11, *Les Tumulti de l'Age de Fer*, Haguenau, 1930.
- 3) *Histoire de l'Alsace*, Tome 1, editions mars at Mercure, Wettolsheim, 1978,
- 4) Voir pour cette période P. Elchinger, Soufflenheim, *La cité des Potiers*, 1977, 11-26 : et 1978. 55-64.

## SOUFFLENHEIM IN THE MIDDLE AGES AND IN THE BEGINNING OF MODERN TIMES

### Chapter Two

#### Contents

- The Grangia of the Abbey of Neubourg
- Soufflenheim - Imperial Village
- The Potters in Soufflenheim
- Church and Parish

The village has formed itself in the first centuries of the Middle Ages, at a time when the Merovingian and Carolingian kings ruled the new born France, as its name can prove, probably around the VIIIth century. The historians indeed admit that the places whose name ends in "heim" are older than those whose names end in "bach, feld, dorf, haus, hof" and who formed themselves in the IXth and Xth centuries.

What does the name Soufflenheim mean? It will be written from the XIIth century in different ways: Sufelnhem, Suvellheim, Suoflenhem, or Sauflenheim. It has been thought that the root could be the Celtic "sawell" which means burning oven and could apply to the old Soufflenheim potteries (1). It could so mark a continuity in settlement and life, this industry of baked clay having been exerted without interruption.

#### The Grangia Of The Abbey Of Neubourg

The name of the village is found in documents beginning in the XIIth century. A Bull of Pope Eugene III confers to the Cistercian abbey of Neubourg several properties in the area, among them a "grangia" in Suvelnheim (1147).

The Cistercian order had been founded by St. Bernard in the beginning of the XIIth century. Its origins consisted in the creation of convents surrounded by properties or domains (grangia), in which a specific attention was given to agriculture (2). The first creation of this order was founded in Lucelle, in southern Alsace, in the Alsace Jura, close to Switzerland. From this point the monks left to establish themselves on the outskirts of the forest of Haguenau, called by mighty count Reinhold de Lutzelbourg (region of Saverne) and by the Duke of Alsace and Swabia, Frédéric the Borgne (One Eyed). In the year 1133, they founded the Abbey of Neubourg west of the Sacred Forest, and the founders donated them with large "grangiae" with farms, barns, stables, fields, meadows, grazing places, often assorted with financial and judiciary rights. There laïc brothers worked in the fields, furnished the abbey with the products necessary for life, cleared woods and made agriculture prosperous. Many fields were gained on forests, others in the Rhine depth, the Ried, in spite of important humidity and danger of floods. The old names of Oberfeld, Mittelfeld and Niederfeld are characteristic for old places of culture where the triennial assolement was practised. So that by the agricultural work in its grangia, the abbey of Neubourg had a beneficial influence on the region of Soufflenheim and on the agglomeration that started to develop from that moment.

Pope Eugene III confirmed the properties of Neubourg as early as 1147 (3); pope Alexander III made the same in the year 1177, and this bull describes the goods depending of the abbey and consisting in fields, meadow, waterways, forests, and the cultivated or virgin meadows (4). In the year 1208 pope Innocent III confirmed those goods and repeated the same dispositions : each time the "grangia" of Soufflenheim is mentioned (5).

These dispositions and confirmations of the emperors are of main importance, mostly so those given by emperor Frederic I Barbarossa. The document dated 1156 confirmed the properties of the abbey and mentioned the "curia" of "Suvenheim" (6). But one event, date unknown, was to the disadvantage of the abbey and of Soufflenheim; there is just a "notitia" of the monks in Neubourg (no official document); the initial donation by Count Reinhold de Lutzelbourg to which the Duke of Alsace and Souabe, father of Emperor Frederic Barberousse, had participated, included the property of "the third tree" of the sacred forest in favour of the abbey, so this meant the property of a third of this forest. But the right of the count to this part of the forest was not so clear, had not been inherited), so that the Hohenstaufen noblemen cancelled this right and took back this complete forest, and gave in compensation to the abbey the domain of Selhofen (near Rothbach in southern Vosges). The monks accepted reluctantly ; the document lets us understand their regretful feeling ; they say "the property we had enjoyed, near Soufflenheim and in the Sacred forest given by count Reinhold and especially there the right of the third tree along with other rights". This loss concerned very directly Soufflenheim, though the large farm continued to be affiliated with the abbey and to operate near Soufflenheim (7).

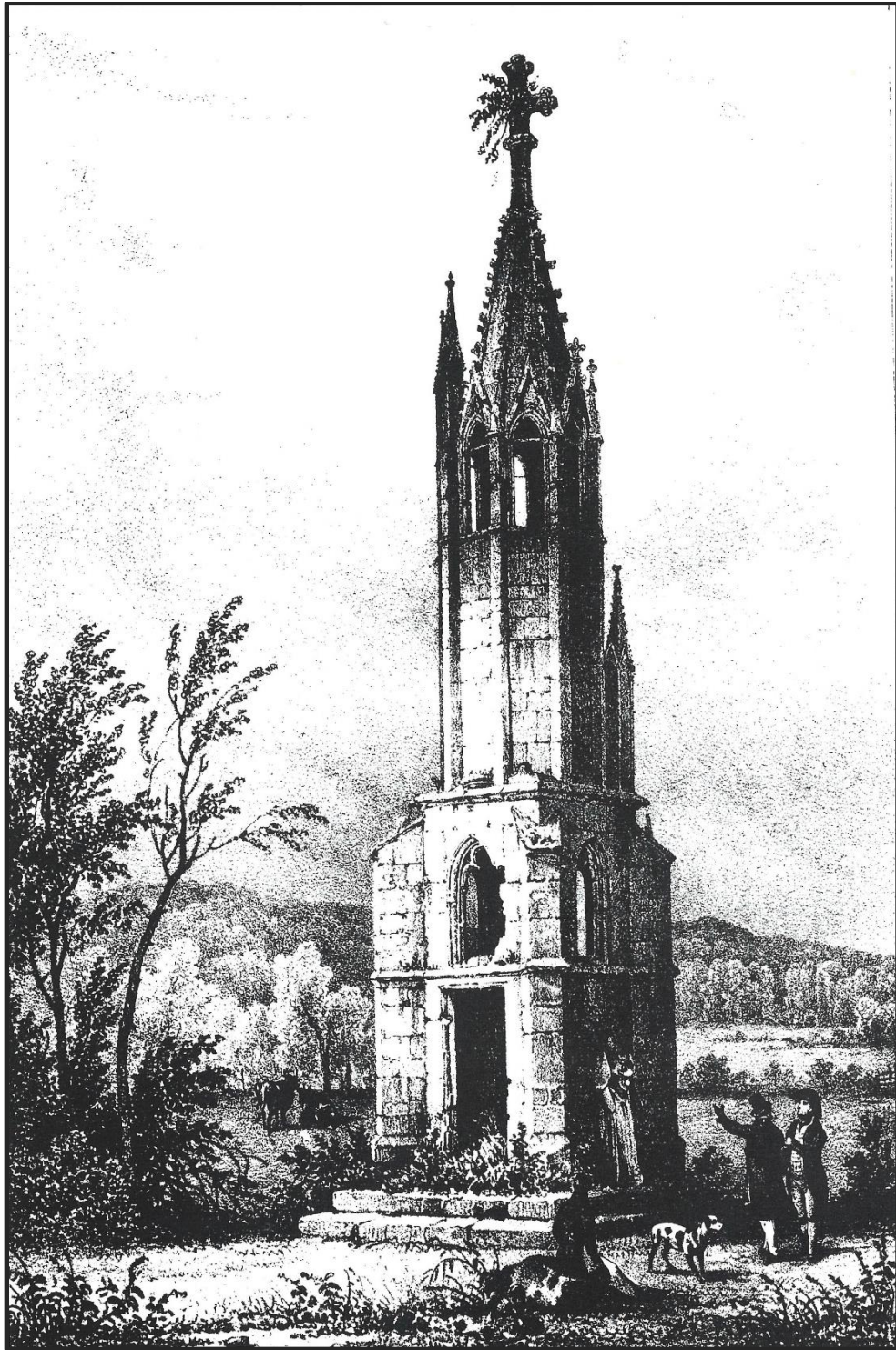
Another document, dated 1158, written by Emperor Frederic I Barbarossa concedes to the abbey of Neubourg the right of pasture (means that the cattle of the abbey may use the grazing pastures inside the forest), and to take the firewood inside the forest (8). But there is no mention of the property of the third tree, so that the forest remains an imperial domain.

Later on, the emperors continued to confirm the rights of the abbey under this same form ; in year 1196, Emperor Henry VI, son of Barberousse (9), and in year 1209, emperor Otton IV (10). In the year 1219 emperor Frederic II takes the abbey under his protection and confirms all its rights along with right of grazing inside the forest and the right to gather firewood in the forest (11). The "curia" in Soufflenheim is always mentioned in these documents.

Abbé Grandidier adds that this imperial diploma dated 1219 contains an important sentence in regard to the curia of Soufflenheim "having claimed this curia, we have built it for our personal use with consent of



the brothers of Neubourg and with the will of the abbey" (12). So that the curia seems to be more imperial or perhaps common to both.



View of the Neubourg Chapel. Lithograph de Engelmann



However, king Rodolphe of Habsburg reconfirmed the properties of the abbey in the year 1291, and among them the curia Soufflenheim (13). In the XIVth century too, in the year 1356, Emperor Charles IV confirms on his side the properties of the abbey, among them the curia Soufflenheim with rights and dependences (14).

In the year 1215, the Abbé of Neubourg acquired two swamps named the large and the small Hundelouve. Brother Hartung, cellarer, and brother Rodolphe, master of the named "grangia" have examined them and found them useful ; they acquired them definitely from Lampertus "de Suovilheim" (Soufflenheim) (15).

A mill is mentioned in Soufflenheim in the year 1338 (16) ; the Abbé of Neubourg dug a pond with the sovereign permission of Louis de Bavière.

In year 1245, the abbot of Seltz sold to the abbot of Neubourg the dime in the ban of the village of Soufflenheim (17).

The Abbé of Neubourg owned in Soufflenheim a number of properties and rights that we unfortunately do not know for sure ; the register that held all copies of documents consulted by Grandidier before the French Revolution does no longer exist, eventually destroyed at this same time, or later on occasion of the fire of the Library of Strasbourg in 1870, as Lucien Pfleger believes. Grandidier writes indeed that inside this cartulary of the abbey of Neubourg, folios 29 and 30 concern these indications entitled "this concerns the properties that the church of Neubourg owns in the village named Suvelheim".

Concerning these properties, L. Pfleger in his study, speaks about the decline of the abbey in the second half of the XIVth century (invading "Englishmen" who wasted the properties and the abbey in years 1365 and 1375 again.)

Nevertheless, in year 1417, emperor Sigismond confirmed the properties of the abbey but without specification. The various curiae are no longer named. Later, we assume that the "grangia" of Soufflenheim was given in loan, as often the custom was for ecclesiastic properties, or even sold (as the grangia of Laubach was, for instance). Grandidier says, but does not name documents, that the abbey kept for further centuries a domain in Soufflenheim. The abbey itself began to decline at the time of the French Revolution, and the convent was totally destroyed.

### **Soufflenheim - Imperial Village**

Besides the so named "grangia" of the abbey of Neubourg existed the village of Soufflenheim, which does not let hear of itself before the XIIth century, but did exist, as its names proves, a long time earlier.

It is named in 1245 as surrounded by its ban or "outskirts". As the document concerns the dime, the tax that the people in the village had to pay to the church and to the vicar, we can say that for sure the village had for a longer while before this, its own church or at least a chapel.

In year 1251, young king Conrad IV proclaimed that, for sake of the rest of the soul of emperor Frederic II (who died in year 1250) his father, he freed the abbey of Neubourg of the annual cens (rent) that was owed on the fields between his castle ("castrum" of Soufflenheim) and the forest, and between the waterways Brumbach and Eberbach on the other side. He forbid to the Schultheiss of Haguenau to "bother" the abbey in these properties in fields (19). The document uses the word "castrum" that describes a castle in Soufflenheim. Did the sovereign start building a fortification, as cited in document

dated 1219 above mentioned could indicate ("aedificavimus"). In any case, the village was the property of the sovereign. Later documents confirm so.

After the downfall of the dynasty of the Hohenstaufen and after the long Interreign from 1250-1273, King Rodolph de Hapsburg (1273-1293), united the properties that had belonged to the family of Hohenstaufen to those of the imperial crown. He organized them into a "grand bailliage impérial" or Reichslandvogtei or bailiff's court, where from would depend, besides the imperial towns, about forty villages round Haguenau, among them Soufflenheim.

In year 1333, the sovereign, Louis de Bavière, (Ludwig of Bayern) decided that the burghers of Haguenau had to free from their pledge the villages of Mommenheim and Soufflenheim that had previously been given in mortgage to Peter de Duntzenheim, knight in Strasbourg. From now on they will depend of the office of the Schultheiss of Haguenau and no longer submitted to mortgage (20).

As a matter of fact, in year 1334, Petermann de Duntzenheim, knight, declared he renounced to all rights on both villages, and freed the "Gebürschafft" or all peasants in Soufflenheim, of any pretension on his part. This community of peasants became the municipality of Soufflenheim.

In year 1370, the imperial upper bailiff, prince Wenceslas (of Luxemburg) promised ten imperial villages, among them Soufflenheim, that they would stay inside the "Pflege" and "Schultheissenamt" of Haguenau (21) as long as he would be maintained head in this function. Soon afterwards, in year 1372, Emperor Charles IVth ordered that under his imperial authority these villages were to depend for ever from the "Pflege" of Haguenau, would not be separated from it in any way, nor given for pledge or loan (22).

In the XVth century we can learn more on their organization. The villages depended of the imperial upper bailliffwick and more directly of the imperial provost (Reichsschultheiss) who, being the head of the local justice, presided the court of justice of Haguenau, court of appeal for the villages. The imperial provost was assisted by counsellors (Räte), according to the rule of 1527. A receiver "Zinsmeister", was in charge of financial matters. He gathered the taxes and the rent "Zinse" this word derived from the French "cens", managed the income in money and nature, took part to the administration of the Holy Forest, and held the accounts of receipts and expenses. Forest clerks (Forstmeister, Förster) looked over the forest applying the forest regulations, watched over cuttings of trees, punished violations of forest rule (Frevel), and took care of the game (23).

The imperial villages had to take an oath of obedience and faith to the upper bailiff, same as the burghers of Haguenau had to. In order to be sworn in, they had to present themselves in the abbey of Neubourg, about 20 km away from Soufflenheim. This may remind of the former dependence from the abbey. Each time a new upper bailiff took his functions, the village people took this oath in front of him and of the under-bailiff (Unterlandvogt).

The villages had their own court of justice with a provost (Schultheiss). This was the case in Soufflenheim, but not for the small villages, some of which had to send their justice cases to Soufflenheim, which proves the importance of this court of justice.

The court was composed of seven municipal magistrates (Schöffen), chosen among the population. The provost presided and led the sittings, and oversaw the execution of the awards. Concerning his nomination, the village community proposed three persons, the upper bailiff named one. The provost took an oath to work for the good sake of the Empire and of the village, and to dispense good justice (24).

Over the village court was the court of Haguenau (named Lauben or Arkadengericht), presided by the imperial provost and which served as a court of appeal for the imperial villages.

The provost of Soufflenheim had to look for order and public security, watch over forced labour and dispense justice. A regulation in year 1560 gives more detail on the provost's office in Soufflenheim ; Henri Schlipper has been named ; he must keep a horse, have a gun, an armour, lance and all that makes part of a good equipment. He swears obedience to the upper-bailiff, the receiver of rent and the counsellors of the upper baillifwick, to fulfil his charge, to dispense justice to all equally, to protect the village people in their rights and freedom. He must also care for his service in the forest with the master (Fortsmeister) and the forest-guards, and condemn the violations in forests and poaching. As wages, he receives 25 Rhine florins (gold coins), 5 ells of toil, 6 ells of toil for the lining of a winter cloth. To keep his horse, he receives 30 bags of oats, and 200 straw bundles. He receives a fourth of the fines inflicted to poachers. He has a right for pasture of four pigs, and full user's right on 10 meadows. In the year 1600, his fees will reach 40 florins in hard money, and the other rights kept the same (25).

Besides the provost or Schultheiss, another village authority was the Heimbürger, a type of a mayor which existed in almost all Alsace villages. In Soufflenheim in the year 1476 are named the provost, the magistrates of the court and besides them three "Heimbürger" of the village and dependences of Sufelnheim (26). This mayor (with or without assistants) was elected each year by the people of the village. He fought for the benefit of the village, managed the village's wealth, made an account of income and expenses, raised the taxes and rents due to the seigniorial authority, and represented the community outside.

There is no indication concerning the dates of existence of the provosts and Heimbürger. As the "imperial baillifwick" has been created by Rodolphe of Hapsburg in the end of the XIIIth century, the different organisms were formed gradually from the beginning of the XIVth century. The upper baillifwick surrounded by the imperial villages existed from that time, and lasted that way for centuries, with the same administrative and judiciary mechanisms. So in the year 1447 there is a note mentioning that the provost of the court is also in charge of health policy : as soon as he suspected a resident to suffer an attack of leprosy, he would notify it to the receiver of rents in Haguenau who came along with two barber masters (Scherermeister) to examine him. If he was judged sick "unrein", the provost and the court excluded him from the community (27).

The provost was in charge of public order and watched for morality : In the year 1616 (28), archduke Maximilian of Habsburg, upper bailiff, having asked the provosts of the imperial villages to report to him disorders and abuses, the provost of Soufflenheim complained about the large feasts on occasion of marriages and baptisms, some of excesses on the eve of marriages, about drinking bouts, songs, dances, swearing, blasphemies and riots in the inns. In this document there is a reference to a "village regulation" or "Soufflenheimer ordnung" which has never been found. The provost also complained in neglected forced labour, on time when "die glocken zum frohnen leuttet : when the bells ring to call for forced labour, some come in time, others do not hurry and arrive belated "über ein stundt hernach" more than an hour later.

At this time, a few years before the Thirty Years War, the material welfare of village people seems quite good as time is given to feasts, and at the same time the regulations concerning duties towards the authorities is overseen.

These duties are the payment of taxes and rents of the village to the "reiche pflegede zu der statt Hagenau gehörig" possessors of the town of Haguenau. There were several sorts of them. We learn about them in the account book of the receiver "Zinsmeister büchel von den Gefällen" in years 1454-1456 (29).

According to this book (folio 12-15), Soufflenheim had to pay a Christmas tax (Wynacht bette) of 14 livres (29a), and for the Harvest tax (Erntebette) 10 livres, then there was a personal tax (Schultheissen Wynacht lipbette) to be paid to the provost in amount of 2 livres, 10 sous, 6 deniers. Other taxes, concerning the forest rent (forstzinse), for gardens and meadows were of 3 sous [cents], 5 deniers [pence], the tax on houses (Rauchgelt) is of 8 sous 8 deniers. Another tax is 3 livres [pounds] due to the receiver of rents when potters take away clay and wood, a regular tax, mentioned as late as 1576 (see chapter on potters).

A register in year 1500 gives the same indications : Christmas tax, leipett (or body tax), Harvest tax. The body tax mentions the number of persons in the commune obliged to pay it : they are 116. Another document in the archives of Haguenau counts 126 heads of family in year 1476. As each family counts about 5 members at least, the total population is of about 600 to 650 (to them we can add a number of servants, and apprentice potters and workmen in potteries) ; so that around 1500 Soufflenheim counted at least 700 persons. If we examine the numbers of other imperial villages, we see that the number of heads of family is much smaller (for instance 33 in Mommenheim ; 30 in Ohlungen, 24 in Batzendorf, 23 in Niederschaeffolsheim). In the XVth century, Soufflenheim was a large village, and this until the 17th century.

Other taxes were due by people of the locality : the Carnival hen (118 in year 1576). The rent on the forest's right (Forstrecht zins), on the ponds, on the kennel's house (Hundtshuss) where the forest guards lived in, on the mill ( 8 bags corn).

Then the people in Soufflenheim had to serve forced labour, as those of other imperial villages. As they found shelter and help in case of danger in Haguenau from the authorities of the upper baillifrick, they had in return to bring help with men, horses and carriages. They were submitted to forced labour for the higher clerks (order of 1527) to fell their trees and furnish them with wood, and hay (18 measures "Mannsmatten" in Schirried), to carry corn and wine.

The forced labour consisted also in cutting and carrying wood. So in the XVIth century we find "for cutting wood, we gave to eat to 80 persons of Soufflenheim" and in year 1536, for carrying wood we used "75 carriages and 250 persons of Soufflenheim who helped load and unload the wood" (30). But the number of days of forced labour by the residents is not mentioned.

The record of 1459 mentions the fines risked by the residents of the imperial villages, and due to the tax receiver. On different occasions, he writes down in his record the fines imposed for violations : to have drawn a knife and have quarrelled, for grazing pigs in forbidden districts inside the forest (überlouff des swine im forste), for violations on wood and for having taken clay from a potter (als der eyne hafner sin erde nam).

Sometimes disputes burst out between Soufflenheim and Haguenau. It happened in year 1496 (31), when the upper bailiff, the palatine Elector Philippe, wrote to the under-bailiff, Jacques de Fleckenstein, to ask him to negotiate with the town of Haguenau in regard of a quarrel concerning grazing and firewall wood which divided the city and the village people. He asks him to obtain that the town releases the prisoners, restitutes horses, and to conclude an arrangement between both parties. On another occasion, a dispute bursts out between the residents of Soufflenheim and the family Niedheimer de Wasenbourg (1606-1608) concerning a district with a pond on the ban of Soufflenheim, which had been plundered by the village people, in spite of the rights that the Niedheimer also enjoy there (32).

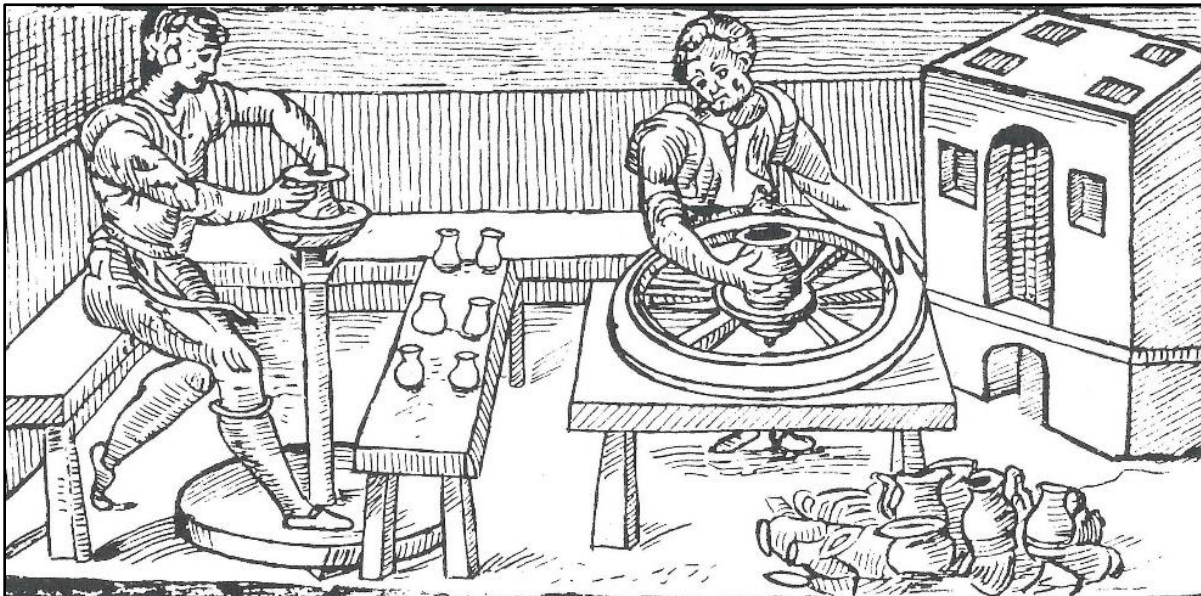
The XVIIth century was an unhappy period for Soufflenheim. The Thirty Years war had burst out in 1618, and in year 1622 the village was plundered and set on fire by the troops of Ernest von Mansfeld (33). The

commune house was in flames, and all documents were destroyed, so that we know little on the history of the locality. A letter addressed by the Upper-bailiff wick of Haguenau to the Habsburgian Regency, notifies that it is impossible to raise taxes, the villages having been ruined by war. Ten years later, in 1632, the Swedes invaded Alsace, occupied it and lived on the country, burning the villages, and torturing and slaughtering the people. In the following years, Alsace became the theatre of a war where the armies of all fighting parties battled, so that the country was terribly wasted. We know nothing on Soufflenheim, we guess that the population had certainly to suffer badly and was decimated.

### **The Potters In Soufflenheim**

During the Middle-Ages, the industry of pottery in Soufflenheim which origin goes back to prehistorical time, continued, probably hindered by the war events which several times mishandled Alsace. But documents for a long time do not mention it. There are just a few information's in the XVth century.

Let us remind however, echoing a long gone tradition, the legend according to which emperor Frédéric I Barbarossa, who had built a palace in Haguenau and given to this city the statute of imperial town (1164) would have given to the potters of Soufflenheim the right to extract freely and forever the clay they needed for their handicraft (33) : The legend has two versions : Frédéric I Barbarossa (or his son) hunting in the sacred forest was attacked by a wild pig and found himself in danger for his life. A potter, working not far, ran and saved the sovereign. The favour cited was granted to the potters of Soufflenheim as a reward. The second version tells that the potters of Soufflenheim had offered their sovereign at Christmas time a crib with the figures of the Holy couple and characters in clay ; the privilege cited was a reward for this gift. A document, kept in the town hall, would have existed on this subject, but has been destroyed by a fire. The tradition of this free clay has remained very lively.



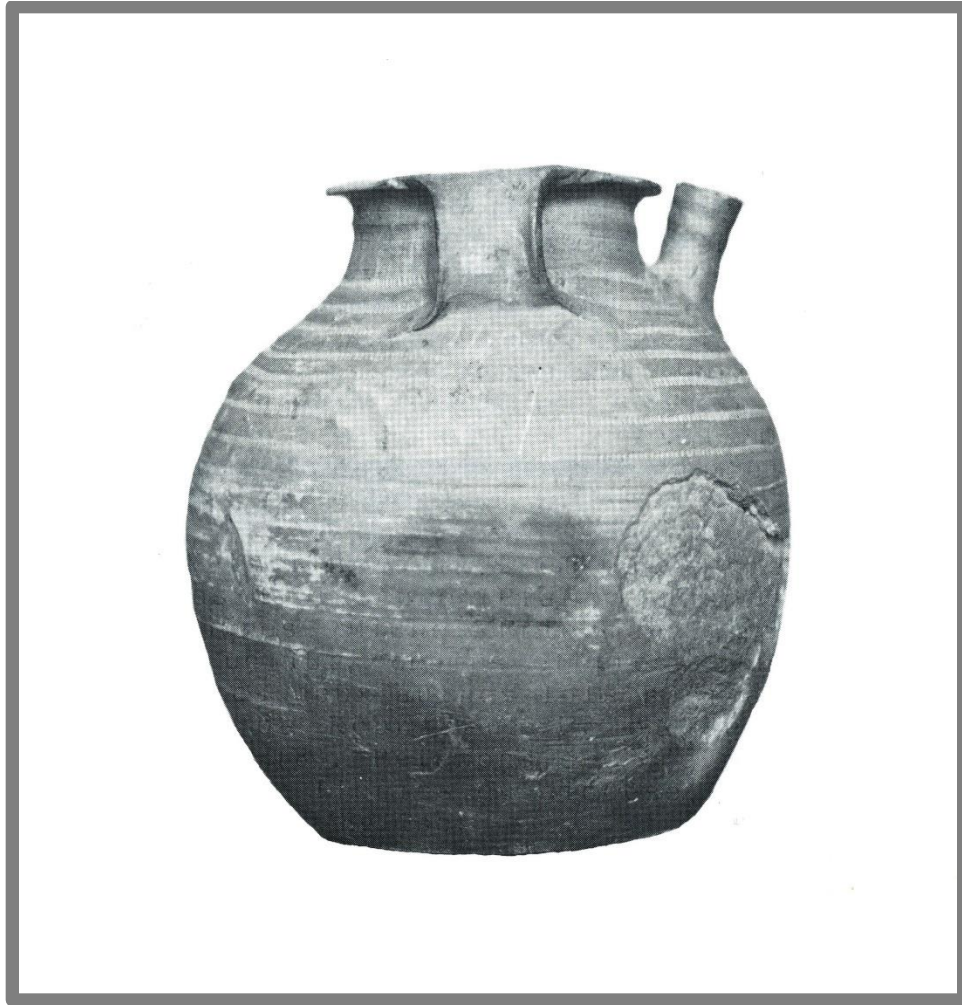
Potter at the Wheel (18<sup>th</sup> Century)



What information is given by documents from the XVth century?

In the year 1435 an agreement passed between Palatine Count Louis, imperial upper bailiff (1437-1449) and the city of Haguenau establishes what follows : the potters of Haguenau and Soufflenheim are allowed to carry away for their use the stumps of fallen trees, and other remains of cuttings, as well as wood unfit for building, and dead wood (33a). The potters, named "Schüsseldreher" in fact had this right previously, as the people of the "grangia" were allowed access to free firewood for their use, taken out of the forest of Haguenau.

In the year 1454, the potters of Soufflenheim had to pay to the upper bailiff of Haguenau, or more exactly to the receiver or Zinsmeister, a tax of 3 pounds, paid yearly, for extracting the clay (3 pounds we potters have given for clay and wood right). This is also noted same in year 1576, in an account record held by the secretary of the receiver (Zinsmeister) "from clay in Soufflenheim ; received as right on clay 2 pounds 10 pence". So that, though the clay itself was free, the right to take it away was submitted to payment by the workmen.



Jug 1403. Provenance: Soufflenheim (Private Collection).

At the end of the Middle Ages, the workmen in Alsace had their own organization in confraternities and corporations. So was it for the potters of Soufflenheim though we do not know the time of their creation. In the year 1442, a letter written by the city of Strasbourg is addressed to the "corporation of potters in Soufflenheim" ; the potters have changed the old sizes of their pots, and Strasbourg asks that the same sizes as forty years ago would be maintained. The potters have also raised their prices. Strasbourg asks for adjustment. So that the corporation of potters in Soufflenheim will have to send three members to discuss and find a compromise (34). This proves that the association of potters is well organized enough to be in stand to discuss with the city of Strasbourg.

At that time there is a large groupment of potters involving the region of Strasbourg and extending to Ravensburg (Northern Lake of Constance). It so unites the potters of Alsace and of a large part of southern Germany ; the yearly assembly takes place in Brisach (35). But it has not been proved if the potters of Soufflenheim were part of it. During the following period, pottery survived with difficulty to the Thirty Years' war, as it is hardly mentioned again.

### **Church And Parish**

The first mentions go back to XIII and XIVth centuries (40). The dime is mentioned in 1245, but the origin of the parish is very likely prior to this. It is not known if, as often was the case, the "grangia" of the Abbey of Neubourg had its own chapel.

About 1350 are named : Ludovicus, rector of Soufflenheim" acquires the burgher's right in Haguenau, as well as "Arnoldus, vicar" (41), The title of rector refers to a well-organized parish, having at its disposal a "plebanus" or priest in charge of offices "for the people". In year 1371 are named the church, with a priest in charge of people, along with a "promissory", a priest who reads the morning mass (42). In the XVth century, King Sigismond raises a royal tax on parishes, named "Königszehnt" (1419) where the mention of : Conrat Schilling, upper vicar and main priest in Soufflenheim" is found, along with his "primissary" (43). These indications prove a large parish with good number of priests. This parish first depends of the priesthood of Beinheim, then in year 1454 it belongs to the rural chapter of "Under Haguenau". In year 1486 there is the presence of a chapel St. Wendelin, saint patron of domestic animals. In year 1492, the chaplain and an altar dedicated to Saint Wendelin are mentioned further (44).

As to the dime, raised by the sovereign, Emperor Frederic III granted it to several persons in families Reinhold, Goss and Huffel (as well as the dime in Sessenheim, Rountzenheim and Dalhunden). It comes to them in 1540 as a right of succession. Emperor Ferdinand confirms this possession to members of the Hüffel family (45).

Reformation did not enter in Soufflenheim, the archdukes of Habsburg, possessors of the imperial bailiff wick, were defenders of Catholicism. The patronat right (or right to name the vicar) belonged primitively to the abbey of Surbourg, and to the chapter of Haguenau.

There was a necessity to restore the religious situation after the Thirty Years war and its terrible destructions.

On the church itself, we have no indication, or on its saint patron. An altar exists, dedicated to Saint Wendelin, but it was not the master altar of the sanctuary. This structure was for sure very ancient and small.

**Notes: Pages 44-46**

- 1) H. MENGES, "Deutsches Wörterbuch für Elsässer", Guebwiller, 1911.
- 2) L. PFLEGER, "Die wirtschaftliche und territorial Entwicklung der ehemaligen Gisterzienserbatei Neuburg im Heiligen Forst bis zum XV". Jahrhundert, Archiv für elsässische Kirschengeschichte, I. 1926, pp. 1-48.
- 3) D. SCHOEPFLIN, "Alsatia Diplomatica", Tome I, p. 234.
- 4) Ibidem, Tome I, p. 261 : "cum omnibus earum pertinentiis, agris, pratis, aquis, silvis, pascuis cultis et incultis".
- 5) Ibidem, Tome I, p. 317, également Würdtwein, Nova subsidia diplomatica, Tome X, p. 227.
- 6) Ibidem, Tome I, p. 471.
- 7) Ibidem, Tome I, p. 261, Würdtwein ; Tome X, p. 60 ; L. PFLEGER, p. 7.
- 8) Ibidem, Tome I, pp. 246-247 : "Pascua et usum lignorum in sacra silva et animalia eorum utantur pascuis in sacra sylva ... ligna veron ad omnium officinarum suarum ignem faciendum.
- 9) WÜRDWEIN, Tome X, p. 178
- 10) BÖMER-FICKER, Gegesta Imperii, n° 283.
- 11) BÖMER-FICKER, n° 1055.
- 12) GRANDIDIER, Oeuvres inédites, Tome VI, p. 374 : "curiam Sufflenheim quam de communi consensus fratrum Novi Castrensi (=Neubourg) abbatisque voluntate in usus nostros vendicatem aedificavimus".
- 13) BOEHMER-REDLICH, Regesten n° 2438, ADB-Rh. (Archives Départementales du Bas-Rhin), série H927, 2.
- 14) SCHÖPFLIN, Tome II, pp. 215-216
- 15) Ibidem, Tome I, p. 330.
- 16) WINCKELMANN, Acta imperii inedita saec. XIII et XIV, Tome II, 366 : "einen weier ufvahen und ufschlahen mügen uf dem gestat vor dem mulrod wider dem dorf zu Sufelnheim uf dem Brumbach bis zu dem Münchborne".
- 17) GRANDIDIER, Tome VI, p. 373 : "decimationem sitam in banno ville de Suvelnheim".
- 18) "Hec sunt predia que possidet ecclesia Novi-Castri in villa que vocatur Suvelnheim tam in Curtis quam agris seu pratis etc".
- 19) BÖMER-FICKER, Regesta Imperii II, p. 829, n° 4544, GRANDIDIER, Tome VI, p. 373.
- 20) A.M. HAG, (Archives municipales de Haguenau), AA 146, F. BATT, "Das Eigenthum su Haguenau, Tome I, p. 227.
- 21) A.M. HAG, AA146, 3 ; voir Jos. Becker, p. 208.

- 22) D. SCHOEPLIN, *Alsacia Diplomatica*, Tome II, p. 265 ; Fr. BATT, *Eigenthum zu Hagenau*, Tome I, p. 229.
- 23) J. BECKER, *Die Reichsdörfer der Landvogtei und Pflege Hagenau*, *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* 1899, pp. 207-247. Du même, *Das Beamtentum der Reichslandvogtei Hagenau*, *Bulletin de la société pour la conservation des Monuments historiques d'Alsace*, Strasbourg 1899, pp. 1-31.
- 24) A.M. HAG, AA149, n° 10.
- 25) J. BECKER, *Die Reichsdörfer*, p. 217.
- 26) A.M. HAG, II 242, n° 16.
- 27) *Ibidem*, AA14, n° 15.
- 28) A. PFLEGER, *Unterländer Brauchtum um 1600*, Bericht an die Landvogtei Hagenau (Dans *Etudes Haguenoviennes* 1948) d'après A.M. HAG, AA150, pp. 15-19.
- 29) A.D. B-Rh., C91, 1 et numerous suivants (Zinsmeister Büchlein).
- 29a . En ce qui concerne les monnaies, la livre (libra, Pfund) valait 20 sous (Schilling) ; le sou, 12 deniers (Pfenninge), la livre avait donc 240 deniers. Le florin (Gulden) était la moitié d'une livre (120 deniers).
- 30) A.D. B-Rh. C91.
- 31) *Ibidem*, C28, 12.
- 32) *Ibidem*, C54, n° 4.
- 33) A. ELCHINGER, 1937, p. 6 ; *Töpferei im Elsass* 1975, p. 55 ; *Soufflenheim, Cité des Potiers* 1977, P. 47 ; et surtout W. Limper, *Grabrecht der Hafner von Sufflenheim, Untersuchung zur Verbreitung, Struktur und Geschichtlichkeit einer Volkssage*, Freiburg i. Br. 1973, pp. 147, 151, 153. (Manuscrit non publié).
- 33a. A.M. HAG, DD12, 2.
- 34) *Ibidem*, JJ242, 2.
- 35) L. SITLER, "Les Associations artisanales en Alsace au Moyen-Age et sous l'Ancien Régime", *Revue d'Alsace*, 1958 Les potiers pp. 42-48.
- 36) J.B. ELLERBACH, *Der Dreissigjährige Krieg im Elsass*, Carspach, 1912, Tome I, p. 237.
- 37) A.D. B-Rh., C81, n° 16.
- 38) M. BARTH, *Wörterbuch der elsässischen Kirchen im Mittelalter*, Archives de l'Eglise d'Alsace, 1962-1963, pp. 1525-1528 ; A.KOCHER, *Das Uffreid*, p. 54, *Geschichte der Pfarrei Sufflenheim*.
- 39) A. HANNAUER, *Cartulaire de l'église St. Georges de Haguenau*, Strasbourg 1898, pp. 74-75, personnes ecclésiastiques admises à la bourgeoisie au milieu du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle.
- 40) M. BARTH, *Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der elsässischen Pfarreien*, Archives de l'Eglise d'Alsace, 1947-1948 : "Die Diözese Strassbourg nach einer pöstlichen Steuerrolle von 1371 qui indique que 'sub archipresbitero in Beinheim'", la paroisse de Soufflenheim donne 5 sous et 4 deniers, le primissaire 3 sous et 4 deniers et le pléban 2 sous et 8 deniers.

- 41) A.M. HAG, JJ220, n° 17, Cartulaire de l'église St Georges p. 406.
- 42) AD B-Rh., C274, 111-112.
- 43) G. KLEIN, Exposition de Céramiques populaires alsaciennes, Strasbourg 1973.
- 44) A. ELCHINGER, p. 6 et suivantes ; Soufflenheim, Cité des Potiers, p. 120 et suivantes ; Töpferei im Elsass p. 57 et suivantes. Ch. MULL, "Un conflit entre Haguenau et Soufflenheim à propos de l'argile extraite dans la forêt de Haguenau", Outre-Forêt 28, 1977, Cahier 4, pp. 41-44.
- 45) A. ELCHINGER, p. 14 et suivantes, Soufflenheim, Cité des Potiers, p. 50.

## **SOUFFLENHEIM: FRENCH VILLAGE IN THE 17TH CENTURY (1660-1715)**

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Contents**

- The Village Administration
- The Population and Economic Life of Soufflenheim in the Second Part of the 17th Century
- The Communal Accounts
- The Trials of Soufflenheim during the Wars of Louis the XIV
- Religious Life and School
- The Potters
- Schultheiss and Heimbürgers 1664-1715
- Town Accounts 1664-1715

By the Treaty of Munster in Westphalien (1648) the large imperial bailiwick (Reichslandvogtei) that the forty imperial villages depended on, passed from the Empire to the Crown of France. Its name will from now on be Grand-bailliage of Haguenau or Prefecture of Haguenau. It is granted by the royal government first to the count of Harcourt, then from 1661, to the Duke of Mazarin who bears the title of grand-bailli. But from 1672-73, the grand-bailliage is in the hands of the Intendant of the Alsace Province and will stay so for over fifty years. Soufflenheim so becomes a royal French village depending on the bailiff or Oberamtmann, on his services, and mainly on his treasurer (Zinsmeister), for financial questions (1).

How did Soufflenheim pass from the old to the new administration? Documents start only in 1666. The communal accounts tell us about the village fifteen years after the establishment of the royal government (2).

#### **The Village Administration**



From the information supplied by the communal accounts, the village authority has stayed the same as in ancient times. At the head of the village is the Schultheiss, called prévôt in French documents. He is named by the royal bailiff for an undetermined period. The justice is in his hands, and his authority is exercised on all types of various communal problems. The first Schultheiss named is Hans Heinrich Schaeffer from 1664-1667. He is succeeded by Lorentz Schaeffer, from 1668 to 1671. As documents are lacking for a period, the next one mentioned is Hans Jacob Schaeffer from 1680, and he remains active until 1699. These people are probably from the same family.

Their remuneration is modest, 9 florins each year. He gets additional money for the cost of trips and meals (Zehrkosten) each time a task is performed. In 1702 for instance, he gets 60 florins for the cost of trips and 48 florins for the cost of meals.

In the justice court, he is supported by 4 to 6 assistant magistrates named Gerichtschöffen. The law court handles questions of low justice, that is to say misdemeanor, the criminal suits being handled by the royal bailiff.

Besides the Schultheiss is the **Heimbürger**, as in the past. This man is a communal administrator and is found in most of the Alsatian villages. He is the agent of the commune and looks over, very often in collaboration with the Schultheiss, the ban, the financial questions and the raising of taxes. He directs the forced labor (corvée) due to the lord (5 days in the year due by burghers). In the 17th century Soufflenheim had two Heimbürgers who both manage together the communal questions, which give an idea of the importance of the village. From 1673, one Heimbürger remains and from 1690 he is also named Burgermeister, or in French bourguemaistre, which then is the current way to name him and describes well his function as mayor.

He is the mayor for one year and is rarely re-elected. His major function is to write down the town accounts or Gemeinderechnungen, kept from 1666 to 1789, the first source of information for us on the communal life.

How is the Heimbürger selected to his position? Each year an open meeting (offener tag) takes place, a day of reunion of burghers [legal citizens]. The sitting of the communal justice court goes on first, then the official rule is read aloud that all listen to (gemeine Dorf ordnung in hörung der ganzen bürgerschaft). Then the functions are sorted out (werden die ämter gezogen). Was it in fact an election or a simple sorting out among the burghers able to hold these functions? The day ends, as the custom is, by a distribution of refreshments (1665: 6 florins 4 sous to give wine to the burghers; 1685 to the burghers on the open day their drink 6 florins expense; to the burghers, a drink paid 4 florins 9 sous; 1694: the communal assembly has spent in meal 11 florins). Sometimes it is mentioned that only the officials had access to drinks (the Schultheiss, Heimbürger and the assessors of justice) and they spent 4 or 5 florins; at the end of the century this expense reaches 10 or 12 florins. From 1697 and for a certain time, the communal accounts do not mention the open day any longer, nor the sorting out of functions, nor the expenses.

The function of the Burgermeister continues on. He receives very scarce money: 4 florins 5 sous a year when there are two Heimbürgers. When there is only one left, 2 florins. Then, following the former custom, 4 florins. He too gets more out of expense in meals.

Both officials, the Schultheiss and the Heimbürger, are narrowly related to the Haguenau city administration. Several times, the accounts mention that they are called to the chancellery in Haguenau (Ganzlei), sometimes they are called to Strasbourg where the Intendant resides; they bring the taxes collected to the authority.

To the Schultheiss and assessors is joined a scribe of the court, whose remuneration reaches 4 florins in the 17th century. A bookkeeper (Rechner) becomes the assistant of the Heimbürger.

A beddel, called in documents Pittel or Bittel (Büttel in German), executes the orders or judgments; he receives 4 to 8 florins, and in the 18th century it can reach from 10 to 16 florins; he is also given a pair of shoes each year.

The communal staff is completed by three foresters who look after the communal forest, and by shepherds and one swine-herd. Another man, the Friese, sees after the waters, the rivers and ditches. Another man, the Landgraben, was an important man, because there was a constant need to care for the dangers of overflows and prevent them by digging ditches and clean rivers. Soufflenheim has no physician; but a midwife is named and receives each year 2 then 4 florins. The commune also has the midwife's chair (Hebammen stuel) in 1683, also called in 1673 a birth chair (Kindbettstuhl). A school teacher is mentioned permanently.

The communal accounts give much information about the commune buildings and life in the village. Besides the church, often mentioned is the communal house (called a gemeine stube or a burger stube), also known as the Rathaus [town hall]. After a long period of war, it needs repairs. As soon as 1666, tiles and lime are bought for repairs. At other times boards (1695). In 1699 it is again mentioned the necessity of repairs in the same town hall, another time (1703) again more work. In 1714 the mason receives 76 florins for repairs to the town hall.

Another building is the Laube, a house with open arcades, which also existed in many other villages. It also needs frequent repairs, and this from 1664 when expenses for boards, nails, and windows are specified. There is also mention made of a chimney and of a stove, tables and benches, repairs to the roof with 2500 shingles, then again with 3000 shingles (Schindlen). In 1680 it is decorated on occasion of the visit of General de Montclar (für den Herrn General de Montclar zugerüstet). Repairs go on: a potter builds a new stove, on other occasions the building is rented, for instance to the cartwright who pays a rent for it (Laubenzins).

There is also a guard-house, rented several times for 4 or 8 florins. Also mentioned is a jail (Blockhaus), where work is done by carpenters in 1684. A new door is installed in 1700. The shepherd's house is built in 1683 (hirten Haus aufgeschlagen), and a tiler brings tiles to it for 20 florins. A carpenter is asked to build two rooms in it. An oven (Backofen) and a new stove (Stubeofen) are added. In 1700, it is referred to as the cowherd's house (Kuhirten). It is also question of a communal cow-shed (gemeine stall) in year 1698, that also gets repaired in year 1705. The swine-herd eventually also lives there, while the lumbermen stay in a small communal house (Gemeindehauesl).

To provide the water needs of the population there is the communal well (gemeine Brunnen) which has been improved several times. Tiles and stones are carried to the communal well (zu einem gemeinen Brunnen) for a sum of 169 florins. As soon as 1669, a well maker (Brunnenmacher) is recruited to repair it (den Brunnen auszubessern).

The bridge is important; it needs repairs several times; carpenters are busy working on it (1668, 1683).

A clock existed before 1660, but needs several revisions and is repaired on many occasions. In 1667 a clockmaker (Uhrenmacher) from Woerth is asked to restore it. On other occasions it needs to be cleaned or oiled. An expense for oil (Baumöl) is mentioned. A locksmith is busy with this. Finally, the authority asks the schoolteacher to care for it and to wind it up regularly. We don't know where it was placed, probably in the church's bell-tower.

## **The Population And Economic Life Of Soufflenheim In The Second Part Of The 17th Century**

As a consequence of the terrible conflict of the Thirty Years War, the Alsatian population decreased strongly. It was probably also the case in Soufflenheim. As the war continued at a slower pace from about 1640, life took back its rights progressively, mainly after the peace treaty of 1648 (Treaty of Westphalia).

Exact statistics are lacking for a long time. From 1662 we have some indications that the village counted 60 farms (3). If on each 5 persons were living, a medium size family, the total population can be evaluated to about 300 persons. This number however does not correspond to what is supplied by the parish visitation asked by the bishop of Strasbourg in 1666, which mentions no more than 40 persons (4). This report may well be inaccurate and wrong, as it also makes a mistake about the Patron Saint of the church, for instance.

The town accounts, a major source of documentation, gives more precise information in the year 1680 (5). It concerns a tax raised (heiligenrechnung) for the saint, to which all parishioners had to contribute. This list, on which several persons are mentioned on more than one occasion, is reduced to 40 names, which would mean about 200 people, if we again apply the number of 5 per family. There may also have been poor people who did not contribute, and so are not inscribed on this list.

In 1693 the parish counted 60 catholic families, the number of those receiving communion on Easter was 200, which leads us again to about 300 people at that time.

In 1701 the tax named Capitation (on each head), initiated for the first time in 1695, names 117 people, but we should leave aside the servants and widows, so that the number of families is in fact 93; with 5 persons in each family we reach about 450 to 500 people. This increase, in regards to the 1680 number, seems reasonable.

In several instances the communal accounts name new burghers (neubürger) who pay a tax (Bürgergeld) to be allowed to settle in the city. In 1670 there are two new burghers. In 1671 nine men and three boors (Schirmverwandte) give 4 or 8 florins, the boors just 1 florin 5 pence. In 1672 there are named 5 boors and one burgher [Barthel Jorger] who pays 4 florins. This amount seems to be the average one. In 1681 a Swiss gave 3 florins to be allowed into the community (ein Schweitzer Hans hat sich hier wollen bürgerlich einlassen). In 1684 new burghers are admitted for 40 florins 5 sous (pennies), so ten more new burghers. After the War of the Augsburg League in 1702, a number of young men pay more than 200 florins (neue junge und fremde), and are inscribed. They would so be around 50. In 1707 eleven new burghers pay 45 florins and two foreign women pay 16 florins for this right. In this way the population of Soufflenheim increases in the beginning of the 17th century, so that the number of 500 is justified.

This increase probably started as early as 1650. The presence in the village of a number of craftsmen before 1670 proves this, as it would not have been the case in a very small community.

As early as 1670 the town accounts mention masons, carpenters, one tiler, one locksmith, one blacksmith, one cartwright, all occupied in various works ordered by the commune. Potters are seldom mentioned. They do not work for the community. Inn landlords are mentioned as early as 1660 and probably before this. There are two of them: Lorentz Schaeffer, who is at the same time the Schultheiss, and Lorentz Cron. From 1681, there are three. After 1700, four are named, which bears witness to the growth of the village. These inn landlords furnish the burghers with wine. The amount for which they have to pay the prescribed tax (or Umgeld) is considerable. In the 1660's the average yearly amount is 351 measures (Ohmen). In 1680: 366 measures for three inn landlords. In 1690: 400 measures in the year for

four innkeepers. In 1699 it is mentioned for the first time a sale of 50 measures of beer by one of them. The amount of wine drunk is significant; the village is a rich one.

The presence of many craftsmen bare witness to an important activity. But this is not the main aspect of life in the village. Life there is mainly based on agriculture and cattle breeding, providing food to the population.

The extended communal ban is composed of three parts: the ploughed land, the meadows and the forest. Each of them has its importance. After the long period of war, they are busily exploited. But they need to be reshaped. On the 10th of November 1658, an order of the authority announces that the communal ban will be "renewed" under a survey of Schultheiss Hans Heinrich Schaeffer, with no more details. In 1662 the ban is re-examined; it contains 511 Acker of fields, and 291.5 Acker of meadows, among them 169 are communal meadows (Allmendwiesen). The well to do burghers own 56 Acker, 47 Acker, 29, 28, 24 and 21 Acker (6). In 1688, under the authority of Schultheiss Hans Jacob Schaeffer, the ban is again renewed, and again once more in 1722.

The revision of the ban depends on the Schultheiss. To establish the land records, he is helped by men known as Merker in 1673 and 1680. These men, numbering eight, receive 1 florin 6 sous. They drive stakes to delineate the fields, the limits of the ban (Scheidtgang) and the communal landed property (Allmendt). In 1682 they walked around the meadows; in 1683 they order the fields to be cleaned (butzen); in 1709 they measure the land and set landmarks.

Documents give little information on agriculture. The many fields are owned either by farmers or by the commune. There is no mention of what is cultivated. The commune has the obligation to furnish the military authorities with oats, hay and straw, and also with green beans and peas.

Cattle breeding is an important matter. The horse, cows and swine herds prove so, as does the communal herd house and stable. The communal bull is often mentioned; when he needs to be cared for or when it is time to acquire another one. The number of head of cattle is not mentioned. According to the communal accounts, the provost and the municipal magistrates wrote down the [number of] cattle (1697, 1698). On this occasion, the shepherds who counted the cattle in the grazing places receive a salary (1699).

The meadows must be well kept and the ditches cleaned out because of the overflows. A specific employee, named the Friese is appointed to the draining. He is in charge of the main ditch, named the Landgraben that needs periodic dredging. In 1683 and 1684 he receives a salary to measure it (abzumessen), to dig it (aufzuwerfen) and to improve it. He does the same for the Stockmattengraben (ditch), and receives payment to create a new ditch (den neuen Graben zu friesen): 83 florins. He plots the new ditches for a payment of 167 florins (1699), and digs a ditch in a place named Ridenberg and receives 122 florins therefore. He surveys the building of bridges such as the one on the way to Rohrwiller, for a salary of 92 florins. Considerable expense is granted by the commune to pay day workers (Tagelöhner) who clean out and repair ditches and drains in the limits of the area.

This amounts to 598 florins in 1700, 463 florins in 1701, and 143 florins in 1715, as mentioned in the communal accounts for the ditches.

These works on the ban have created old and new terms to describe them (Flurnamen): Mittelfeld, Niederfeld (which proves the usage of three course rotation), Bergacker and Imberacker. Then, the many meadows: Niedermatt, Obermatt, Riedmatten, Stockmatt, Schlangenmatt, Neumatte, Schofmatten, Stortzmaten, Rammelshauermatt, Schnepfenmaten, Hattermatt, Pfaffenheckmatten, Federlesmatt, Klossmatten, Dieterswördtmatten, to which can be added the damp places Ecklach, Herzlach, Bubenlach,

or Buchensee, Rote Pfuehl; Sigelgericht means a plot that has been eroded (gereut, gerodet), Geiswöll, or Gysswöll am Landgraben, and Klingen complete this list.

The meadows belong to private persons but mainly to the commune who rents them to get the hay and aftermath and receives important income for those. In the year 1666 for instance, 63 florins from the butchers of Strasbourg (von den Metzgern zu Strasbourg für die Riedmatten).

The third part of the communal ban includes the communal forest, east of the village in the direction of Rountzenheim, in the lower part of the area. It brings to the commune important income through the sale of wood, oaks and beeches, and on the other hand, firewood. In 1700 the sale amounts to 500 florins. In 1702: 881 florins. It climbs to 1500 florins in 1703, but reaches an average amount of 800 to 1100 florins in the beginning of the 17th century. Three foresters look after the forest and receive a salary, and specific pay at the time of hunting. The customers are not mentioned, except one Dutch man in 1685 (vom Hollender für Eichbäume 30 florins: received from the Dutch man for oak trees: 30 florins). Let us note in 1710 the sale of wood to a "wooden shoes maker". The woodcutters work all year long.

The acorn crop (Ecker) was of some importance for the breeding of swine. For this too the commune gets income, but must pay swine herds therefore named "Eckerhirte" or "Eckerknecht". The benefit amount in 1664 for example was over 100 florins, and in 1697 was 325 florins. This acorn harvest takes place in the communal forest, and also in the large forest of Haguenau where specific authorizations are needed.

The yearly labor was broken by one or another day of leisure. Among them we can cite the religious feasts with their processions. On Sundays, one would visit the inns. A number of customs going back earlier than the 17th century authorized a number of amusements. The main day was the village feast named Mestag or Messti. It seems that it was a very noisy feast and the source of many disturbances. On this day, specific people must watch and see to the good order: the Pitel in 1664, the Waechter in 1665, 1666, and 1673, the Messtag huter in year 1674. In 1682, the feast of the consecration of the church (Kirchweih) takes place at the same time as the Messti and lasts three days. In 1698 and 1699 the accounts speak about the guardians of the fairy who receive a salary at the occasion, same in the year 1701. But later, after the war of the Succession in Spain, there is no such inscription left, times were too hard. The custom of the Messti however was renewed later.

Carnival is also a feast. In 1702 the town accounts mention an expense for wine drunk in the commune on carnival's day, but this does not last. On the contrary, the women's carnival (Scheuertag) makes more noise; in 1664 the accounts mention "to the burgher's women for wine on the carnival day, given 3 florins 5 sous" (den burgers weibern uff die Fassnacht zur Neuen wein geben 3 florins 5 sous), in 1665 "to the burgher's women on carnival for meal given 2 florins 6 sous (auf der Fastnacht den burgers weibern zu verzehren geben 2 florins 6 sous), and in 1671 "to the women's carnival day given to spend 4 sous" (am Scheuertag den weiern zum besten geben 4 sous), the same in 1673. In 1681 at Carnival's time "given to the women as from old usage as they made the Heimbürger a prisoner" (die Weiber altem gebrauch nach den Heimbürger gefangen); he has to pay to be set free a sum of 4 florins 9 sous, and in 1689 "given by the Heimbürger to the women on Carnival's day, to spend on meals, 3 florins 8 sous" (der Heimbürger an der Fastnacht den Weibern zu verzehren geben 3 florins 8 sous). After this date, and because of the war period, the custom stops or decreases. The town accounts do not in any way mention them any longer. In 1683 a small note mentions: Ordre gebracht wegen der spilleuth das Dantzen zu verbieten: order is given to the musicians to forbid dancing.

## **The Communal Accounts**

One of the major duties of the Heimbürger was to establish the yearly accounts. These give an idea of the financial situation of the commune from year to year. Written down by the Heimbürger, they are checked by the Schultheiss and the local magistrates in Soufflenheim's local justice court until 1685. Then the control gets more strict. It is made by the superior authority in Haguenau. Present to hear the account are the bailliff, scribe, Schultheiss, and local judges (die Rechnung abzuhören Oberamtmann, Landschreiber, Schultheiss, Gerichtschöffen). Later again and from 1699, the delegate of the Intendant, the royal prosecutor, and the scribe, sometimes in Strasbourg, control the account. All of them get a salary for attendance; the bailliff receives 6 florins, the prosecutor 3 florins, the scribe 1 florin.

The general amounts given by the accounts, income and expenses, for the years 1660 to 1670 are limited, and do not reach 400 florins, but they increase considerably around 1680 (up to 700 florins) as a consequence of the royal taxes raised by the royal authorities. After 1680 a total amount of 1000 florins is reached, and after 1700 it amounts to 2000 to 3000 florins, and on average 2500 livres until 1715 (refer to sketch).

The section on income mentions the sales of wood in the communal forest, the hay and second harvest in the meadows, and the tax on wine sold in the inns (the Umgeld tax).

The expenses consist of work performed on town buildings, repairs to the same after the damage of the Thirty Years War, the salaries and expenses of the Schultheiss, Heimbürger and communal clerks, for the vicar and the religious feasts, and for work performed in the village and on the ban.

Until 1670, the accounts do not mention the expenses for taxes and fees paid to the seigniorial authority (the Prefecture of Haguenau). The royal administration in the financial organization starts in this year.

The first tax raised is the Subvention, a contribution to be paid four times in the year (Quartalgeld) [Quarterly Tax] or quarterly, to the Zinsmeister [receiver] of Haguenau. Added to this are the seigniorial fees going back to the middle Ages, named Bethe (taille or toll), and the harvest toll (Erntebeth). The Schultheiss and the Heimbürger make the trip to Haguenau several times to get information on the subject and receive the necessary instructions.

From 1670, the Quarterly Tax is raised regularly. From 1672 are raised the taxes due for forced labor of those in the village who must go to Philippsbourg to work on the fortifications. The Dutch War breaks out and the financial needs of the King become more pressing. From 1673-1674 the royal contribution reaches 205 florins. The commune faces difficulties in raising this amount and is obliged to borrow 100 florins from the Marzolf brothers and from Daniel Baur. Then the communal accounts disappear for several years.

When they start again in 1680, mention is made of a new extraordinary tax added to the royal contribution called the Foraging Tax, primarily meant for the cavalry. Concerning this new tax, the Schultheiss and Heimbürger go several times to Haguenau and are obliged to accept the conditions fixed by the Amtmann and Landschreiber who also occasionally come to Soufflenheim to instruct criminal cases (frevelhätigung gehalten).

The royal contribution is raised every three months. In 1681 it amounts to 178 florins. In addition to the harvesting toll, the Christmas toll is raised.

From 1685 appears a new seigniorial tax, called the Frohngeld, or tax on forced labor, also raised every three months, and supplemented by the population.



Very hard years follow, as a consequence of the War of the Augsburg League (1688-1697). There are no town accounts from 1686 to 1689. In 1690 the military taxes are heavy: the Winter Garrison Tax (Winterquartiergeld) amounts to 126 florins, and 53 florins must also be paid to the companies settled on the Rhine (von den Gombeneyer am Rhein). Forage must be sent to the fortress of Fort-Louis: 100 florins.

Taxes are always higher. In 1691 the Subvention Tax is 100 florins, the Frongeld Tax (Forced Labour Tax) is 260 florins, and the Christmas Toll and Harvest Toll equal 28 florins. In 1692 another important increase is noted: Foraging is 95 florins, Subvention 261 florins, and the two Bethe taxes are 37 florins.

Interesting to note in 1694: the equivalent of French money is fixed: one florin is 2 French livres: (zu renovation in Französicher valor geliefert 656 livres, thut in hiesiger wehrung 358 florins), [the renovation tax has been discharged here for an amount of 656 livres, which is the equivalent of 358 florins in local money].

The increase in royal contributions [taxes paid to the King] put the communal administration in a very difficult position. In 1685 the commune pays to Walter Weber rent on an amount of 300 florins borrowed since the Dutch War. In 1694 the commune pays to Josel, the Jew, 24 florins and 5 sous interest. In 1695 she reimburses a sum of 48 florins borrowed in Haguenau, and at the same time an installment of 75 florins to the miller, J.P.Meyer, an amount on the sum of 354 principal borrowed to pay the debt (qu'on avait faite lorsqu'il fallait livrer les grains au roi) [made on occasion of payment to deliver the royal corn-harvest], same to Augustin Underkirch, to reimburse a debt of 224 florins.

In 1695, to the existing taxes is now added the Capitation (Kopfgeld), a tax on each head. This amounts to 96 florins in 1695, to 136 florins in 1696, to 145 florins in 1697, and to 515 florins in 1701 and 1702.

The commune also pays the Subvention (also named Schatzung): 420 florins, the Capitation: 136 florins, the Frongeld: 198 florins, the seigniorial fees (beth of Christmas and of Harvest, and on grazing in meadows): 67 florins, then the supplies for the military needs, the foraging, the safeguard, and the militia (1696). All soon exceeding 1000 florins each year. In 1701: a new regulation concerning foraging by royal decree: a tax to pay for the troops in their winter garrisons. Soufflenheim is taxed for 340 livres in the money of France, to be paid in two installments, on the 15th of January and the 1st of March.

The situation gets worse during the war of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), painfully experienced in the North of Alsace in the military and financial fields. The commune has to sell a large amount of wood and of the acorn harvest. She has to get the most out of the rented meadows and gather from the population the necessary payments for taxes. After 1701 the communal accounts mention an average expense of 2500 florins a year.

The weights of war are heavy on the region. The enemy invades Northern Alsace and occupies it for a time, raising important contributions. In spite of this, Soufflenheim also has to pay the royal taxes. This is only possible by borrowing more money and so to also have to pay the rent [interest] on this: in 1705 to Isaac Heysch is paid: 300 florins, to Christian Moser: 177 florins, to Daniel Hug: 400 florins. In the next year she pays 10 florins and then 24 florins to Heysch as rent. In 1709 she pays rent on a capital of 184 florins to Bartholome Querquer, the butcher in Fort-Louis; in 1710, 20 florins for rents to the widow of Martin Bruckert, for a similar capital borrowed, and same to others. In 1709, 143 florins of rents are paid to seven different creditors. These rents continue to run over the years. But the commune is able to balance the budget, with a remainder that could be used the following year. In 1714 the royal taxes and seigniorial fees amount to nearly 2000 florins, to which are added the 440 florins of military supplies and payment for winter garrison of troops.

After peace has come back (Peace of Utrecht, 1710; Peace of Rastatten, 1714) the taxes remain high and will even be increased. From year to year the population of Soufflenheim, mainly lower and middle class peasants, will suffer under the heavy load that the royal government imposes, just as the rest of the country, by the way.

### **The Trials Of Soufflenheim During The Wars Of Louis The XIV**

The Dutch War (1673-1678) does not greatly affect the area of Soufflenheim. However it makes the population feel insecure and generates new financial burdens. In 1672 and 1673 the communal accounts mention that fruit, hay and oats were delivered to the fortress of Philippsbourg, occupied by the French troops. A first group of residents is working there on forced labor (fröhner), then a second group was sent to work in Philippsburg (die andere rott burger nach Philippsburg zu frohn gemüsst), and a third group sometime later, causing an expense of 36 florins.

In 1673 and 1674, the accounts refer that the troops of Marshall Turenne are lodged in the village for two days (die Turenische völkher) causing an expenditure of 15 florins 8 sous. A short time later, the Prince of Condé spends a night with his troops and drinks wine for 15 florins. Several times the French troops go to billet [camp/lodge] in Soufflenheim and this is expensive. The following years, the Imperial troops invade Alsace, but the area of Soufflenheim is not affected, until Marshal Turenne is victorious over the Imperials and Brandeburgers in the battle of Turckheim (January 1675), obliging these armies to cross the Rhine in a hasty retreat. Then the region is occupied by French troops, who in 1677 set the city of Haguenau on fire. After the peace of Nimègue (1678) Alsace is bound more strictly to the Kingdom of France, especially after the annexation of Strasbourg in 1681. The troops are still lodging there, and the headquarters are in Soufflenheim in 1680, causing damage there (als das Hauptquartier zu Sufflenheim gestanden, für das fourage un erlitten schaden empfangen 20 florins) [as the headquarters were in Soufflenheim and needed foraging and caused damage, received: 20 florins].

A new war bursts out between Louis the XIV and the Empire, named the League of Augsburg War (1688-1697) and is a new trial for the village.

From 1690 the communal accounts mention the many obligations due by the village. At first were the military supplies sent to the fortresses of Philippsburg and mainly Fort-Louis, built on order of Louis the XIV, according to the drafts of Vauban. Then the winter garrison of the troops, swallowing the finances of the villages. The Salva Guardia (sauvegarde) [safeguard], the troop to protect the communal goods, spends over 120 florins in a year. Then the expenditure of 30 sacks of oats sent to "Monsieur le General" in Beinheim: over 100 florins worth. Then 27 carriages are driven to Fort Louis for the transportation of goods. A new winter quarter costs 1226 florins; the furnishing to the Rhine companies (zu den Companien am Rhein): 53 florins. The soldiers, the foragers (fouragschirer), commandeered food and plunder the church and houses (die kirch und heiser beraubt).

In 1691 and 1692, to supplement the money necessary for the winter quarters, the creation of a militia by the government is the occasion of new expenditures. The Schultheiss and Heimbürger make the trip to Haguenau concerning the volunteers (frey willigen) and pay the necessary price for the horses and cloths (monture) for these men, allotted among the single men in the village. Again more oats are sent to Fort-Louis, and straw and foraging to Wissembourg.

In the following years the military expenditures remain very high, to pay for the 10 companies on the Rhine, for the soldiers passing by, and for the safeguard (170 florins). For the maintenance of the militia are bought stockings, gloves, jackets, and bags (over 100 florins in year 1695; more than 120 florins in

year 1696; and over 150 florins in year 1697). Supplies in straw and oats to be sent to Fort Louis and Surbourg cost 177 florins. The endless military requirements make the population anxious, as they are obliged to make very important sacrifices.

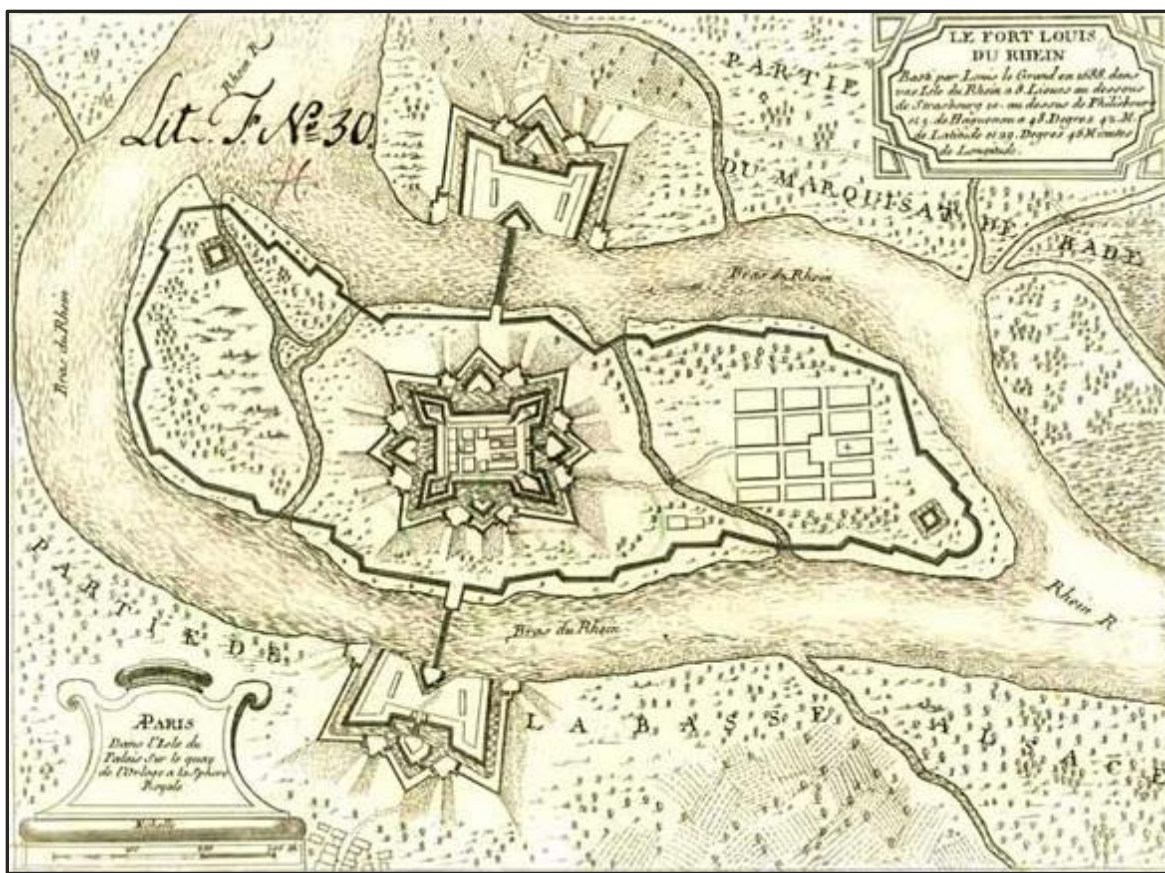
The Treaty of Ryswick [1697] is welcomed with huge relief by the villagers of Northern Alsace. But the peace does not last long. In 1701 the War of the Spanish Succession bursts out. It will lead to a dangerous situation in the region and will be followed by considerable devastation and impoverishment. Soufflenheim is badly touched and undergoes important damage, occupied now and then by the French, the German or enemy, according to the accounts whose report is made regularly to the French authority in Haguenau or in Strasbourg.

In 1702, Prince Louis de Bade takes Wissembourg and Landau, marches up to the Moder River and establishes his headquarters in Bischwiller. Soufflenheim is under the occupation of the allies, and the accounts mention the expenditures for "teutsche parthy" for the German army, providing bread to the Germans of the area and besieging the town of Landau. The commune is required to furnish carriages (196 florins), to pay the German safeguard, (22 florins), and to provide Wissembourg in wine and bread (over 40 florins). In 1703 the same important expenditures were made for the safeguard, the carriages to Landau, bread, oats, wine, a total of 350 florins, whereas the German soldiers eat in the four inns for an amount in meals of 170 florins. More than that, the commune has to pay to the Germans for the prisoners required to work on the entrenchment of Wissembourg (Allemands pour les prisonniers qui doivent travailler aux retranchements de Wissembourg) and for the burghers made prisoners in Lauterbourg (180 florins), for the safeguard of the village: 244 florins. The commune is obliged to pay 300 florins for the freedom of poor prisoners, and to send men to forced labor (fröhner) in Landau (145 florins), and to provide firewood and candles to the Germans in Wissembourg (30 florins). Finally, Marshal Villars beats the Germans back across the Rhine borders.

In 1704 the allies invade Northern Alsace again, and make way to Haguenau, which surrenders. Fort-Louis is besieged. Marshall Villars tries to resist the lines at Haguenau and to prevent the loss of Fort-Louis. In December 1704, Soufflenheim is requested to provide forage and victuals to the Germans (429 florins) In January and February of 1705 they provided large sums, nearly 1200 florins, as well as furnishing wood, meat, oats, wheat. The cost for the Schultheiss who was made a prisoner in Seltz amounted to 30 florins. In these worst periods of 1705, the two bells were sent to Bischwiller for safekeeping.

In 1706 and 1707 the region is relieved by the French and Fort-Louis is disentangled. But for Soufflenheim, expenditures remain important. Safeguard, winter quarters, officers and supplies continue to cost just as much, and these expenses continue in 1707 and 1708. The German danger is avoided in 1708, but war goes on. Soufflenheim is still under occupation of troops. It is only in 1709, a cold and miserable year, that the expenditures start diminishing. But as always (in 1710) the safeguard must be paid as well as the winter quarters. Expenses for candles, salt, butter and meat are required by hussard officers, and reach more than 500 florins, especially to Monsieur de Ferrette, Colonel of the hussard company (170 florins) and his Commander (Capitaine), working on the fortifications (40 florins). In 1711, the military expenditures still remain important and amount to more than 1500 florins.

Is it surprising that in 1707 the commune needs to borrow money? In this year, she borrows 300 florins from Isaac Heysch, 177 florins from Christian Moser, and 400 florins from Daniel Hug, which will need reimbursing in the rents in 1708 and 1709.



Fort Louis in the Early 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

In the following years the situation improves, but still requires major contributions; in 1712 the winter quarters cost 170 florins, and in 1713 cost 347 florins. Moreover, the safeguard requires nearly 350 florins. But "when the army has passed" the expenditures for soldiers are 373 florins. In 1714 the winter quarters need 440 florins. Happily, the treaty's of Utrecht in 1713 and of Rastatt in 1714 put an end to this long war which has exhausted the whole country.

The sacrifices have been very important. Indeed, Soufflenheim had not to grieve over victims, nor undergone destruction's. But the village has suffered from the occupation of enemy troops, requesting all type of supplies, constant forced labor, and much money. And the situation is not better when the French come back. From year to year, the impoverished village had to find important royal taxes. And never was exempted from them! One wonders how the population, with hard farming on fields for subsistence, could suffer all these expenses. The village is much poorer, and the wars of Louis the XIV during the last years of his reign were a considerable trial.

### Religious Life And School

The communal accounts give many indications about religious life, because the commune assumed all expenditures for the church, the priests in charge, and the celebrations. In 1664 lime is bought to repair the bell-tower. Processions take place during the year: Around the ban on the 1st of May; with cross and

banners to Marienthal. Upon their return, the priest and the civil authorities that took part in the celebration, the choir and the banner bearers, take a meal that the commune pays for. The dime is set on auction (1665-1666). This is mentioned as early as 1660. The vicarage needed repairs. A dispute on the subject placed the commune of Soufflenheim in opposition to the dime collectors, who as they collected dime, were in charge of the repairs to religious buildings (7). At this time the dime was granted in part to the vicar, to the church council, and to the noblemen de Huffel and Steincallenfels (8). Later there is no further mention. In the 18th century some precise information will be given. In 1662 the church owned 22 fields (Acker), and the vicarage consisted of a house, a barn and stables.

During the years 1664-1665 Soufflenheim still had no vicar. But the parish life was well organized. The processions are a proof of this. The Jesuit fathers in Haguenau read mass, or sometimes the Capucin fathers did so. In Christmas of 1665 it is interesting to note that a play is organized (probably the play of Nativity), and the young persons who participate are offered a meal (als uf Weihnachten das Spill gehalten, ist von den jungen Gesellen verzehrt 4 sous 3 deniers) [on occasion of the Christmas play has been offered to the young persons a meal paid 4 sous, 3 deniers]. The organization of the Christmas play is typical of the Jesuit religious action.

The same year, the Schultheiss and church bedel (kirchenschaffner) go to Haguenau to meet the father (Rector) to discuss about a vicar for the parish. The town account mentions that the parish is looked after by Jesuits who now ask fees therefore. They also mention that the Capucin fathers eventually read mass. Those too get paid therefore, but finally leave. So a vicar now is installed, and is in charge of religious ceremonies and processions around the ban and to Marienthal. He receives a small payment: 8 florins in 1667 and 15 florins in 1662. For the small dime he receives 15 florins (1666). Other processions lead to the convent of Koenigsbruck, same on St. Wendelin's day, saint patron of shepherds and cattle, already celebrated in old times. In 1668 another play takes place, to honor Saint Joseph, and a meal is offered to the young persons who participated. The veneration of Saint Joseph is more vivid since this period.

In 1669 the remuneration paid to the vicar is fixed at 30 florins. At Christmas he receives a compensation for having made a crib. In 1670 a benediction of cattle is mentioned. On Saint Sebastian's day, the vicar who celebrated a solemn office receives bread and wine. There is also mention of a fund for the sanctuary that holds accounts (heiligen rechnung). At the same time, the commune buys some tiles for the bell-tower.

In 1671, Ascension's Day is celebrated in a brilliant service. Afterwards, the authorities spend 4 florins 5 sous. On St. John's Day, and on All Saints Day the vicar receives wine (for communion and blessing). One more time a play is organized, those who took part receive payment in wine. This is the time after the Thirty Years War, a disaster in religious life. Restoration of Catholicism is very actively pursued by Jesuits and Capucin fathers, and also by the vicars who re-awaken religious life and restore faith with solemn celebrations and many festival days; pilgrimage, processions, even scenic plays of religious character. The yearly processions are regularly cited: the 1st of May, Rogations Day (around the ban), the one leading to Keonigsbruck, the one leading to Schirrhein, the very solemn Corpus Christi day, and the procession or pilgrimage to Marienthal.

In 1680 the religious account (heiligen Rechnung) is presented by the accountant (heiligen Meyer or heiligenpfleger) in charge of the prebende of Our Holy Lady and St. Wendelin funds (unser lieben frawen und sankt Wendelin pfrundt geld). These accounts are receipts and expenditures of the religious accounts. The receipts name the contributions due by the people of Soufflenheim asked to pay this fee: 64 names figure on it, this is the oldest list of the residents paying their share, 1 or 2 florins sometimes, more often 3, 5 or 7, up to 10 sous, or part in wheat. The total receipts amount to 107 florins 4 sous. The expenditure concerns all that has been paid during the past year for the church: services, oil,



incense, candles, eternal lamp, alms, offices on Eastern (ostertauff), Corpus Christi, Whitsun, expenses for wine and for meals that follow these ceremonies, and also emoluments to those who assisted the account reading: the Schultheiss, the bailiff, and the scribe, also the sacristan who creates the figures of the Christmas crib out of baked clay: this is a characteristic of Soufflenheim. This account is rendered on the 11th March 1681 in the presence of the vicar (H. Robert Biehler), of the Schultheiss, and of the new and former church accounter. This last man goes to Haguenau with the Schultheiss to the Chancellery to take an oath. The importance of this prebend is attested by the presence of bailliff and scribe.

In the following years the same processions are still mentioned: to Marienthal, Koenigsbruck, round the ban, and to Schirrhein, whereas people from Schirrhein come in procession to Soufflenheim on Rogations week. Repairs to the bell-tower are necessary. In 1682 a shingle roofer works for 105 florins on the bell-tower. In the graveyard is a large crucifix which needs new paint. In 1682 the Capucins fathers give their blessing to the cattle, a very common custom in Alsace. A new vicar comes in 1683. His name is not known.

In 1685 the commune pays for a new chasuble. To brilliantly celebrate Corpus Christi Day, powder is bought for gun shots, a custom still in use to this day in some places. A small bell is bought, and the Heimburger goes to Seltz to purchase it. Some more chasubles are bought and new banners, especially a red one, because in this year the general vicar of the bishopric came to visit the parish.

In 1690 the parish welcomes a new vicar. The processions go on as usual, one of them to Roeschwoog. The church needs repairs; tiles are bought in 1693 for the roof, and in 1698 tiles, boards and stained glass windows. The vicar receives 30 florins a year. Later, he will receive 60.

In 1700 the pulpit is repaired by a joiner from Beinheim for 43 florins. Other repairs are necessary. The authorities know this, but the war means that the repairs cannot be made. In 1714 soldiers, and even officers, take part in the repairs of the church and receive 30 florins for their time. Other persons also work on it and receive 39 florins. The stained glass windows are also repaired, and a bell is bought (295 florins); 108 florins are spent for the clock and for its solemn blessing.

In these times of wars and crisis, there is no more mention of Christmas plays nor of a crib.

## **School Life**

In the first communal accounts, the schoolmaster (schulmeister) is already mentioned. In 1665-1666 the former schoolmaster is dismissed and replaced by a new master agreed to by both the Schultheiss and the Heimburger. So proving that the school existed for some years before this. The salary of the new schoolteacher is partly in money; 8 florins, and partly in agricultural goods; 4 sacks of wheat and 3 measures, which later is just paid in money. This schoolmaster stays for twenty years, his name is not given.

In 1683 the accounts mention a new schoolmaster. In 1693 they mention the same schoolteacher. From 1699 he is named as in French, "Mestre d'école". He teaches in a house that the commune has designated for this purpose and called a school house (Schulhaus). Nothing is known on what is taught, nor on the number of pupils. We know just that he teaches students to read, write, count and sing.

In 1701 he receives a salary of 14 florins and 6 measures of wheat or 30 florins value. In 1702 the cost of repairs to the school house amount to 130 florins. Each year his salary is mentioned, money and cereals. He is also in charge of the clock.

The schoolmasters stay for years and it is very interesting to note that just after the Thirty Years War, Soufflenheim already had a schoolmaster and kept him without interruption until the last years of the 17th century. So we may well assume that the village already had a school in the beginning of the century, and even in the 16th century.

### The Potters

Potters are mentioned just a few times in the 17th century. In 1682, the Court of Justice of Alsace, the highest justice court of the country, confirmed a regulation for potters established between Strasbourg and Basel, repeating the dispositions that had been taken by Emperor Ferdinand the Second in the year 1622 in this regard. But we do not know from any document whether the potters of Soufflenheim were subject to the same regulations.



Potters Oven (16<sup>th</sup> Century)

After the Thirty Years War, in the second half of the 17th century (9) the profession revived again. In 1689 nine potters pay 30 sous each to extract potter's clay (10). After the troubled times and disturbances, they believed they could be rid of this tax. A big mistake on their part, as from 1696 to 1701, they were arrested for having taken potter's clay without paying the proper tax. At each time, nine potters are mentioned. So that just nine of them lived at this time in Soufflenheim. With the outburst of the Spanish Succession war and the new troubled times, there is no more questioning of this tax.

The communal accounts do not speak much about the potters and their craft. In 1684 there is a mention of cups and pots paid by an officer (H. Leydenand), same in year 1685. An important part of this activity is concerned with figuring flagstones for stoves, and making them. In 1698 for instance, a potter is paid 2 florins 5 sous for flagstones on a stove in the Laube. In 1714 the same thing; a potter receives 4 florins for the building of another stove.

## Notes: Page 82

- 1) Voir: R. REUSS, l'Alsace au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, Paris 1896, et récemment: G. LIVET, l'intendance d'Alsace sous Louis XIV, 1648-1715, Paris 1956.
- 2) Archives Départementales du Bas-Rhin, 1 E 62 (ancien Notariat de Hageunau), une grosse liasse, Comptes communaux de Soufflenheim, année par année à partir de 1666; quelques années manquent. Toutes les indications du texte sont tirées de ces comptes très détaillés. Les comptes sont faits en florins (Gulden), en sous (Schilling) et en deniers (Pfenning), abrégés : fl. S., d. (le florin vaut 20 s., le sou 12 d., 1 florin = 240 d.). Pendant toute l'époque française jusqu'à la Révolution, on calcule en fl. et non en livres françaises.
- 3) A. KOCHER, Das Uffreidt, Strasbourg 1911, pp. 50-53, Geschichte des Dorfes Sufflenheim ; pp. 54-57, Geschichte der Pfarrei Sufflenheim.
- 4) M. BARTH, Visitationsberichte des Bistums vom Jahre 1660, p. 1527, Archiv für elsässische Kirchengeschichte 1943, p. 223 et suivantes.
- 5) AD B-Rh., A1 E 62, n° 15.
- 6) KOCHER, P. 51.
- 7) AD B-Rh., g. 1923, n° 4.
- 8) GRANDIDIER, Oeuvres inédites, Tome VI, p. 379.
- 9) Töpferei im Elsass (Lutz Röhrich und Gertraud Meinel), Bühl 1975, pp. 54 et 57. A.M. BURG, "Les Potiers de terre de Haguenau du XIII<sup>e</sup> au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle" dans : Artisans et Ouvriers d'Alsace, Strasbourg, 1965, p. 79 et suivantes.
- 10) A.M. RAG, AA 230, n° 3, "Mémoires des droits annexes à la Préfecture royale de Haguenau et de ce qu'ils se sont montés l'année 1688", fol. 2 verso : "le droit des fosses de Soufflenheim est un droit qui se paye par les potiers de terre pour avoir la permission d'y prendre de la terre à raison de trente sols pour chaque potier par an".

## APPENDICES: Page 83

- 1) List of Schultheiss and Heimbürgers: 1664-1715.

**Schultheiss:**

- 1664-1667 : Hans Heinrich Schafer (or Schaffer)
- 1668-1671 : Lorenz Schafer
- 1672-1679 : ?
- 1680-1685 : Jacob Schafer
- 1686-1689 : ?
- 1690-1699 : Hans Jacob Schafer
- 1700-1715 : Adam Sceffer (or Schaffler)

**Heimbürger, Bürgermeister:**

- 1663 : Georg Irr et Hans Bandel, (Gewesen Heimbürger im anno 1663 jahr)
- 1664 : Hans Artz et Claus Trager
- 1665 : Hans Kieffer et Hans Artz
- 1666 : Jacob Wagner et Joseph Burckhart
- 1667 : Hans Hortel et Jacob May
- 1668 : Theobald Irr et Hans Jacob Schaffer
- 1669 : Hans Metz et Paul Breckhinger
- 1670 : Veltin Ulrich et Hans Kier
- 1672 : Jacob Bergner, heimbürger (a partir de ce moment un seul heimbürger).
- 1673 : Jacob Wagner
- 1674 : Jacob Wagner
- 1675-1679 : ?
- 1680 : Martin Kir
- 1681 : Simon Ulrich
- 1682 : Diebold Entz
- 1683 : Johann Voegelin
- 1684 : Martin Wagner
- 1685 : Andreas Goetz
- 1686-1689 : ?
- 1690 : Peter Dobler, Bürgermeister
- 1691 : Andreas Mosser
- 1692 : Simon Ulrich, Heimbürger
- 1693 : Johann Lohr, Bürgermeister
- 1694 : Peter Obermeyer
- 1695 : Adam Hertel
- 1696 : Lorentz Zensenbrenner
- 1697 : Mickael Kiehlhofner, Heimbürger
- 1698 (\*) : Augustin Underkirch, Bürgermeister
- 1699 : Hans Peter Dobler
- 1700 : Jean-Pierre Dobler
- 1701 : Urban Foeg
- 1702 : Hans Wagner

- 1703 : Michel Kielhofner
- 1704 : Hans Bernart Hattler
- 1705 : Adam May
- 1706 : Hans Bernard Hottler
- 1707 : Joseph Burgert
- 1708 : Jacob Becker
- 1709 : Jean Weeber (Weber)
- 1710 : Wendlin Gotz
- 1711 : Jacob Zetvogel
- 1712 : Georg Scherrer
- 1713 : Michel Burger (Burgert)
- 1714 : Thomas Kieffer
- 1715 : Simon Osterreicher

(\*) a partir de cette date, toujours: “bürgermeister”.

## 2) Town Accounts: 1664-1715

Year	Income: Gulden (Florin)	Expense: Gulden (Florin)
1664	201	269
1665	184	148
1666	242	243
1667	400	264
1668	398	365
1669	353	365
1670	271	?
1671	372	224
1672	?	?
1673	?	?
1674	252	?
1675-1679	?	?
1680	204	201
1681	162	178
1682	399	367
1683	770	482
1684	620	452
1685	379	364
1686-1689	?	?
1690	1401	1446 (*)
1691	1010	914
1692	882	830
1693	986	1005
1694	1925 (**)	1934



1695	1251	1208
1696	1127	1124
1697	1870	1779
1698	1102	992
1699	1214	1257
1700	1822	598
1701	2975	3055 (***)
1702	2353	2645
1703	2654	2683
1704	985	1022
1705	4871 (***)	5128 (***)
1706	1262	1516
1707	2955	2800
1708	3068	2926
1709	2706	2509
1710	2059	1888
1711	2582	2515
1712	2429	2422
1713	2685	2654
1714	3428	3345
1715	2414	2017

(\*) Considerable increase

(\*\*) "French value 645, local money (value) 358" : that is roughly the double of a Livre (pound).

(\*\*\*) Strong Increase

Note: Accounts drawn up and examined either at Soufflenheim or at Haguenau, before the subdelegate of the Intendant, the bailiff prosecutor of the King, by the provost (Schultheiss), the bourguemestres, the clerks and assessors of the tribunal (members of the justice). Accounts are made in Gulden (florins), Schilling (sous), and Pfennige (deniers).

## SOUFFLENHEIM IN THE 18TH CENTURY

### Chapter 4

#### Contents

- Anxiousness and Military Concerns
- The Commune, Its Administration

- The Population
- Economic Life
- Financial Situation of the Commune
- The Potters
- Religious Life in the 18th Century
- Schultheiss (prévôts) and Bürgermeisters 1716-1789

ALSACE became French in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Soufflenheim knew a period of development due to a long period of peace (1). This period was interrupted only once, by the War of Succession of Austria, and this was just a short intermediary period which caused quickly healed injuries.

Life in the village was spent peacefully. The place grew, population increased, however the village suffered the heavy financial charges imposed by the royal government, which caused everywhere an increasing feeling of discontent and finally ended up in the French Revolution in 1789.

### **Anxiousness and Military Concerns**

After the War of Succession of Spain, France keeps a strong military organization. The establishment of a militia and the costs derived of it are a frequent preoccupation to the authorities of Soufflenheim. In year 1718, the mayor (Schultheiss) must make the trip to Haguenau to receive the orders of the bailiff on the subject. The following year, the military conscription obliges the young men to make the trip to Haguenau (die jungen wegen der Militen). The commune has to find the money for cost of bags (schnappsäcke) and for meat, the provost (Schultheiss) makes the way with them to Strasbourg ; the cost amounts to 75 Gulden (florins).

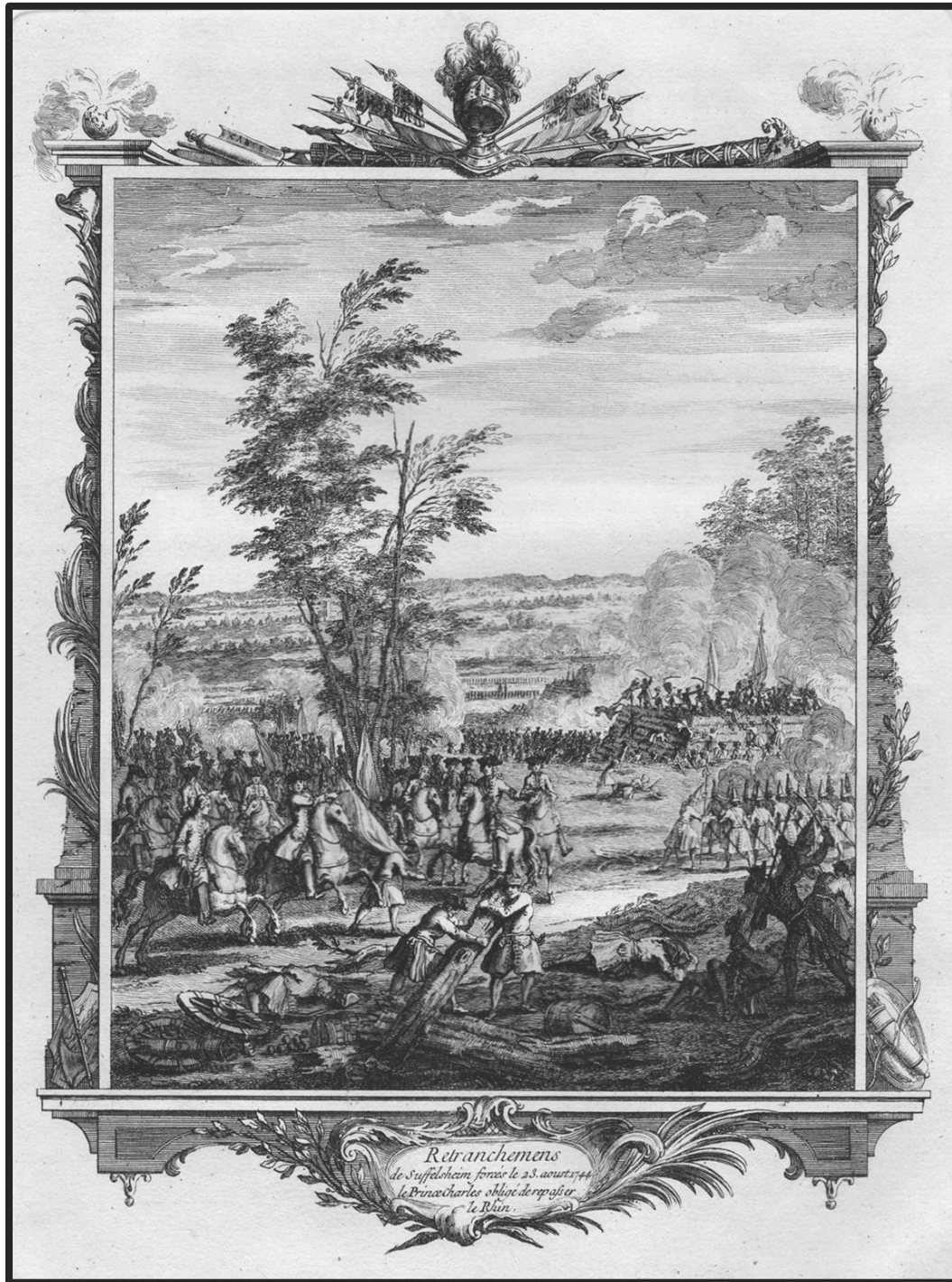
In the following years, the question of military conscription is constantly evocated along with the equipment of the members of the militia who received a yearly salary paid by the commune. In year 1733, they receive 84 Gulden (florins) for 3 years. Several times are noted the expense due to young men who were "obliged to play the part of militiamen" (haben miligen spielen müssen).

Are also found in accounts the expenses for furniture of fences, and straw for the royal store, then of fodder, same as it occurred in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, which occasioned important costs. So in year 1735, Seligmann the Jew pays 300 florins in the account of repartition of fodder due by the commune. In year 1736 the expense is of 178 florins.

The forced labor due to the army comes back when the War of Succession of Austria bursts out (1741 - 1748) during which war France is allied to Prussia against Austria and the German Empire. From the beginning of the hostilities, those in Soufflenheim who own draught-cattle owe forced labor. Carters (fuhrleute) of the village are called to join the French army in Bavaria. The commune gives money to them. In year 1743, fodder is driven to Lauterbourg and straw to the royal store in Haguenau. The burghers also owe forced labor to the army (zur armee frohnend gemusst).

The French army is obliged to retire from South Germany. In July 1744, an army of 60,000 Austrians, under command of Prince Charles of Lorraine crosses the Rhine and invades Northern Alsace. Lauterbourg and Wissembourg are caught. The Hungarian cavaliers, named Pandours, or Red Coats (Rotmäntel) invade the country and mishandle the Alsace country. Soufflenheim is not spared. According

to the local accounts, the Austrians (österreich Völker) occupy the locality which is obliged to furnish them with bread and wine.



The entrenchments of Soufflenheim forced the 23 August 1744. Prince Charles obliged to retreat across the Rhine River. Courtesy of Marc Elchinger.

The military safeguard (Salve garde, dass sie hiesiges Dorf beschützen sollen) protection of the village, costs 80 Gulden, the furnishing of troops are continuously asked for. The fortress of Fort Louis is besieged. Prince Charles establishes his general-quarter in Haguenau. His troops take by assault the town of Saverne and plunder the region of Kochersberg. Burghers in Soufflenheim are submitted to forced labor, and loose five horses. The exactions are frequent. A man gives money to two hussards soldiers who threatened to set the vicarage on fire. The war contribution exacted of Soufflenheim is delivered to the general-quarter in Wingersheim ; it amounts to 1436 Gulden, besides other contributions in money, bread, corn or forced labor cost another 250 gulden.

During more than ten weeks, the Austrians stay in the region and live off of it, responsible for plundering and taking by force the preserves of the community.

Finally, the French troops, under command of Maréchal de Noailles, arrive and chase the Austrian out of Saverne (13-15 August), then make their way to the Rhine. De Noailles drives the enemies out of Bischwiller and reaches Schirrhein. He is stopped in front of Soufflenheim, near the road to Schirrhein. On Sunday 23 August, the French army starts the offensive and takes by force, after a hard fight, the entrenchments of the enemy. The Austrians loose more than 2000 men, and leave Soufflenheim, they set Auenheim on fire. At night fall, the French army is near Roeschwoog. A second fight is engaged in the dark and disorder, the French infantrymen restore the situation, and the Austrians loose over 1200 men more (2).

On the 26 August, the French army arrives in front of Fort Louis, the Austrians raise the siege hastily and drive back through Beinheim and Seltz over the Rhine.

Alsace is freed again. Young King Louis XV, who had fallen very sick in Metz, is sound again and is welcomed in Strasbourg with large festivities. Several days long, the costly festivities go on. The villages of northern Alsace, who had suffered a lot : Roeschwoog, Rountzenheim, Auenheim, Soufflenheim, heal their wounds with their limited means. The memory of Pandours will stay for long in minds. The derived names of Pandurenkopf, Pandurenfeld, Pandurenhügel bear witness of the events.

In year 1745, Soufflenheim has to furnish fodder again and spends over 520 gulden for military needs. French troops occupy the village and cost over 168 gulden. But after 1747 the war concerns disappear. In the following decades, the military expense is no longer accounted for.

Each year however, the community has to arm itself and pay for a militiaman, then for two, their yearly salary is of 36 gulden. In year 1766 for instance, the allotment of militia, which takes places in Haguenau, names two young men for whom at time of allotment bread and wine is paid for. In year 1767 the bill presented by the inn landlord in Haguenau amounts to 8 gulden (für die Knaben als sie allda militzen gespielt). These young men are controlled as to their health for instance in years 1768, 1776. A cocarde is bought for them (den zwei Militzen Coquarden gekauft, 1769, 1776). The number of militiamen increases ; they are 6 in 1786 and 1787 ; they stay in the militia for six years.

In the last years before the Revolution, the town accounts still indicate that the commune has furnished the royal artillery with wood ; 942 gulden in 1776, 283 gulden 1789 (Artillerie holz). In other years, the community furnishes the fortress of Fort-Louis with "Faschinen" (fascines) : 1,065 gulden 1780 and 530 gulden in 1783.

## **The Commune, Its Administration**

The representatives of the royal authority seldom come to visit or inspect Soufflenheim. The local chiefs receive their orders from the sub delegate of the Intendant or bailiff, often from Haguenau, sometimes from Strasbourg. Ceremonies are rare. In year 1753, the local authorities welcome the new Intendant de Lucé on eight horses, in Kriegsheim and in Haguenau, and spend 16 gulden for food. When Louis XV dies in year 1774, the schoolmaster is requested to ring the bells during six weeks. When Louis XVI is crowned, a bonfire is lit in Soufflenheim (Freudenfeuer) and all burghers received bread and wine (148 gulden). At time of birth of the Dauphin in 1781, poor children receive presents (39 gulden).

The local authorities are the same as previously (see list later). They are in charge of administration of the village according to old regulations. In year 1769, the printer Hädrich in Haguenau is asked to print four exemplars of these (die alte Dorfordnung und gerechtigkeit) ; these alas have not been found again.

At the head of the commune is always the Schultheiss or provost, named for an undetermined time by the royal administration. The Heimbürger is now named Bürgermeister, and is named for one year by allotment, sometimes the Bürgermeister stays in his functions for two years. He has the same attributions as previously. Both men are assisted by the justice members of the law court (Gerichtsschöffen) in number of five or six. These two care for local communal concerns and form this way a kind of town council ; proof of their presence : is the yearly account held by the Bürgermeister where they sign down the report. An accounter (Rechner) is in charge specifically of financial administration and writes down a large part of the communal accounts. The Schultheiss has to present his oath in front of his superior authority or bailiff (Amtmann, Oberamtman). The members of the justice court are allotted, same as the Bürgermeister, on the yearly reunion day of the burghers, day named "offenene Tag". In year 1717, on this occasion, Schultheiss, members of the justice, servants and other burghers eat for 18 gulden "according to usage", 4 measures (Ohmen) and a half wine, and this goes on in years 1720 and the following years. The expenditure amounts to 80 and 97 gulden (1735). This reunion day takes place on Carnival day (an fastnacht nach gewonheit) (1741). After 1760 however, this "offener Tag" is no longer mentioned in the communal accounts. Has this expenditure been suppressed as it increased too much? The lists of Bürgermeister and members of the justice are complete until year 1789.

The local authorities get paid for ; the Schultheiss receives 4 gulden a year, the Burgermeister 2 gulden. They receive compensations for their trips (Ritt und gäng) named "Zehrkosten". In year 1716 for example, Schultheiss, Bürgermeister and members of the justice spend 39 gulden for communal matters (gemeine Geschäfte). In year 1746, for errands and canvassing.

The Schultheiss receives 69 gulden, the accounter 62 gulden ; in year 1753, for their work and services (für getane Arbeit und geleistete Dienste) 36 gulden. In year 1768 the cost of trips "Ritt und Gäng" of the Schultheiss the expense amounts to 55 gulden. In year 1773, the five justice members of the local court of justice receive each 10 or 12 gulden. The total expense for the authorities is of 110 gulden in year 1782, and of 218 gulden in year 1786.

Close to the authorities, as from old, are found several agents. Three tax collectors gather taxes and rentals (Schatzungsleger). The sergeant or policeman (Wächter) is responsible of public order in the watcher's house (Wachthaus), which has been repaired on several occasions, and receives 39 gulden for yearly retribution. He blows a horn to deliver his message (Wachthorn). He is not to be confounded with the two night watchers, who together announce the hours (Stundenrufer) and care for the light in the watchers' house all year long and are paid 36 gulden yearly. The necessary errands are assured by a beadle (Dorfbote) who receives 22 gulden in year 1768 for his yearly retributions, 25 gulden in year 1771 and in year 1781. The ban surveyors look over the exterior ban or outskirts. Three forest guards look over the forest, and are at disposal of a master forester (Waldmeister) who receives 25 gulden in the year. Sheperds, cowboys, and pig shepherds are hired each year. A judge of wines (Weinsticher) collects the



Umgeld or tax on wines sold in inns. A surveyor of water, named Friese, inspects running water and ditches. He cares for their cleaning (die Gräben putzen) for there is a continuous risk of overflow. Canal locks are surveyed by a "Schliessenmeister". The midwife receives 4 gulden yearly. The commune sets a clyster at her disposal (clistierspritz zu der gemeind nutz, 1771 ; für eine neue Clisterierspritz 2 florins : town clyster, to buy a new clyster 2 gulden in year 1779 ). She is called for a number of medical cares. A chimney sweeper named J. Fagetto, of Italian or Savoy origin, comes to work every year. There is a mention made of a postmaster (Postmeister) who gets a tax named Vingtième from the commune (1754).

## **Exhibit : Page 95**

### Accounts Receipts In Year 1764 [Partial List]:

- Same to Anton Götz carter for work done : 9.43
- Same to Lorentz Jäck the barreler for barrels and cleaning with water those and amending them : 9.44
- Same to Andres Ertz for cereals : 9.45
- Same to Andres Blecher from Haguenau for a new pair of scales : 9.46
- Same to Georg Ehinger for sale of house : Receipt 47
- Same to Mr. Geither the mason in Haguenau for work on the choir of the church [end of page]

The common town buildings (gemeine häuser) are under survey of the authorities. They often need repairs. The common town accounts write down the expenses ; so in year 1766, the town hall or city hall (Gemeindehaus, Rathaus) has to be whitewashed, in year 1768 the slater makes repairs to the bow window (Ecker im Gemeindehaus). Many repairs concern the "Laube" with its arched gates and the shepherds' house. Sometimes it concerns doors and windows, other times ovens to be installed or amended. So that masons, joiners, carpenters, locksmiths, glaziers, are constantly at work. The constant concern is the town clock. A clocksmen is often called to repair (in year 1738 the cost is 124 gulden). Later the schoolteacher is responsible for this task. The church too, a very old building, needs repairs. For the roofs, shingles are used (Schindeln). For instance in year 1729, 9,000 shingles are necessary for the town stable, in year 1739 for the town hall. Tiles and bricks are also furnished to repair in year 1731 for instance the building named "gemeine Laube".

The bridges need a constant up keeping. The carpenters often proceed to repairs, or to new constructions. In year 1731 for instance the repairs amount to 115 gulden. In year 1733 there is question of a new bridge. In year 1752 work "an der gemein Burcken und Stegen" to bridges is as expensive as 58 gulden. After overflows; in year 1758, new works are necessary ; a stone cutter from Lobsann delivers the necessary stones for 45 gulden. In year 1764 the bridge in the village has to be consolidated (Brücke im Dorf zu machen von vier Zimmerleuten) and four carpenters work on it for an expense of 43 gulden. In the ban are found bridges and foot-bridges (Stege) ; foot bridge over the Brumbach, Mühlsteg (towards the mill) are repaired in year 1759 (neue Brücke über den Mühlbach). Besides this, the commune is forced to contribute to the construction of the bridge in Drusenheim (gelieferte Königsbäume zur Aufrichtung der Brücke) ; they deliver wood for 358 gulden. Other type of work is necessary, in year 1761 for a town well (gemeine Brunnen) and its lip (Brunnentrog). Another obligation of the commune is to avoid the risks of fire, so in year 1768 a new fire engine or pump is bought (eine neue Feuerspeitz) for 190 gulden, and the next year new grease to lubricate it is bought (Fischtran und Schmalz die Feuerspritz zu schmieren).

## **The Population**

In the beginning of the 18th century, the population of Soufflenheim is estimated to about 500 people, according to Capitation list held in 1695. The following decades other elements are given: in year 1722 at time of renovation of ban, 189 houses are counted which makes the amount of population reach 800 or 900 souls.

Are mentioned:

- In year 1761: 155 burghers
- In year 1762: 163 burghers
- In year 1763: 178 burghers
- In year 1771: 191 burghers and 18 protected citizens (manants Hintersass)
- In year 1772: 217 burghers and 5 protected citizens (Hintersass)
- In year 1776: 239 burghers

So, an increase of number of burghers is remarked. According to these numbers, the population in the village being in 1761 of about 700 people, reaches twelve years later in 1772 to 1000 people, and in year 1776 about 1200 people.

During the century, many new burghers are admitted to bourgeois (Neubürger, junge Bürger) who pay each a tax of 4 gulden for admittance. In year 1723 the community receives 159 gulden for new burghers (von den jungen burgern an Bürgergeld eingezogen), so 40 persons admitted (for several years probably). In year 1738 too ; young or new burghers pay 120 gulden so about 30 persons admitted ; in year 1745, 103 gulden received for 25 new burghers. In twenty years, from 1723 to 1745, so, around 55 new burghers are received, probably young men. In the following decades, until 1765, new admissions are mentioned again, 58-60. Of 1765 to 1768, an amount each year to 11 or 13 admissions, so a total of 48 in four years. In 1780 again is received 130 gulden for admissions of young men, and in year 1789 their number is of 56 (38 new burghers, 18 foreigners). So that in the end of the century, the number of people is largely over 1000 persons. And actually the first census in year 1800 indicates a total of 1547 people (3).

## **Economic Life**

In the course of the XV11th century, economic life is very lively. It concerns mainly farming work in the fields.

The ban is composed of the three parts mentioned earlier. The attention of the authorities is permanently present. In year 1719 the Schultheiss, the Heimbürger and the assessors of the local justice court inspect the ban, renew the limits to Drusenheim and look for the disappeared boundary-stones. One more visit takes place in year 1745. Several times, the authorities drove piles in the meadows of Ried and boundary-stones, furnished by the stone cutters of Goersdorf and Lobsann, are placed (1725, 1736, 1758, 1776).

On some occasions, visits of the ban are necessary. So in year 1740 three experts and the Schultheiss note the damage caused by the overflows. A new expertise takes place in year 1758 after an important overflow which has destroyed the bridge so that cattle cannot go into the commune pasture and has to be led to the forest. Two requests are made to the Intendant concerning these large overflows. In year 1770 new damage of water caused poverty and misery (allzugrosse armuth und notdurft) during two years. In

year 1784 again, bad weather and overflows make a visit of ban necessary. Another indication given is the order to get the high snow out of the roads.

Several times the roads and their construction are the concern of the local authorities. In year 1743 a new road has been traced in the middle of the fields. Those who lost fields will receive a compensation (132 gulden expense).

At the same time, the government creates a number of new roads, the commune has to participate, from Surbourg to Seltz, to the new construction of the named "Landstrasse" and carries stones to the place (1749). In year 1751 again, the commune takes part to the expense for a new royal road "neue königliche Landstrasse" between Mertzwiller and Gundershoffen. In year 1777, the commune delivers stones for the road to Bitche and the one from Herrlisheim to Gambsheim ; these stones cost 420 gulden (1786) to the commune and 288 gulden for the up keeping of roads.

On other occasions, there is a need of helping the up keeping and repairs to ditches on the Rhine, in 1725 in Drusenheim (58 gulden) in years 1780 and 1781 in Sessenheim (159 gulden). Forced labor is necessary, and furniture of beams to Fort-Louis (1845 gulden and 150 supplementary). On another occasion, the commune has to build a ditch over the meadows (neue Werbüber die gemeinen Matten) realized with help of forced labor of burghers.

Agriculture and stock rearing feed the population. Concerning agriculture, the town accounts give very few indications, except in years 1730 and 1731 (and only for these two years!) when it is a question of hops' culture which, for the first year provides an income of 5 gulden, 6 sous, and for the second years 10 gulden. As in the past, people grow corn, oats and vegetable, but we would like to know if they also grow potatoes and when these make their first appearance.

Concerning meadows and grazing places, documents give more information. The wet region of Ried, often over flooded, needs specific works. An agent that we named before, the Friese, is in charge of caring and cleaning the rivers and ditches, or to dig new ones, to let the water evacuate. In year 1717, he orders works in the "Landgraben" for an expense of 57 gulden. The cleaning of ditches is made nearly each year. In year 1720, the burghers dig the Obermattbach, in year 1723 the Friese orders the cleaning of the "gemein ditches" so the communal ditches (27 gulden). In year 1777 the Obermattbach is cleaned again. Works to ditches and rivers are made by burghers who accomplish their forced labor (1736 : Gräben und Bäche fronweiss von der Bürgerschaft gesäubertà). They receive for this some wine ; this year they get 9 measures of wine (Ohmen) which costs 30 gulden.

Stock rearing is important. The communal flock is composed of cattle and pigs, shepherds care for them. When in year 1703 there is a fear of epizootie (cattle disease) masses are celebrated in Marienthal. A Franciscan monk is charged to help by his prayers to chase the evil. The flock is driven into the communal grazing place, but also to the communal forest and royal forest (forest of Haguenau) to feed the pigs and pasture of cattle, in summer time (Sommerwald) and in winter (Winterweidà. Each time, the permission asked for to the royal authority is paid for "Sommer und Winterwaldstrich im Forst" : 18 gulden in year 1751, "Sommerweid" for 26 gulden in year 1752, for cattle (Rindvieh an Weidgel gezahlt) for 35 gulden (1753) ; overflows obliges the peasants to lead their cattle to graze in the forest (forst) (als man im Bann nicht weiden können wegen überschwemmung, die Erlaubniss mit dem Vieh in den Forst fahren zu dürfen, den Beamten der Maitrise bezahlt 18 florins, 1758). During the "Winterweid" the grazing costs 55 florins, in year 1765, 42 gulden in year 1763, all cattle concerned (cows, oxen, pigs) included in "Vieh in den königlichen Forst auf die Weid zu treiben" in 1771, to drive cattle into the royal forest to graze "and also in the communal forest. Concerning pigs, the tax is yearly, in the royal forest or into the communal

forest. These indications prove that stock rearing was conducted differently in the following century. Flocks did not stay in stables, but were driven in a herd into the ban to graze, in winter too.

Sheperds must mark their cattle (burn) so that they can recognize each piece and find again more easily if lost, same for pigs, also marked two times in the year. Cowboys also shorten the horns of flock (stutzen) to avoid accidents (indications précised in year 1766 until 1781). From 1785, a few Jewish families have settled in Soufflenheim. They pay a specific tax for grazing (Weidgeld) of flock equal to 4 gulden 5 pfennigs. The authorities take good care of meadows, in year 1768 they hire a man for 34 gulden salary, to destroy moles in large numbers.

The communal meadows extend largely and are profitable. Each year they are set on auction for aftermath that burghers and strangers can acquire. From 1720, this income is equal to 150 up to 250 gulden, and from 1730 amount to 500 gulden, after 1760 : 800 and up to 1000 gulden, in year 1786 and 1787 it reaches to more than 2000 gulden. But some were bad years. In 1765 for instance, the commune could have no aftermath because of a dry summer (die Gemeind keine Heut und Ohm gemacht wegen der allzugrossen Dürre). On other years on the contrary, the ban suffers of overflows.

The communal forest is important and provides meaningful income to the commune, with timber and firewood. The forest is administered by a "forest master" (Waldmeister) and three forest guards. The royal Maîtrise surveys them from Haguenau (founded in 1695). Salaries and indemnities amount to 84 gulden in year 1739 for forest guards, and for the Inspector sent by the Maîtrise (Mastership). In year 1788, the inspector receives 20 gulden for his yearly inspection (dem Waldinspektor für seine jährliche Inspektionsgebühr). In year 1785, the bailiff perceives 23 gulden to inspect the communal forests (gehaltene Mühewaltung die gemeine Waldungen zu besichtigen).

In year 1752, four days long, the cadastral survey of the forest is established by the inspector, the land surveyor and the local authorities (Abmessung des gemeinem Waldes durc Inspektor, feldmesseur, gerichtsteute und Schultheiss) for an expense of 39 gulden. A map of the forest is drawn and costs 206 gulden (gemein Wald abzumessen und Plan darüber verfertigen zu lassen. This expense is covered by a sale of wood authorized by the Intendant, which brings a sum of 345 gulden. From 1784 and 1788 the forest accounts are held separately (Waldrechnungen).

Each year, the forest supplies important income to the commune, which progresses regularly. In year 1717 the income reaches 265 gulden, in 1718 there is mention of people from Holland who buy lumber (Von dem hollenderholtz erhalten 76 gulden). Income is from 200 to 300 gulden each year until 1735 ; it reaches 589 gulden in year 1736, 596 gulden in 1745, 864 gulden in year 1748, 786 in years 1760 and 1037 in year 1762. The commune decides on cuttings (Kuppenholz) and each time the authorization of the Intendant is given. This allows to pay the royal taxes (zur Bestreigung der königliche Auflagen, Zur Gelder"). These cuttings bring 2500 gulden receipt, and reach 4900 gulden in years 1773 and 1783. Exceptional cuttings take place to allow construction of the church and to acquire the organ (1765, 1770).

To be noted is the plague of wolves. The town accounts mention the gifts paid to hunters each time that one or several wolves are killed in the commune forest (1716, 1747, 1748, 1751). Sometimes wolves are many : in year 1749, 3 young wolves and 5 elderly are killed : in year 1752, 8 wolves ; in year 1754, 8 young. In year 1750 a man is specifically in charge of protecting the flocks "against wolves "wegen Wöfen". In year 1751 again, a young wolf is killed in the commune forest whereas in the "Forst" of Haguenau, forest guards are in charge on their side, to hunt wolves.

As in preceding decades, craftsmen are at work. The commune accounts quote many of them, each time they work for the commune and get paid for this. Are mentioned : masons, carpenters, tilers, joiners,

black smiths asked to repair the commune buildings. They also build many houses for the local population. These are generally built with a material named pisé or cob wall, with half timbered façade. To be noted also that for important or special works, such as on the town hall or church, exterior craftsmen are called. The four inns sell 400 to 500 measures of wine (or 200 to 250 hl) each year. The pottery activity is very lively.

The commune accounts give some indications on the sanitary situation. As usual, a midwife takes care of births. She also cares for ill people, in year 1749 she buys medicine for 4 gulden 8 pfennigs, in 1748 for 8 gulden 5 pfennigs. In year 1749 the midwife in Haguenau is paid 8 gulden to teach her practice to the new midwife in Soufflenheim. In year 1750 she buys for 3 gulden of medicine (Medicines für die Apotheke), and in year 1750 for 4 gulden for the poor people in the locality. So that she owns a small chemist-store and can bring some aid to sick people. There is mention of a clyster. Another person in this scene is the barber-hairdresser. As in many other communes of the time : in year 1755 Wilhelm Drexler is the "barber" (balberer) and makes use for a sick person of some medicine he has bought for 4 gulden 3 pfennings. In a general way, care brought to sick people is still very limited.

Cattle also receives sanitary care, for instance the local bull : in year 1743 and 1744 medicine is bought for this and costs 3 to 5 gulden. In year 1748, "is paid to Joseph Mary physician here for medicine dispensated to the local bull" he receives 12 gulden, and same in 1749 and 1765. We can deduce that Joseph Mary so was the first physician who settled in Soufflenheim, but he may also have been a veterinarian?

### **Financial Situation Of The Commune**

As in the past, this situation is known to us by the town accounts held year to year by the Bürgermeister or mayor and an accounter, and verified by the Schultheiss or provost and the members of the local justice in Soufflenheim, then in Haguenau, where the royal authorities check those and get paid for this job. These accounts are held in German, but for some years there is a French translation so that the authorities (bailiff, sub delegate, procurator) can understand (for instance in year 1746, 1766, 1789).

The accounts write down as usual the income and expense. From the beginning of the century, the amounts increase more and more. Between 1716 and 1720 they amount to 1000 up to 2000 gulden. After 1720 they reach over 2000 gulden ; from 1730, 3000 gulden ; in year 1750 they reach 4000 gulden ; in year 1760 5000 to 6000 gulden ; and from 1775, 8000 gulden ; in years 1777 and 1778 : 10,000 gulden ; in years 1781 and 1782 : 12,000 gulden, and go down in the last years before the Revolution to 7000 gulden. We can remark that generally income is superior to expense ; and each year there is some money left over or excess ; the middle amount of excess being from 2000 to 4000 gulden. A wise administration, as these excesses are written down, each time, into the income of the following year.

The income has several origins. In first line, the income of the commune in sale of wood, of hay and aftermath, auction for fishing in rivers paid by fishermen. They also concern, and this is the largest part, the royal taxes on one side, the seigniorial taxes due to the Prefecture in Haguenau on the other side, which get into the royal cashier as expenses ; a large part of small income is used for the needs of the commune.

The royal taxes are named Subvention and Vingtième (2th part). The named Subvention is also known in the 17th century the "royal imposition" or "königliche impositionsgelder" or "Schatzung". It is a meaningful part of income and expenses. It gets increased regularly during the whole 18th century. In years 1720 to 1730 is still of about 600 to 700 gulden, increasing to 800 gulden from 1730 to 1740, and from 1740 to

1750 (war of Succession of Austria) reaches 3000 gulden in 1769. From 1770 to 1782, the middle amount is of 3500 gulden, and over 4300 to 4500 gulden in 1783 and in the following years.

From 1753 another tax, the Vingtième (20te Pfenning, dem Landschreiber die Statuten des 20te Pfennings zu machen gezahlt 3 florins). Paid for the putting down of 20th Pfennings tax by the scribe and statutes des 20th Pfennings tax : 3 gulden. The burghers of Soufflenheim do not pay this tax without complaining as indicated in 1773 account "zur Bestreitung der den Burgern auferlegten Geldern" for the contested tax imposed on the burghers ; or "von allhiesiger Bürgerschaft eingetrieben" in 1770 the 20th Pfenning ; receipt on the imposed tax on burghers here.

In this general amount are in fact included the Capitation and the 20th Pfenning, also a tax due for administrative royal costs (Landes und Ambtskosten) for a total of 200 up to 300 Gulden each year. However there is a general increase of these costs in year 1769 "zur Abtragung der Landes und Ambtskosten, so der Gemeind auferlegt" for the total contribution on the commune paid 741 gulden ; in 1771 : 742 gulden ; in 1773, 851 gulden, up to 935 gulden in 1777, and in 1783 to 1362, and in 1787 1413 gulden. The 20th Pfenning alone costs 57 gulden in 1752, 150 and up to 122 in 1760, to 500 and 600 in 1770 until 1780 and reaches 875 gulden in 1785 and 930 in 1786.

To these taxes must be added the important contributions to military needs of the kingdom. In first place the fudder, exceptional military tax due to the military administration, equal to 544 gulden in year 1720, than from 701 gulden in 1721 at time of Austrian Succession war, in 1745, up to 476 gulden, lessening in year 1759 to 255 gulden ; in year 1760 it reaches 348 gulden. Then there is a sudden increase of fudder cost : in 1763 : 877 gulden, in 1766 : 1061 gulden. After this date, no more detail is given. In year 1768, "the royal taxes" reach 2549 gulden including the 20th pfenning tax and fudder. After 1771 there is no further mention of fudder (royal taxes all included). This reaches over 3000 gulden for the total yearly expense.

Another tax of military order paid is : the cost for militiamen in the commune. Their equipment and salary this last expense being of 30 to 50 gulden a year.

To the royal taxes must be added the old seigniorial taxes due (herrschaftliche Gelder) paid to the Prefecture in Haguenau. These are the "Frohngeld" (forced labor right) paid four time in the year (quartal geld, quarterly payment), the highest, then there is the "Beth" paid on Cropping time in summer and on Christmas, and smaller taxes such as "Hausleithbeth", "Rauch und Lösch geld" paid per house on each family group and on tobacco, then Atzgeld, tax paid to the bailiff for his meals when he comes in the village. Taxes on poultry is also due. In the middle of the century (1762) these side taxes reach 35 gulden for the Beth and crop and Christmas taxes, 71 gulden for the others and the Atzgeld, 51 gulden on hen, 120 to 150 gulden yearly as middle value, 180 gulden in the 1780's years.

The Frohngeld or forced labor tax is much higher : 268 gulden in year 1716, 300 gulden in 1721, 430 to 470 gulden in the 1740's years, 500 gulden in the 1740-1750's years, but up to 600-650 gulden in the 1760-1786, and 752 in 1784.

If you add the seigniorial taxes to the royal taxes, the 200 families in Soufflenheim must pay each year very important amounts ; example : 3000 gulden in year 1761, 3513 gulden in year 1770, 5350 gulden in year 1785. No wonder that the commune is unable to pay these sums, and is obliged, with the "benevolent" authorization of the Intendant, to decide on cuttings in the communal forest, which bring about 2500 to 4000 gulden in years 1784-1783.



The commune has income that would suffice to cover its needs, but the king keeps a large part of it. They include wood sales, location of meadows and sale of hay and aftermath, grazing, acorn crop, location of waters, taxes paid by foreigners who owe property in the ban, and the Umgeld or tax on wine sold in inns.

Sales of wood are important. Each year, the commune sells mattering quantities of lumber- wood (oaks, beaches) and of firewood from fallen trees (windfäll, fallholz) ; in year 1776 for 160 gulden, in year 1717 for 265 gulden, in year 1721 374 gulden, other years between 200 and 400 gulden, sometimes even 500 gulden or 600 (so 1736, 1745, 1750) and up to 800 or 1000 gulden or more (1762) other years only 300 (1768, 1769, 1772, 1775). Large cuttings with special authorization of the Intendant bring more, but this money goes to the king.

Location of meadows and sale of grass are another benefit to the commune. They concern the communal meadows, or "Allmende". So in year 1717 this brings in 108 gulden, in year 1719 (hay and aftermath) 238 gulden. This amount is about the same for ten years, grows to 500 and 600 gulden, over 800 gulden in year 1760, nearly 1000 gulden in years 1770 and 1780, reaching 1338 and 1605 gulden in 1781 and 1783, 1696 in 1785, and over 2000 in 1786 and 1787. The grazing in the communal forest (Weide im gemeinwald) brings little benefit, for instance 18 gulden in 1718, 20 in 1723, 48 in 1731, 40 and 50 in the following decades.

#### **Exhibit : Page 109**

Record of income date 1776, sale of wood.

Acquired by:

- Joseph Schäfter 14 G
- Niclaus Daul 14 G
- Joseph Uhrig junior 14 G
- Mathis Görtz senior 14 G
- Johannes Wilt 14 G
- Antoni Vögele 14 G
- Michael Messner 9 G 3 S 4 D
- Joseph Mosser 14 G
- Andres Müller junior 14 G
- Joseph Goetz 14 G
- Michael Goeb 14 G
- Adam Mey 14 G
- Antoni Mey 14 G
- Joseph Schütts widow 14 G
- Antoni Träger 14 G
- Antoni Schütt 14 G
- Joseph Elchinger 14 G
- Jacob Bveck 14 G
- Andreas Müller senior 14 G
- Joseph Kieffer 14 G
- Dominicus Lehmänn 14 G
- Lorentz Kieffer 14 G

Total: 303 G 3 S 4 D

Page 110 :

Same, the acorn-crop in the communal forest brings 18 gulden in year 1724, 60 in 1721, but is never more important.

The use of waters is also auctioned : "gemeine wasser" ; it brings 60 gulden in year 1747, only 30 in 1749 and 1753, "Versteigerung von alt Wasser" auction of old water, for six years brings 32 gulden in 1756, 1758, 1759, but 54 in 1761, 60 in 1776 for the Altbach river.

Property owned by strangers to the commune in the ban provide money, for instance 36 gulden in 1759, 54 in 1758, 56 gulden in 1760.

The Umgeld is the tax paid on wine sold in inns and is written down by the gourmet (Weinsticker). It is of 80 gulden in year 1737, 60 in 1738, 82 in 1740. In year 1742 beer and wine bring 87 gulden, after 1742 : 40-50 gulden only, then go over 58 gulden in 1756 and 1760, reach 74 in 1761 and 80 and more in the following years.

The total income of the commune is yearly equal to about 1600 or 1800 gulden.

The income is used by the commune to pay the royal and seigniorial taxes and to provide for its own needs. On one side, to pay the local authorities and the agents of the commune ; their salaries are very limited in regard of cost of their activities ; on the other side, this income is needed to proceed to the necessary works in the ban, in the fields, in the meadows, the forest and waters, roads and bridges, communal buildings and the repairs they need, the building of the church mostly. On this subject, our ancestors have contributed with their limited possibilities, but for the wellness of the commune.

## **The Potters**

The information on potters, is again, limited. They are occasionally mentioned when they are needed for work for the commune. So mainly concerning oven to build or repair. In 1719 and 1723, Frantz Zimmermann, potter, repairs the communal ovens (Stubenöfen) for 4 gulden and for 2 gulden again in 1726. In year 1727 ovens are installed in the building Laube, same in 1733 for 3 gulden. On other occasions, (1736, 1750) potters are just asked to repair ovens (ausbessern, flicken). In year 1732 a potter is named "Kachler", specialist in the fabrication of flagstones for ovens, and the commune delivers the flagstones for his work. In year 1770 the potter Joseph Hebel is in charge of the commune oven and of a baking oven in the house of Guards. Some specimens of the 18th century potteries are still kept in the Alsacian Museum in Strasbourg and bear witness of a lively profession.

The regulations of the Large Brotherhood of potters in Strasbourg and Basel were reconducted in years 1725 and 1740 in 43 articles (3a). Nobody can produce or sell pottery if he is not a member of the brotherhood, foreign potters can sell their products only on occasion of fairs. The potters in Soufflenheim were very likely members of the brotherhood (3b) which was abolished by the French Revolution.

One important point : during the 18th century, there is no mention made of the tax on the extraction of clay. Probably this tax is no longer received. After the end of the Spain Succession war, the royal Maîtrise

"Mastership" had much to do with a good administration of the forest, so that probably renounced, or just forgot, to receive a tax of little value.

Besides, people are still authorized to gather fallen wood in the forest, as well as firewood as for the oven of potters. The documents in the 18th century do not mention it, but this right will be confirmed after the French Revolution.

## **Religious Life In The 18th Century**

In the beginning of the century, religious life was very active, and continued to be so. Religious practice made family life lively, people had a deep and simple faith, but consciousness, and with a serious morality.

After the sufferings of war, serious damages had to be repaired. The vicar of the time, whose name is unknown to us, cared fiercely for his parish and church. He received 50 gulden as yearly salary. The expense for cult and for the church were supported by the commune. To teach religion and strengthen faith, the vicar asked the help of Capuchins and sometimes of other Orders. In year 1717 two crucifixes are erected in the grave yard and are blessed by the archpriest of Haguenuau. Banners are bought for the church (50 gulden). Processions take regularly place in the week of rogations (Kreuzwoche) in month May to ask profitable crops : on Corpus Christi which is a main celebration, highly colored, and on other religious days : Assumption, All Saints Day. Each time singers and these who hold banners receive a small gratification for their service. At this time there is mention of a very active religious brotherhood (Bruderschaft), the name of which is not given, and which is administered by the vicar, who receives 30 gulden therefore. The Capuchins brothers receive 9 gulden 7 pfennings (for their assistance to the brotherhood). A cashier gathers a duty for the church, paid by the people of the village, managed by a treasurer (Heyligen Schaffner). A chapel, of which we ignore the exact location, needs repairs of windows in 1718. The Capuchins members receive two pigs in payment of their management, and one calf, to thank them. We know more about processions : one on Corpus Christi, then the very much venerated pilgrimage to Marienthal, and the one to Schirrhein in the Rogations' week, and each time "according to an old custom" the holders of banners receive a gratification.

There is permanent concern about the bad state of the church. It is old, and the necessary repairs could not be made during the war time. As soon as 1716, the very degraded bell tower's roof must receive a new cover. In year 1720, masons, blacksmiths and tilers work steadily on the church, they receive 32 gulden. In year 1721 work goes on : masons and tilers furnish bricks and tiles. In the same time, this year, a bell founder from Strasbourg receives 61 gulden for a new bell. On the following year, the vicar buys a parish register (4). Works continue during year 1724 and 1725. The bell tower is repaired again, and needs a supply of lime and stone. A clock maker works on the clock of the church that does not function well.

For the questions of cult, members of the Dominican Order from Haguenuau come to Soufflenheim and receive each year a retribution for their help, mainly for confession (12 to 15 gulden from 1731 to 1738). In year 1738, their agreement of 1732 ends up, and from 1739 the members of the Capuchins Order take this over to help the vicar.

There is a permanent complaint about the bad state of the church ; in year 1732, it gets whitewashed, logs and timber are bought for the bell tower in 1734.



Soufflenheim Ceramic (Late 18th and 19th Century)



In year 1735, a new altar dedicated to Our Lady is erected by a sculptor from Wissembourg (whose name is not given). He receives 162 gulden and 61 gulden in 1736. On the same time, a stone hewer creates a new baptismal font (Taufstein), and a copper basin for baptisms (Taufschüssel) is installed. Other expenses concern confessional boxes and chairs in the church.

A vicar comes in 1743 who cares for the procession around the ban (Bannprozession). The vicar presides a high mass with songs on St. Wendelin's Day, patron of domestic animals, venerated in Soufflenheim where an altar in the church is dedicated to this saint. The brotherhood is again in question. In 1746 the vicar blesses a crucifix in the grave yard (für den Herrgott so auff dem Kirchhoff am Creutz ist).

On his side the vicar makes a trip to Strasbourg and asks the bishop's adjunct to be allowed to erect a crucifix. This vicar is named Streicher, he replaces the curate. In year 1750 the brotherhood is named Brotherhood of Saint Rosary which has been existing for decades, and very active. The Capuchins members in Haguenau manage it and receive 11 gulden for this. These monks also receive a pig (ein fettes Schwein) or 12 gulden each year for their services to the parish.

The bell tower is always the object of repairs by masons, joiners, tilers and this for 90 gulden (1749, 1750). A slate roofer from Lichtenberg in the Northern Vosges, receives 118 gulden to cover the bell tower. The use of shingles disappears. In the same time, a nailer from Hatten delivers laths on which the slates are fixed.

In 1752, a stone cutter from Wasselonne erects a stone crucifix in the cemetery and receives 104 gulden. In 1755 Mathieu Edel, bell fonder from Strasbourg delivers a new bell (102 gulden). Works continue in the church, in the bell tower and in the graveyard where a wall is built (eine landveste am Kirchberg). A glazier repairs the stained glass windows in the church for 31 gulden, a blacksmith is also on work, 9000 shingles are used, probably for the roof, a stone cutter from Lobsann brings in stones to cut and flat stones (Quadersteine und Platten). A milliner from Haguenau delivers painting. Works continue on the sanctuary. Stones, tiles, whitewash, beams are furnished, and the commune pays an expense of over 350 gulden (1756).

At the same time, it is question of a Saint Sepulcher which is installed during the Holy Week. In 1737 already, twelve angelots were the ornament of this Saint Sepulcher, surrounded by lamps (Amblen). Other figures of saints surround it.

In 1759, we can note that song books are bought, and the vicar blesses the small oratories in the fields ; these small oratories with images of saints are places where the congregation stops for prayers. These monuments were numerous in the Alsace landscape and are witnesses of the faith of our ancestors. In 1760, a new altar is erected on Corpus Christi which costs 50 gulden.

In 1761 an epizootic disease causes important and severe losses to the stock. Local authorities ask a Franciscan monk to pray for the cattle. A ceremony is mentioned on this occasion : on the Saint Trinity's Day, ribbons are fixed on the cattle's heads to preserve them from the evil. But the degraded state of church is more present in the minds. In spite of renovations, the construction of a new church is considered as necessary. Decision is taken to sell by auction the old church and to publish this auction in many places (1761). In 1762 the royal bailiff comes to Soufflenheim to examine the church, which costs 66 gulden. He gives his authorization for the construction of a new church.

Works begin. Wood is brought in and bricks ; 247 and 333 gulden are spent. A solemn ceremony takes place to place the first stone which is blessed by the archpriest in Haguenau (1762).

The construction advances quickly. Walls are erected in 1763. A painter receives 123 gulden advance money ; the plasterer receives 114 gulden for his work and 20 gulden for the choir. The building will need an expense of 418 gulden.

In 1764 the painter is still at work (176 gulden), the carpenter and the locksmith too, 200 gulden are spent for bricks. A mason from Haguenau for his work on the choir and walls receives as agreed with him 450 gulden for his task. The provost Friedmann is master of work is director of this enterprise with a master mason from Fort Louis who receives 4439 gulden. The mason from Haguenau receives 387 gulden more, others 120 and 823 gulden, whereas the sale of the old choir brings 106 gulden benefit. To pay for these very high expenses, much superior to 7000 gulden, the provost Friedman is obliged to have more cuttings in the commune forest which bring 4827 gulden benefit (1764). The people in Soufflenheim probably largely supplied to the cost of the constructions, by their gifts.

On the same time (1765) works concern the ossuary and the small house near the church. Other works concern the interior part of the church ; the gallery is displaced in the front (200 gulden). The glazier from Fort Louis earns 23 gulden. The painter in Schirrhoffen is paid for his painting the crucifix in the graveyard and the one inside the church. The sculptor Ziegler from Haguenau receives an important order of two side altars and receives a payment of 325 gulden. The baptismal fonts and a basin, a small box for the brotherhood complete the provisioning of the church ; more wood is furnished for the large sanctuary gate.

Vicar Nebel presides to the construction of this new religious building in the commune. He receives 53 gulden yearly honoraries. Among other things, he gets the clothes that four young girls will wear on the day of procession, bearing Our Lady's statue.

In 1765 is also mentioned a new school teacher, Mockers, who serves as bedel. He will play an important part in the life of the commune.

In 1766, according to town accounts, the consecration of the church takes place. For this festive day, the baker cooks bread for 3 gulden for the population and 3 pfennings, the inn keeper "At the oxen" sells wine for 50 gulden. A festive meal takes place where are present vicar Nebel, the provost, the members of the justice court, the commune pays the cost of 16 gulden therefore. There are no indications on the ceremony itself. There is no representation or drawing of this church which was implanted on the same place as the previous church, on a place named "old graveyard" today.

As the church is built now, several questions remain to be solved : sale of iron, from the former church ; sale of stones not used for the present church for 57 gulden ; the two joiners receive 40 gulden for their work. The forest authority offers a clay-pit.

In 1767, Andres Ziegler, sculptor in Molsheim (named previously as from Haguenau) receives a remain of 3 gulden 6 pfennings for his work on the two side altars (Our Lady and Saint Wendelin) he has sculpted. A book binder from Haguenau receives payment for a register to write down sepultures, a carpenter is paid for a crucifix out of wood and an oratory (15 gulden).

Other work takes place in 1768 ; the roofer from Haguenau is asked to paint the stone part of the bell tower, and to repair the button of the spike (30 gulden). The painter from Haguenau receives 516 gulden for his painting of altars that are high, and typical of the barocco art (however we have no representation of those). A mason is needed for scaffoldings ; other work is on walls of the graveyard around the church; stones (111 gulden), whitewash (129 gulden), the work of masons itself (180 gulden) for a total of over 420 gulden.

A joiner works at the Saint Sepulcher during the Saint Week. It is set up and down again. Besides his normal payment, the vicar receives indemnities for communion wine, for the procession round the ban in the rogations' week, to bless a crucifix and an oratory, 61 gulden on the whole. After the procession of Corpus Christi, the singers, the holders of banners and the servants eat for 18 gulden 7 pfennings, whereas the Fathers Capuchins, who help permanently the parish, receive 12 gulden the year.

In 1769, a big project : the acquisition of a organ (4a). Mockers, schoolteacher, has a good knowledge of the matter, he makes twice the trip to Haguenau, Woerth and Nehwiller, to examine several organs. He decides on a model by Stieffel, organ fabricant in Rastatt. In 1770 the organ is delivered for 1200 gulden. Mockers has them sent on five carriages from Rastatt. The mayor Anton Burgert sells by auction a number of pieces of commune wood, which brings 2320 gulden. Two joiners make the organ chest (78 gulden).

In 1770, a new master altar is bought by the church fabric, made by the joiner Franz Läufer in Haguenau, who receives 310 gulden. The sculptor Michel Pfaff from Haguenau receives 225 gulden for his work and the gilder P. Sauter, also from Haguenau 400 gulden, same as Xavier Reich painter to paint the new altar (5). This refers to the pictures of Saint Michel on the master altar, and of Saint Wendelin. But this master-altar has disappeared, it probably was a masterpiece of barocco art.

Complementary works follow on the organ in 1771, which occasion large expenses again (over 160 gulden). This same year, the gilder from Fort Louis paints and gildens two church pictures(37 gulden). Other acquisitions are made for a new Saint Sepulcher. The church windows are repaired again.

One inscription in the accounts of the commune is interesting to us concerning the popular pious feeling of the time : a deputation is sent to Strasbourg to the bishop to ask permission of praying the rosary each day, but this is not granted.

In 1772 the vicar of Rountzenheim works on a Mount of Olives, near the church, with statues of Christ and apostles, for 50 gulden, and a painter receives 48 gulden to paint it, a mason participates (18 gulden). Bars surround them. Processions of Corpus Christi and of the Rogations week are held each year. The singers, statues holders and church servants receive bread and wine. In 1773, new banners and clothes are bought with special clothes for holders ; the church fabric and the brotherhood participate to the expense which amount to 111 gulden.

In year 1775, more restorations are needed by the Saint Sepulcre, the altars of Corpus Christi, the Mounts of Olives. In 1786, a sculptor from Wasselonne receives 90 gulden for the stone crucifix, erected in the village. The same man, his name is Joh. Michel Haass, makes an angel to be put on the Mount of Olives. The foundation of the crucifix is realized by a tiler (86 gulden).

In the following years, in 1777, other acquisitions concern the sacerdotal ornaments and the banners for 119 gulden. Corpus Christi is celebrated with solemnity, banners holders and lanterns are mentioned, singers, canopies holders, and twenty eight young boys and girls hold the statue of Our Lady's statue or pictures, as often. Shooters also participate. At St. Jean near Christmas festive day, a blessing of wine takes place. There is a solemn celebration of Saint Michael, patron of the church (29 September), shooters on this occasion furnish plumb and powder. The first mention in documents of Saint Michael, archangel, patron, is in year 1758, but he was formerly in old times also (6).

In 1779 sculptors named Michel Haass and Ignace Beymann, both from Wasselonne, furnish a new crucifix (100 gulden) erected on the side of the road to Bischwiller. The schoolmaster and the bedel J. Mochers are called to ring the bells during six weeks when Cardinal Louis Constantin de Rohan-Guémené, bishop of Strasbourg, (1756-1779) dies.



In 1781 a new presbytery is built (2652 gulden) for which the cost is paid in 1782. To allow payment, 2500 gulden are a loan to the fabric's cashier, institution mentioned from 1680 and for which we have documents kept from 1753 to 1784 (7). These accounts provide precise indications on the management of the parish and on the churchwarden. This way for instance we learn that for 1773, the income comes from the tax named Pfenning zins (124 gulden), anniversary masses (116 gulden), income from "fruit" probably on loaned fields (140 gulden), from dime auctioned for 111 gulden, hay and aftermath also auctioned (167 gulden). As there was an excess from the last year equal to 1258 gulden, the benefit mentioned is of 1644 gulden, whereas the expense is of 492 gulden (acquisition of wax candles, oil and so on..., reparations to the church, expense for the organist-bedel. In the preceding and following years, the income is still good. From 1777 however, the income is joined to receipt in hay and aftermath and provides 300 to 350 gulden yearly. In 1784, the auction for dime provides 355 gulden.

Rector Nebel dies. He has been very active for the beauty of the sanctuary. He has been a remarkable director of the parish and a respected guide of souls. Ignace Lempfrid is named to replace him, as a rector, in 1785. In several documents he is referred to as Hopp, named Lempfrid". He will encounter great difficulties during the French Revolution. In year 1786 the sculptors from Wasselonne create five crucifixes out of stone in the forest, which will cost over 1500 gulden. In 1789 again, a new stone crucifix is erected by a sculptor from Haguenau.

The French Revolution in 1789 will cause a large crisis in life and religious practice in Soufflenheim, as well as in the whole of Alsace.

## **The School**

As we mentioned before, it is characteristic that from 1660 a school is mentioned in the village which hardly recovered from the damage of the Thirty Years War. Local authorities, provost and mayor, are very much attached to their local schoolteacher, mentioned at that time for the salary he receives, part in money, part in nature. We do not know their names however. We do not know either how they taught, probably in a very simple way. There is mention of existence of a school house at the end of the 18th century, and during the same 18th century, reparations are necessary to it, to the stable and toilets. Besides his teaching, the school master is in charge of function of bedel, also in charge of the clock which is for sure badly working.

In year 1731, there is a mention of "Michel Geisler, schoolteacher" replaced in year 1732 by Michel Wolfsberger who receives 44 gulden as salary. The widow of his predecessor receives a kind of allowance in money and fruit of 16 gulden 3 pence. In 1747 Anton Aveline is the new schoolteacher. According to his name, he came from France, but was also fluent in German. He holds the commune accounts, which is paid for 3 gulden 3 pfennings, his salary as schoolteacher amounts to 64 gulden. Later, his salary as scribe is paid 8 gulden, and for translations into German the list of tax payers of the 20th cent, he receives a gratification of 2 gulden (1756) so that we understand his function of town hall scribe. After 1760 a new oven is installed in the school house and the windows need repairs.

At this time a new school teacher is named : Joseph Weinstoffler. But in 1764 Johannes Mockers is mentioned as the new schoolteacher. He receives 66 gulden for his salary. He plays an important part in the life of the commune (8) and will remain for about ten years in his functions. He was born in Bühl in 1742 and came to Soufflenheim aged 22 years, and will stay there until his death in 1814. He is schoolteacher, specialist of organ and organ maker : a remarkable personality. Later, he becomes the

associate of Stier another organ maker. He is still mentioned in Revolutionary time. He married three times and had many children, his last wife was Thérèse Messner from Soufflenheim.

In the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the members of the local justice court cannot write, and sign their name with a cross in the commune accounts. So that part of them were still illiterate. It is no longer the case in the second half of the century when young people have been taught to write. Teaching indeed has not been organized so far, and there is no obligation to attend school for a long period later ; the schoolmaster teaches children to read rudiments, and same to write, some arithmetic's, but also singing and sacred history, all this in German language, French language is unknown to all except for a few expressions. The schoolteachers in Soufflenheim in the 18<sup>th</sup> century had the merit to give to new generations the first elements of culture and to have served the population to a large extent.

### **Notes: Page 126**

- 1) Pour tout ce chapitre, comptes communaux de Soufflenheim, Archives Départementales du Bas-Rhin, 1 E 63 et 64, 2 liasses, année par année. Les comptes se font en Gulden (florins, abrégé fl. et sous, abrégé s.).
- 2) Soufflenheim, "Cité des Potiers" (P. ELCHINGER, A. SCHEYDECKER), Aus dem Pandurenlärm, p. 101 et suivantes ; également A. KORCHER, pp. 51-52.
- 3) A. KORCHER, p. 53.
  - 3a) AD B-Rh., C 589, 26 et ordonnances d'Alsace, Tome I, p. 624.
  - 3b) A. ELCHINGER "La poterie à Soufflenheim et à Betschdorf à travers les âges", Strasbourg, p. 11.
- 4) Les Registres paroissiaux (aux Archives Départ. Du Bas-Rhin) comprennent les baptêmes à partir de 1748 ; les mariages 1743-1754, puis à partir de 1788, les décès depuis 1790.
  - 4a) P. MEYER-SIAT, L'orgue Stieffel 1770 de Soufflenheim, dans : "Etudes haguenviennes", 1977, p. 198 et suivantes.
- 5) AD B-Rh., G 6 614, Heiligenrechnung 1771 (source indiquée par M. Meyer-Siat).
- 6) MEDARD BARTH, "Dictionnaire des paroisses", Archives de l'église d'Alsace, 1962-1963, P. 1527.
- 7) G 6614, Fond de l'Evêché aux AD B-Rh..
- 8) P. MEYER-SIAT, Stiehr-Mockers, facteurs d'orgues, Archives de l'Eglise d'Alsace, 1972, pp. 27, 93-94, et Etudes haguenviennes, 1977, pp. 189-197.

### **APPENDICES: Page 127**

- 1) **List of Schultheiss (prévôts) and Bürgermeister: 1716-1789.**

### **Schultheiss**

- 1716-1728 : Adam Schaffer (depuis 1714)
- 1728-1736 : Jacob Schaffer
- 1737-1744 : Philipp Kieffer
- 1744 : Antoni Jaeck
- 1745-1757 : Andreas Voge
- 1758-1763 : Ignatius Fridmann
- 1764-1789 : ? Kieffer

## **Burgermeister**

- 1716 : Adam May
- 1717 : Andreas Mosser
- 1718 : Claus Draher
- 1719 : Niclaus Albrecht
- 1720 : Franz Vogellin
- 1721 : Andreas Stiffelmeyer
- 1722 : Jacob Steckelmeister
- 1723 : Lorenz Sensenbrenner
- 1724 : Lorenz Moser
- 1725 : Michel Ulrich
- 1726 : Jacob Burgert
- 1727 : Adam Kehlhoffner
- 1728 : Friedrich Fritz
- 1729 : Heinrich Jack
- 1730 : Hans Jacob Haser
- 1731 : Michel Kieffer
- 1732 : Lorenz Lehmann
- 1733 : Peter Fourger (?)
- 1734 : Philipp Kieffer
- 1735 : Antony Gotz
- 1736 : Hans Georg Halm
- 1737 : Hans Georg Fridmann
- 1738 : Hans Georg Metzler
- 1739 : Joseph Hartel
- 1740 : Michel Burgert
- 1741 : Michel Mossner
- 1742 : Joseph Thaul (Daul)
- 1743 : Andreas Lehmann
- 1744 : Andreas Voge
- 1745 : Thomas Kieffer
- 1746 : Michel Uhrich
- 1747 : Andreas Muller
- 1748 : Lorentz Wagner
- 1749 : Wendling Gotz
- 1750 : Peter Kieffer

- 1751 : Georg Gotz
- 1752 : Jacob Mossner
- 1753 : Mathis Burger
- 1754 : Evasius Biski ou Bitschy
- 1555 : Andres Wagner
- 1756 : Mathis Lehmann
- 1757 : Anton Kieffer
- 1758 : Andres Messner
- 1759 : Joseph Uhrich
- 1760 : Hans Stiffelmeyer
- 1761 : Joseph Mossner
- 1762 : Mathis Kieffer
- 1763 : Joseph Marry
- 1764 : Antoni Kieffer der jung
- 1765 : Michel Gotz
- 1766 : Lorentz Wagner der jung
- 1767 : Antoni Mossner
- 1768 : Mathis Gotz
- 1769 : Niclaus Daul
- 1770 : Antoni Burgert
- 1771 : Joseph Schoster
- 1772 : Ignatius Friedmann der jung
- 1773 : Joseph Uhrich
- 1774 : Joseph Haaser
- 1775 : Anthon Burgert
- 1776 : Joh. Hummel
- 1777 : Joseph Halter
- 1778 : Andreas Muller der Alt
- 1779 : George Adam Ludwig
- 1780 : Antoni Ernewein
- 1781 : Joseph Burger
- 1782 : Joseph Mesner der jung
- 1783 : Joh. May
- 1784 : Antoni Kieffer
- 1785 : Jacob Daul
- 1786 : Hans Adam Bruger
- 1787 : Antoni Daul
- 1788 : ?
- 1789 : Andreas Muller

## 2) Town Accounts: 1716-1789

Year	Income (Gulden)	Expense (Gulden)
------	-----------------	------------------

1716	1,286 (*)	1,286
1717	1,160	1,181
1718	1,088	978
1719	1, 515	1,240
1720	2,309	1,744
1721	2,304	1,742
1722	2,020	1,255
1723	2,489	1,409
1724	2,532	1,676
1725	2,397	1,661
1726	2,242	1,399
1727	2,780	1,825
1728	2,773	1,687
1729	2,773	1,687
1730	2,542	1,598
1731	2,808	1,618
1732	3,317	2,039
1733	3,363	2,315
1734	3,051	2,194
1735	3,095	2,518
1736	3,429	2,610
1737	?	?
1738	2,628	2,589
1739	2,284	2,151
1740	2,608	2,187
1741	3,119	2,446
1742	3,119	2,446
1743	3,165	3,224
1744	5,387	5,395 Year of Crisis (War)
1745	3,264	3,176
1746	3,905	3,516
1747	3,617	3,667
1748	4,027	3,993
1749	3,530	3,438
1750	3,238	3,004
1751	3,315	2,975
1752	4,243	3,667
1753	4,204	3,371
1754	4,706	3,231
1755	5,417	3,526
1756	5,193	3,616
1757	4,540	3,410
1758	4,616	3,689

1759	4,207	2,849
1760	5,572	3,568
1761	6,865	4,220
1762	8,384	4,840
1763	8,830	5,216
1764	13,599	11,969
1765	6,813	5,170
1766	6,756	4,638
1767	4,921	2,225
1768	4,956	3,759
1769	3,692	1,932
1770	6,506	3,479
1771	5,849	2,935
1772	4,934	2,281
1773	7,651	5,140
1774	6,855	4,429
1775	7,740	4,988
1776	8,859	5,698
1777	10,090	5,927
1778	10,407	5,924
1779	8,709	8,598
1780	6,606	5,304
1781	12,532	7,338
1782	12,884	9,820
1783	6,398	2,410
1784	6,943	2,878
1785	7,216	3,238
1786	7,616	3,842
1787	7,421	445 (?)
1788	?	?
1789	6,920	3,895

(\*) The surplus of the receipts is each time entered in the receipts of the following year: it often reaches more than 1,000 guilders.

## SOUFFLENHEIM DURING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

### Chapter Five

As in all other localities, the population of Soufflenheim wrote down in the spring of 1789 the Cahiers de doléances (list of Complaints). The commune accounts indicate this in mentioning an expense of 6 gulden to translate them into French. But alas this list of complaints has disappeared (1).

The country's States General, composed of three orders Clergy, Nobility and Third state were elected and assembled in Versailles. The commune of Soufflenheim is asked to elect three deputies of the Third state in Haguenau which is the occasion of an expense of 49 gulden (2).

The General States quickly turn into a revolutionary assembly: the Bastille is taken in Paris on the 14th of July 1789 by the population of Paris, privileges of Nobility and Clergy are abolished on the 4th of August, and the property of the Church is confiscated and set on disposal of the Nation the 2nd of November.

In the end of the year and in 1790, new administrative constituencies are created: Departments (Bas-Rhin, Haut-Rhin for Alsace), districts (4 in Bas Rhin: Strasbourg, Benfeld, Haguenau, Wissembourg with a Directory of Department, and Directories for the districts), cantons, communes with the mayor and town council. The Directory of the District of Haguenau will be, during the hardest years of the Revolution, until 1795, the superior authority for the commune of Soufflenheim which belongs to the canton of Fort-Louis, also named Fort-Vauban, then to the canton of Bischwiller.

In year 1790, the account of the town dime in Soufflenheim is still made in presence of the old and new municipality and of the representatives of the commune.

In October 1789, the Intermediary Office of the Assembly of District in Haguenau "studies the List of Complaints of the "deputies" of the commune of Soufflenheim", and those presented by the previous Schultheiss or provost of the place (3). The Office deliberates over the statutes of several articles of this List, concerning "the exercise of the seigniorial rights and contentious justice" (exerted by the provost). It decides that "in the future, the choice of the town employees will be made by the provost and by the municipality". But later, there is no more mention of the provost. The commune property and the allotment which is discussed heated up minds. Complaints are set by the burghers against the provost; they show the "animosity, hatred and chicanery". They "must be dismissed, and those who signed the denunciations condemned ... ordered Joseph Halter junior, Laurent Haberkorn and Jacques Trecksler as the authors of the ferment of minds in the commune of Soufflenheim, to live in peace and tranquility, or if not they will be declared disturbers of public peace and punished as such according to the rigorous regulations.

Concerning commune property, this will be divided in equal shares between the burghers who own houses and stables; those who own them are subdued to forced labor; the abandoned commune properties will be divided among young burghers. But this question of the commune property comes back to the order of the day in 1790, as attested by the presentation made by the commune on subject of elections, and functions of the employees, of reception of burghers, and division of commune property. The right of reception of burghers is fixed to an amount of 80 pounds for a man, and 50 pounds for a woman.

During the year 1790, Revolution progresses. On the 12th of June, the National Constituent Assembly votes the civil Constitution of Clergy, according to which, as the Church had lost its property, the clergymen had to receive a salary, but also to present an oath to the State. Which occasioned a strong protestation of the religious authorities. The bishop of Strasbourg, Cardinal de Rohan, who had settled in the Baden district of the bishopric, in Ettenheimmunster, forbade (20 November 1790) to the clergymen to obey the new law, and the Pope himself declared he was opposed to this new civil constitution of Clergy. A large religious crisis started everywhere in France. It was particularly vivid in Alsace. The priests refused for the most part to take this oath, with the support of a large majority of the population. The small



number of priests who have taken the oath were viewed badly. The government, more and more infused with revolutionary ideas, hounded and condemned the priests who refused to take the oath, to the large discontent of the believers.

In Soufflenheim, the anti-revolutionary feeling grew because of the exploitation of the commune forest. In August 1790, a request is presented by the commune to be authorized to a cutting of wood in the district Obermatten and to convert the place into cultivated land. The District of Haguenau refuses. This case is treated by the Directory of the Department. This authority (23 December 1790) considers that the conservation of woods and forests is of the highest importance, in regard of the considerable degradations and depreciation of the past year and of this beginning year, reiterates its refusal, insisting that the wood in question is part of a reserved space, the only one which could provide some income to the community in case of need, as it is composed of beautiful trees, and one of the most beautiful places in the neighborhood. Besides this, this plot is situated on a low level, and can only receive a culture of potatoes and Turkish corn.

This case continues in year 1791, to the large discontent of people in Soufflenheim, heating up minds. On the 11 March, the antipatriotic actions of the mayor are denounced. He has assembled the commune to protest against what has been made by the representatives of the Nation and sent a memorandum of protest to the neighboring communes.

In April, the mayor and members of the municipality have the woods of part of the Obermatt cut, on their own authority (6 acres) and in the district Schifflach, meadows named "Ochsenbrunnen" over 1200 faggots of willows. The district of Haguenau sends the municipality in front of the justice of Saverne, to be condemned. The population is allowed to take away the fallen wood, but in year 1792 will be authorized to just a half cutting for firewood.

In the religious field, things get worse, and provoke important hostilities between villages. On the 24th of July, the "fanatic" farmers of Soufflenheim, having heard that several non-oath taking priests had been arrested by soldiers and sent to jail in Sessenheim, march towards the village, with the mayor at their head, to free by force the ecclesiastics. The mayor of Sessenheim, surrounded by his population, is opposed to this action. Both parties nearly come to blows, when a young man of Soufflenheim, full of energy, interposes himself to prevent his friends from this extremity, explaining that people in Sessenheim behave in agreement to law. So that the people of Soufflenheim go back. The authorities give their position. The "patriots" in Sessenheim are congratulated. The ecclesiastics are sent to Fort Louis, where from they are allowed to go to Strasbourg and be free of arrest, but will have to leave the country. On August 10th, people of Soufflenheim, always a threat to those of Sessenheim, so that the Directory sends 15 soldiers to protect the village of Sessenheim. (4)

In December 1791, the municipality of Soufflenheim sends another request to the authorities to be allowed to cuttings in the Obermattwald which should be converted into cultivated land. This time, the Directory of District of Haguenau is conciliatory: the commune of Soufflenheim "owns very large forests, all of them well kept" so it will be authorized to proceed with this clearing, which will allow a real and considerable benefit. And as this is the wish of the whole population, the commune, in acknowledgement of this service, accepts to double its patriotic contribution".

The opposition of several States against the measures of the revolutionary government leads to War (April 1792) which is a big concern for the border population. But for the moment, Alsace is not affected by movements of troops. In July, the municipality sends a new request to the Directory of District to be allowed to cutting in the district of the Obermattwald, for their needs, in conformity to the requests

accepted two years ago. This request is renewed in the autumn, and on October 31st the Directory gives his authorization for the cutting of firewood for the year of 1793.

The sale of National Property, that is to say, those of the Church, occupies many minds. On April 12th, an auction of a few properties of the abbey of Koenigsbruck in Soufflenheim takes place (5). Also of the vicarage and of the fabric in Soufflenheim. About the end of the year, several persons and Michel Friedmann, mayor, among them, present an oath in quality of experts for this sale (6).



Last Abbess of the convent of Koenigsbruck. Painted in 1772 on the occasion of her election.  
Auctioned during the Revolution, the painting was preserved until 1966 in a family of Roeschwoog

The vicar Ignace Lempfried, who since 1785 rules the parish and who did not present the oath asked by the Constitution, continues to exercise his ministry, with his vicar, the abbot Felix Rimpler. Now they must present the oath or leave the country. They accept this last order and in October 1792 (7), according to a record signed by commissaries, leave the country and make their way to the other side of the Rhine River, in Rastatt. From August, the churches whose priests who have not taken the oath are named, and are closed.

In 1792 and in February 1793, the properties of the vicarage (Pfarrgut) are sold by auction. Michel Friedmann, the mayor, acquires a lot, fields and meadows, for 10,000 francs. The two other lots are sold by auction to people in Rountzenheim and Niederbetschdorf (8). Let us remember that the bishop had forbidden to the congregation of the diocese to take part to auctions of the properties of the church.

In Paris, the revolutionary events are moving quickly. They lead to the fall of the royalty and the proclamation of the Republic (22 September 1792). A new national Assembly, the Convention, is elected. The revolutionaries, more and more radical, prosecute their enemies. The king and the queen are beheaded, and thousands of victims are sent to the guillotine. It is the time of Terror (1793). In Alsace, the condemnation is unanimous, the aristocrats are prosecuted and imprisoned, the non-oath taking priests especially chased. However, they continue to exercise their ministry in hidden places. The priests who have taken the oath on the contrary find little assent.

In Soufflenheim, changes find place in the administration of the commune, on the 24th January 1793, a request of several citizens concerning wood mentions "the commissaries with provisory functions of mayors". So Friedmann is no longer the mayor. Does this new municipality follow the directives of Paris or of Strasbourg? The present oath taking vicar Ficker does not have a simple life, he is hated; in May, the municipality refuses him the firewood that he normally should receive; the objections are under cover of hatred; in July, the certificate of citizenship is refused too, motivated by his bad behavior and aristocracy (9). Then no one hears of him again.

What is the general spirit in the commune? It is wise not to express one's opinions freely. J. Mockers, a valuable person, secretary of the town hall, organist and musician, experienced this. He has expressed too openly his opinions, and has been imprisoned. His wife asks that he be able to return to his family. The Directory of the District of Haguenau deliberates on this petition, estimates that he made some incautious speeches, and has been sufficiently punished, therefore he grants his authorization to come back with an injunction to be more circumspect in his words and respectful of laws". Mockers takes this into consideration. He is no longer named as schoolteacher and cultivates land (10).

Concerning the municipality, a document refers to the division of the commune property (according to law of 10 June 1793 which authorizes it); the municipality and council attend a meeting called by Jacques Drechsler, procurator now named commissary. This meeting was attended by all citizens of both sexes, aged 21, having a right to take part to this division. They number 617 and call for the continuation of the division of communal property for a period of 9 years. The reserves are made for the defenders of the Nation, the army, which will receive its share of the common property, on the contrary those who have fled abroad will be named "emigrants" are excluded and will lose their civic rights. This decision is taken the 18 August 1793 and the record is signed by G. Adam Lutwig, mayor and four town assistants, clerks of the commune, by Jacques Drechsler, procurator, and seven members of the council, Antoine Messner signs as scribe.

However, end of August (15 Fructidor year 2 of the republican calendar), in a case of wood sale, Drechsler is mentioned as the mayor, he is blamed by the Directory of District of Haguenau, because on occasion of a sale of wood, an emigrant is the auctioneer, and that Drechsler should not have let him

participate; he did not preserve the interests of the Republic, his behavior is judged reprehensible. Citizen Drechsler is forbidden to sell or dispose of this wood, and he is recommended to show more solicitude and zeal for the conservation of what belongs to the Republic.

But facts of much more importance take place at that time. In autumn 1793, war reaches Alsace. Austrian General Wurmser, member of Alsace nobility, invades northern Alsace, which was not protected by the French troops. In October, he is in Haguenau, welcomed as a liberator. His troops reach Strasbourg. On the 14 November, the fortress of Fort-Louis surrenders. But almost immediately the army of the Rhine, under the command of General Desaix, takes the offensive (20 November). Small fights take place. Austrians and Prussians have retrenched behind the ditch named Landgraben in Gamburgsheim, so that the French arrive in Drusenheim in front of the retrenchments of the Moder River, which extend to Bischwiller, Marienthal, Schweighouse, and from there in direction of Reichshoffen, Froeschwiller, Woerth. The French, under command of General Hoche, take the offensive on this side and are victorious in Woerth and Froeschwiller (22 December), so that Wurmser is obliged to evacuate Haguenau in haste, and retires back to Wissembourg, also abandoning Landau, freed from blockade. (11)

But the consequences of the Austrian defeat are dreadful to the population of northern Alsace. In fact, the majority of the population was opposed to the revolutionaries and feared the pursuits by terrorists. This turned into a movement of frightful panic among thousands in the population, peasants, workers, merchants: 40,000 to 50,000 persons take their flight, leaving houses and homes, to find refuge in the Palatinate and northern Baden. This movement is known as "the big flight" a terrible misfortune for the people of Northern Alsace, left to their sad situation, living miserably in foreign country, waiting with anxiety for the time when they could come back home (12), which will only be possible after the time of Terror, and even then with great difficulties.

On January 19, 1794, Fort-Louis is abandoned by the Austrians, who destroy the ramparts and go to the other side.

Soufflenheim has suffered from these movements of troops and from the Great Flight. The documents in the Archives of Bas Rhin (13) name 70 persons considered as emigrants and who, coming back after the Terror, in 1795, (decree of 20 Nivôse, 9 January) encountered utmost difficulties to be removed from the lists of emigrants and to get back their sequestered properties. According to the decree, the return of peasants and workers, with or without their families, is possible if they had left the French territory after May 1, 1793. They are allowed to come back before the 1st Germinal; the sequestered properties will be restituted to them, if they have not already been sold. If they have been sold, their value will be reimbursed to them (14). But some of these refugees do not wish to come back, and the question of the "emigrants" will not be solved before 1800 by the authorities.

Terror time ceases in France after Robespierre's fall (July 1794). A large peace comes over the country. In a letter of the municipality, asking to be reimbursed for the damages caused to the communal forest by the republican troops, (Ventôse year 3, 1795), Drechsler is mentioned as mayor, Mittelhausser as town officer, Messner as scribe and Müller as "National agent".

In the following years, mainly after the dissolution of the Convention assembly (October 1795) and the establishment of a new government, the Directoire, the situation calms down again. From this time dates back a list of the primary assemblies of Bas Rhin, which in August and September 1795 mentions the citizen members of those in the different districts and municipalities (15). For the district of Fort-Vauban (name given to Fort-Louis during the Revolution) Soufflenheim counts 232 citizens (named), whereas Sessenheim has just 106, Rountzenheim 80, Schirrhofen 74, Stattmatten 28 and Dahlunden only 17. The

assemblies of citizens take place in Sessenheim, as Soufflenheim had not been sufficiently "revolutionary" minded.

The request of Jacques Drechsler, citizen, horse postmaster in Soufflenheim, is probably related to the precarious situation of the village. In November 1796, he asks the transfer of the post to Rountzenheim, because of robbery, at time of the last invasion of enemies, of all harnesses and part of the carriages; he bears accusations against ill-willed persons and invokes the insecurity and personal risks he encountered (16).

In December 1796 (Nivôse year 5), Lehmann is mentioned as agent of the commune, and Messner as adjunct. The general spirit reigning in Soufflenheim does not please the authorities. The district commission (Roeschwoog is the chief town) in a letter addressed to the commissary of Department (5 Messidor year 4, June 1796) calls Soufflenheim "this miserable commune" and speaks about "the badly minded citizens there, who, after the breakdown of the suspension of arms, get more and more impudent (17). This ill opinion expressed by the authority is mainly due to the faithful feelings of the population towards the church. Celebrations have been totally disorganized during the Terror, the priests persecuted. Now, the church holds up her head again. In October, the vicar of Behlenheim, Hessé, is in charge of the parish, but he must return to his own parish, because the last two months, abbot Felix Rimpler, former vicar in the named Soufflenheim, is missioned to care for the parish in question. Besides this, abbot Veith is vicar in Soufflenheim during the time of Terror, and ministers, secretly, his parish, and this of Roeschwoog, where the church had been turned into a hay-storage from 1793 to 1797. This church is consecrated again. He is called "true minister of the parish of Soufflenheim" at this last date, (19) and will still be vicar there from 1800 to 1803.

The Church gets quickly reorganized at this period, but a new campaign is led against the non-oath taking priests. In November of 1797 (Frimaire an 6) a chest has been seized from emigrants who came back to Soufflenheim (20). Opened by the authorities, it contained a black short cassock, three albs, a vicar's bonnet, chasubles, stoles, manipules, a purse containing a "corporale", surplizes, altar table clothes, and a breviary; the whole was confiscated and put into the hands of the receiver of Domaines and Registry. Sometime later (Thermidor year 6, August 1798) items from emigrants from Soufflenheim and of Sidel, a non-oath taking priest of Molsheim, are sold by auction. This case of emigrants and of their property, same as of the non-oath taking priests, makes much noise.

The troubled years of Revolution had caused disorders and important anxiety in the country. Gangs of scoundrels formed and attacked travelers and isolated farms. In the forest of Haguenau, these attacks were so frequent that it became necessary to raise mobile troops and national guards to scour the woods and arrest suspects and outlaws (June 1796) (21). Fortunately, owing to the victorious campaigns of Napoleon Bonaparte in Italy, France holds head up (1796). The religious question however is not solved, and the return of people who had fled, and were declared emigrants, still raised questions.

To these disorders are added the action of the people in Soufflenheim (Thermidor year 5, July 1797) (22) who have allowed themselves on their own private authority, to decide on a clearing of about 100 acres of their commune forest, planted with oaks of the most beautiful sort and of the utmost value, that they divided among themselves". Very reprehensible action, as judged by authorities, and that must be punished. Several times already, the population of Soufflenheim had decided on their own initiative of clearings and exploitation of wood, so that it seemed urgent to take the necessary measures to stop them. A detachment of 50 men is sent to Soufflenheim. It will stay there quartering, as long as the commissary will think it necessary. The municipal agent is accused of having let this action be done by the population, and to have neglected the means given to him by the law. Citizen Jacques Lehmann was dismissed and referred to as "ex agent" in the report to the Inspector of national forest of Haguenau, that

was sent to the Directory of Department. He is the only one responsible, whereas among the population, no rebellion nor wickedness is found; on the contrary submission and obedience". Population deserves indulgence, the more so as severe epizooty had substantially ravaged the flocks. Severity towards them will leave them in utter despair and misery." So that Joseph Messner is found as new agent of the commune, "the Small agent", whereas Lehmann is adjunct.

During the Revolution, farmers do not always observe the old regulations in the forest of Haguenau, they usurp rights of grazing and are guilty of many offenses. The city of Haguenau authorizes Soufflenheim to let the cattle graze inside the undivided forest, but make it clear that this is tolerated but not a right (January 1792). In December 1795 (9 Nivôse year 4) Haguenau informs that those living on borders of the undivided forest can send their flocks in the districts named if they pay a tax to the town. For the gathering of fallen wood, Haguenau declares that those who pay the first tax have a right on the second advantage also (November 1797). But this will be obtained in a more peaceful period (after 1802). Two laws dated 8 Ventôse and 19 Germinal year 11, and a decision of the Council of Prefecture (22 Prairial year 13), grant the farmers of Soufflenheim the right of grazing flocks and of gathering fallen wood in the undivided forest, also dry branches of willows and oaks, and fallen pieces of wood of less than 14 feet (23).



Worker's House 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Soufflenheim, Henri Bacher, 1906, Courtesy of Marc Elchinger

In years 1727 [1797] and 1798, however, Soufflenheim is still ill considered by the authorities because of the devastations in the forest. On the other side, the commune begins to develop and enlarge, as shown by the request of several burghers asking wood for construction of houses and stables (Brumaire year 7, October 1798) (24). One man is named again: Jean Mockers. In 1799 he gets payment to rewind the clock and ring the bells. But next year he is again the schoolteacher, organist and bedel. On the contrary, in February 1799, Joseph Messner, commune agent, presents his dismissal. Citizen Hecht or Heckt replaces him for the time, until the elections (25). After the Revolution, the village regains life. For sure, the new principles of equality and better justice, and the abolishment of seigniorial privileges, had a favorable influence on the population, but on the other side the measures against the Church and the persecutions of priests encountered a strong opposition of the believers. They fought for their faith and have welcomed the conclusion of Concordat by Napoleon Bonaparte (August 1801), which still governs nowadays the relations between Church and State in Alsace.

## **Notes: Pages 147 & 148**

### **(Révolution)**

- 1) L'histoire de la Révolution française est difficile à écrire pour Soufflenheim, du fait de la perte du document le plus important, les Délibérations du Conseil Municipal (par faits de guerre).
- 2) Comptes communaux, année 1789, n° 62 et 63.
- 3) A.D. B-Rh.. Les indications suivantes sur la forêt communale portent ce même numéro.
- 4) R. REUSS. La Constitution civile du clergé et la crise religieuse en Alsace, 1790-1795, Strausbourg 1922, I.I., p. 161, p. 299. Voir également Soufflenheim, Cité des Potiers, 1977, p. 93.
- 5) A.D. B-Rh., Q 563.
- 6) b, Q 452.
- 7) b, 3 L 75, voir également P. Meyer-Siat, Etudes haguenviennes, 1977, p. 196.
- 8) A.D. B-Rh., G 641.
- 9) R. REISS, Constitution civile? T. II, p. 149
- 10) P. MEYER-SIAT, voir note 7, p. 196.
- 11) A. CHUQUET. Les Guerres de la Révolution, IX Hoche et la lutte pour l'Alsace (1793-94), p. 105 et suivantes.
- 12) R. RUSS, La Grande Fuite de décembre 1793 et la situation politique et religieuse du Bas-Rhin de 1784-1799, Strausbourg, 1924.
- 13) A.D. B-Rh., Série Q, Domaines Nationaux, ventaire pp. 813-814 comme émigrés sont cités pour Soufflenheim : Adam (Joseph), Albrecht, Babinger, Beck (François-Antoine), Beller, Bitschi, Bourg, Brotschi (Joseph), Burger (Catherine), Burger (Ignace), Daul (Barbe), Daul (Jean-Michel), Eck, Eissen, Elchinger (Joseph), Ernwein, Ernwein (Laurent), Friedmann (François-Joseph), Friedmann (Jacques), Goetz (Jean), Gress, Haberkorn (Marie-Anne), Haberkorn (Laurent), Halter (frères), Hochendel, Hoehn (Casimir-Antoine), Hummel (Jean, Potier), Jaeck, Kieffer, Kleitz (Brigitte), Leppert,



Libert, Mary, Messner (Joseph), Mey (Joseph), Meyer (Antoine, tuillier), Meyer (Jean-Léonard), Meyer (Pierre), Mohler, Monnet, Montbarrey, Moser, Muller (André), Muller (Jean), Ostreicher, Poppinger, Rinck (Jean), Schaeffer (Antoine), Schlosser, Schmuck, Schoeffler, Schwoerer, Simon (Henri), Steiner, Stoll, Strack, Stupffler, Thomen, Ulrich (Jean), Voegele (Antoine), Wagner (Jean), Wahlung, Wendereich, Wendrich, Wintz, (Madeleine), Wunsch, Zittwoch, Zollenmeyer.

- 14) R.REUSS, Historie d'Alsace, Paris, 1920, pp. 284-285.
- 15) A.D. B-Rh., 20 L 5.
- 16) IB., 1 I 1 223.
- 17) Ib., 1 I 1 765.
- 18) L. KAMMEUR, Les Commissaires épiscopaux dans le diocèse de Strasbourg pendant la Révolution, Archives de l'Eglise d'Alsace, 1983, p. 306.
- 19) P. MEYER-SIAT, Stiehr-Mockers, Facteurs d'orgues, Archives de l'Eglise d'Alsace, 1972-1973, p. 65.
- 20) A.D. B-Rh., Q 4 413.
- 21) R. RUSS, Histoire d'Alsace, p. 296.
- 22) A.D. B-Rh., 1 I 1 381.
- 23) R. DUFRAISSE, Paysans et forêts sous la Révolution, les Droits d'Usage, dans : paysans d'Alsace, Strasbourg 1959, p. 145 et suivantes, surtout p. 161. G. HUFFEL, la Forêt Sainte de Haguenau en Alsace, Nancy-Paris, 1920, p. 96.
- 24) P. MEYER-SIAT, voir notre 7, P. 197.
- 25) A.D. B-Rh., 20 L 5.

## **SOUFFLENHEIM DURING THE 19TH CENTURY**

### **Chapter 6**

#### **Contents**

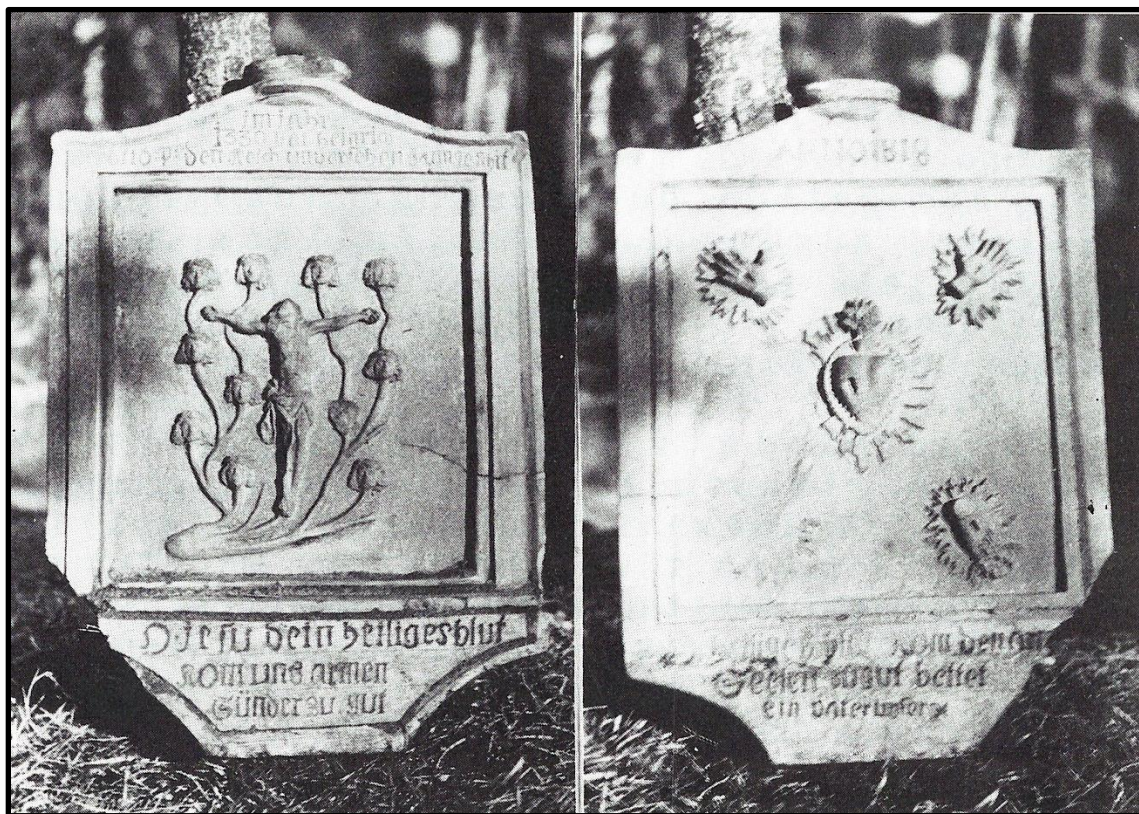
- From the French Revolution to 1870
- The Parish and Church in the 19th Century
- The Schools and City Hall
- Life in Village in the 19th Century
- Mayors in the 19th Century
- Schoolteachers

## From The French Revolution To 1870

Since the Revolution, the commune had a Town Council. The elections did not take place in the form of a universal suffrage, but of a censitary system : one had to reach a certain degree of taxation to be liable as an elector or eligible, so that just a small percentage of the citizens could accede to public functions. According to the register of Deliberations and Decisions of the Town Council, kept only from 1832 to 1836, the Council counted 10 counselors and the mayor, and this, during several periods of ten years in the 19th century.

After the fall of Napoléon (1815), the commune encountered large difficulties due to the occupation of the country by the allied troops for which maintenance had to be provided. Deliberations took place regularly, and the most important point each year was the establishment of the budget.

After the war, as everywhere else, the population in Soufflenheim increased quickly. Whereas in 1801 the place counted scarcely 1500 people, in 1812, 2060 were accounted for and 395 houses, and in 1831, 2982 persons. From this time the number did not increase much more (2935 people in 1870, 638 houses).



Soufflenheim Cemetery Year 1818.

Members of the Messner family succeeded one another as mayors after 1800. In 1814, Antoine Messner was obliged to present an oath of allegiance to Louis XVIII and to emperor Napoleon 1, back from the

island of Elbe, in 1815. In June however, after Napoleon's defeat in Waterloo, he has to present his oath again to the king (31 March 1826). By quinquennial renewal in 1821, Antoine Messner, son of the above one, is elected mayor and will stay so until his death in 1829. Joseph Messner, also named the Great Merchant, succeeds him. The Prefecture considers him as an active, intelligent and good man and mayor. No better choice could have been made. The construction of the church and of the town-hall, of schools, attests to his activity.

He remained mayor after the Revolution of 1830 (fall of Charles X, accession to throne of King Louis-Philippe). The report of his installation under the new king is dated 27 November 1831. On this date the formation of the National Guard took place. Soufflenheim received its own company with captain, lieutenant, under-lieutenant and sergeant-major.

Since 1822, the Deliberations of the town council are written in French. In 1832, complaints are made on this subject : all members of the council do not know the spoken nor written French language (so deliberations took place in local dialect). Hence, it has been asked that deliberations should be written in German and translated, so that those who sign them can understand them. Each deliberation, indeed, was followed by the signatures of the counselors. But nothing ever changed afterwards.

In 1837, Messner is followed by Martin Helmer, horse smith, under whom things are going the wrong way. From this year, bitter complaints are sent to the Prefect of Lower Rhine concerning him. Members of the Council, land owners, merchants and craftsmen who pay the higher taxes, reproach him that "the town hall is left to men who do not know their duties and raise disorders" in the town hall. They ask for his replacement, as he is a man "without any education, just as ignorant as rude". He dismissed a teaching sister, the town scribe, the rural policeman. He threatens to suspend the teaching sisters. The counselor of the Prefecture, and General Secretary, expresses his violent rejection of Helmer. But this man has also his supporters and he defends himself.

In 1840 at last, he is replaced by Joseph Messner, who is trusted by his fellow- citizens and is at the same time commanding officer of the National Guard. He is reinstalled in his functions of mayor in 1846.

But in 1848, the Revolution overthrew King Louis-Philippe and installs the Second Republic. Messner leaves his functions to mayor Brotschy. The president Napoleon transforms quickly the government and becomes Emperor Napoleon III (1852). In these years, there is no good understanding among the members of the town council in Soufflenheim. The details are not understandable to us, documents posterior to 1853 give some information and this through the vicar of the parish, Cazeaux.

Mayor Brotschy died on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 1853. The question was to find a good successor to him. Vicar Cazeaux, totally devoted to the Napoleonic order, writes to the prefect ; he exposes that from 1843 to 1848, he had been the subject of prosecutions that troubled the life of the village ; "he saw himself obliged to defend himself in front of every justice authority" but "as my parishioners are the judges in last decision, they gave me proofs of their sympathy". During the elections of 1848, they excluded from the administration, with a large majority, "all men whose methods they had never approved". This sole act of justice has sufficed to reset Soufflenheim in its rank among the peaceful communes". This way Brotschy was placed in the functions of mayor, and the elections in 1852 even more have rid the town administration of the commune of undesirable persons. Citizens voted, "as one man" for Prince Napoleon.

Mayor Brotschy, very meritorious, had died. An influential person, whose name could not be found out, writes to the Prefect (26 March 1853) : "when, several years ago, the commune of Soufflenheim was divided into factions and that disunion reigned among the population, M. Brotschy, from the very time



when he was set on the head of the town administration, sought to bring back concord among his citizens and thanks to his spirit of conciliation, succeeded so”.



Mary (late 19th) (cold painted) Last Supper collection of the Alsatian Museum.



Pietas of the beginning of the XIXth century.

The question now is to replace him. So, the same influential person, along with vicar Cazeaux, and with the police officer who was the head of the district of Bischwiller, agree on André Friedmann, aged 53 years. The vicar says about him that "he is one of the most qualified men in the whole district ; he owns a large tiles factory and a mill. He speaks French... so he can personally read all official dispatches... he is a providence for many poor families". According to the letter sent by the influential personality named above, Friedmann is member of the town council where he knew how to gain by his probity and spirit of order, the appreciation of his fellow-citizens.

So Friedmann is named as mayor by the Emperor (23 March 1853) and solemnly installed the 08 July 1855 with two deputy-mayors, Andre Kieffer, a farmer aged 64, father of seven children ; and Leon Burger, a horse smith father of six children. Friedmann was to stay in his functions until 1860.

He is replaced by Ferdinand Uhrig, farmer, and at time of the renewal of mayors and deputy mayors which takes place every five years, he stays mayor and will remain until 1870. In 1865, a judgment of the Prefecture concerning him says : "it would be good that he would be better educated", but he is a perfectly honest man : he is praised for his probity and his spirit of conciliation ; so that he must be maintained, in spite of the competition with one of his opponents, a member of the Messner family.

So there were, since 1830, strong differences within the town Council. Some families are strongly competing and have hard differences, which perhaps is not always of benefit to the commune.

### **The Parish And Church In The 19th Century**

After the French Revolution, the parish had a vicar : Christian Kappler, native of Beinheim, in the years 1803-1856. He left the parish then. The parishioners called back the former vicar of the last Revolutionary years, Ignace Lampfried, who had lived in England. Having come back to Soufflenheim, he could not assume for a long time the management of the parish and dies in year 1817. At that time, the parish had a vicar whose annual salary was fixed to 400 francs.

Lampfried was replaced by a clergyman of dynamical and devoted temper, Franz Thannenberger, native of Sundgau region, born in 1751 in Blotzheim and predicator in the cathedral of Strasbourg. He became a vicar in Soufflenheim in 1818, and stayed the guardian of souls until his death in 1837. He was at the origin of the construction of a new sanctuary in the large commune that did not stop enlarging in population. This long lasting work caused him many worries, but he had the satisfaction to see a magnificent sanctuary erected.

As soon as 1822, the Bishop of Strasbourg, Prince de Croy, wrote to the Prefect of Lower Rhine concerning the church of Soufflenheim. After his first visit round the diocese, he says "I was sorry to find out that it did not suffice for the half of the large population of this beautiful commune". As inconveniences result in the detriment of religion and order, he looks for the means to "remedy to such a serious evil", but he learns "with the utmost satisfaction, that he could find inside the commune the necessary funds to meet the costs of the construction of a church was answered by the population". He prays the prefect to welcome the wish of the commune, in conformity with his own project, and to study the possible resources to realize the proposed edifice. "I would be very much obliged to see you adopt the interest that I attach to it".

So that, in 1822, a first draft is presented with plans in colors. The project progresses in year 1823 : on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October, the mayor writes to the prefect to obtain the authorization concerning the site of the new church, as well as of the boys' school which has to be built. According to a report dated December

30, 1823, the present church is "insufficient, ill situated and in a bad state". The wish is that the new church could be built quickly.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1824, the bishop, prince de Croy, writes again to the Prefect : "this unfortunate parish has much trouble to succeed in an enterprise which already has cost her so many efforts and encountered so many obstacles. I recommend her again with my most vital interest. It would be sad for her that she could not take profit of the coming season to start putting her hands on work."

In April of the same year, the plan of the new church is presented. In June the prefect's authorization to acquire the necessary plots, follows. At first the intention was to have it built on the same place as the old one, but now a new site is considered, as vicar Thannenberger writes to the bishop (June 1824) : above the main road, in the center of the locality, so that the celebrations might be held in the old church during the construction of the new one. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 1824, the prefect sends to the bishop the new project established by the architect of the Department, as well as the deliberation dated 12<sup>th</sup> of September where the town council gives its assent to the new project.

In May 1825, the plots for the new site of the church are acquired ; an amount of 12,600 francs is voted by the Council to face the expense. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, at time of A. Messner as mayor, the auction of works is made and goes to M. Batitston Christophe, contractor in Fort-Louis. These works consisted first in the demolition of three buildings which the commune had bought from families Schmitt, Daul and Kieffer. But (July 1825) the acquired plot is insufficient, it was necessary to acquire also the plot of Joseph May, barreler (570 square meters). On this very time, vicar Thannenberger celebrates his golden mass.

In 1826, under bishop Tharin, the cornerstone is blessed by canon G. Retling. Vicar Voltz in Bischwiller reads the homily lecture. The works start and the construction progresses quickly. An exceptional cutting of wood in the communal forest is decided to cover the expense. In 1828 the foundations are done ; works to finish the church, and mainly the bell-tower should be postponed until 1829. In 1830, these works are achieved and the accounts made in 1831. According to a report of mayor Messner to the Prefect, the expense is amounting to 48,621,82 francs. The new church can be set on service during the same year. It measures 38,40 m in length, and is 27,30 m broad. It can contain a population of 3000 people. Its consecration took place on 02 October 1831.

In August 1832 is found a big file on the construction, footage, reception of works and on the wall closing.

Now the interior part must be furnished in material. The benches are bought in years 1833 and 1839. And immediately follows the serious question of altars, main altars and side ones (1835). The inspector of the direction of departmental affairs cares very much for it as he wants to create a beautiful work. The project consists of four parts : master-altar with tabernacle and six candlesticks, stalls and paneling of the choir, two lateral altars, three large paintings one of them in the choir, behind the main altar, and both others, above the lateral altars. The town council votes a credit of 10,000 francs, as proposed by the architect. The works consist of sculptures, paintings and gildening.

The plans are made, the three altars erected by specialized craftsmen and artists who sculpt pictures.

But the town council and mayor Helmer have objections. The work has been done in conformity with plans and estimates, but "the local authority is not satisfied with the pictures" so writes the discontented master of works. In a long report to the Prefect, he writes that : "the pictures with which I am personally satisfied have been exposed in the former hotel of lottery in Strasbourg.... the patrons of arts who examined them have the same judgment as myself. These pictures have been made by M. Guerin, the best painter in Strasbourg and probably in the department, and the contractor of altars has done all he could in employing the most distinguished artist".

The contractor was Fr. Jos. Imbs, gilder-sculptor, helped by Christian Wurm, joiner-cabinet-maker in Bischheim. The painter in question, Gabriel Christophe Guérin (1790-1846) was the curator of the museum of painting of Strasbourg, portraitist, painter of great repute, who worked for the cathedral of Strasbourg (painting of the *Adoration of Shepherds* in the sacristy).

He created a large painting, still existing, representing St. Michael, patron of the church, crushing Lucifer. The paintings of the side altars for which we do not have more precise information, represented Our-Lady and Saint Wendelin, very much darkened, they are no longer in the church of Soufflenheim. To the decoration of the sanctuary are added the pulpit and four confessional boxes, which come from the monastery of Koenigsbruck, suppressed at the time of French Revolution.



The Bell Tower of the Church of Soufflenheim, Henri Bacher, 1906, Courtesy of Marc Elchinger



Vicar Thannenberger, who had the joy to see the sanctuary finished, dies in 1837, he had worked relentlessly for its completion.

In 1839 a new vicar, Louis Cazeaux, comes in, he was native of Klingenthal where he was born in 1803, and where his father was captain of an important industrial manufacturer of arms. Having started as a vicar in the cathedral of Strasbourg, he inaugurates his arrival in Soufflenheim by the acquisition of two new bells created by the bell founder Edel in Strasbourg. He was a very active priest.

The organ had been repaired in 1819 by Xavier Mockers, son of Jean Mockers who had died in 1814. But it had now to be adapted to the new larger church. In 1845 the old instrument was replaced by a new one.

Vicar Cazeaux cared very much for the instruction of young people and gave in this a sum of 18,000 francs. He was also responsible of the building of a new vicar's house (1838). Several times, raised the question of the Brotherhood of the Rosary, created in 1839, but going back to the 18th century in fact. Now, a vicar is helping the curate ; his salary of 250 francs yearly grows up to 350 francs in 1864, to be paid by the public treasury. Cazeaux left Soufflenheim in 1859 after 22 years of devotion to duty, to be in charge of the parish of Saint-Jean in Strasbourg ; he was buried in Soufflenheim.

Concerning the church, works of restoration were started as soon as 1856 and followed in 1859, for painting (deliberation of council 09 August, mayor Friedmann).

In 1872, the vicar M. Gsell sends to the bishop a plan of the larger new master-altar. A first project did not find the approbation of Martin, architect. The mayor of Soufflenheim (this is the beginning of the German period) had another one drawn by the architect of the arrondissement of Haguenau, named Bernhardt, which the town council found better. Mgr. Raess, bishop, was asked to approve. The auction will find place by way of competition and the execution will be trusted to the artist whose submission will offer the best advantage to the commune, that will pay for the cost. In these years (1876), it was also spoken about erecting a spire above the bell-tower, which project was also established by the architect of the arrondissement, but not executed.

Vicar Gsell had replaced vicar Bangratz (from 1860 to 1870) and managed the parish from 1871 to 1890 ; he was in charge of the elevation of a new master altar.

## **The Schools and City Hall**

From the beginning of the 19th century, the question of schools (boys' school, girls' school) preoccupies the town council of Soufflenheim. In the preceding century, school was well attended. The municipality is attached to a good quality of education and comfortable classrooms, and this at a time when attending school was not obligatory and where the commune was the only one to care for it. It is to the honor of the municipality to have been in charge of the question of education of youth. A deliberation of the town council (01 August 1812) announces the establishment of the Sisters of Providence (Sisters of Ribeauville) in the commune. It has been decided to have a house built for them, and the necessary funds are voted mid November 1812 ; the school for girls finds its place there. In December 1819, a deliberation of the Council reminds that in year 1813, upon establishment of the Sisters of Providence in our commune, "Antoine Messner, former mayor, had a house built to accommodate the sisters, and hold the girls' school" for a total amount of 1000 francs of the time. We do not know what this school looked like.

In 1813, Mockers, director of the school, receives a gratification to thank him for the good service rendered. Bernard Hess, native of Bühl, is the new teacher named by the Prefect by decree. In 1820, J. Martin Hohl is named his schoolmaster aid.

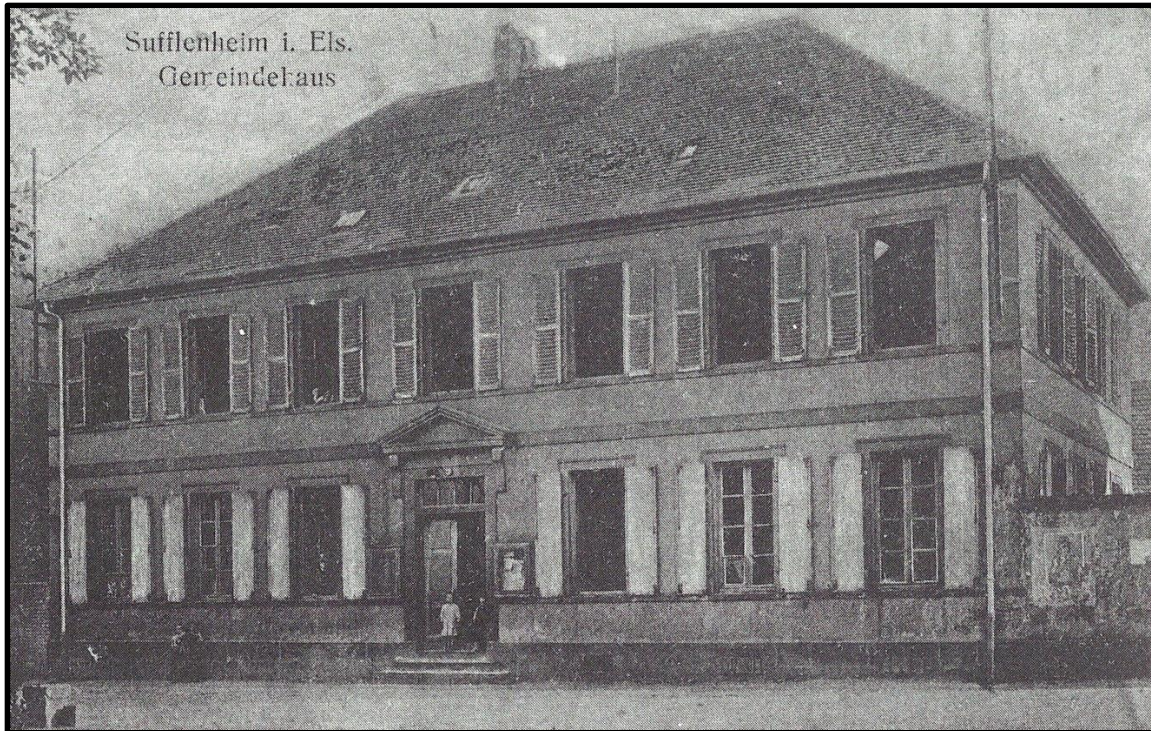
As the population of the village is increasing largely at this period, and so the number of children going to school, the issue is at the forefront of concerns of the community. The committee of primary school education of the district of Bischwiller writes to the rector. A word of prince de Croy, bishop, is added to the request ; this high dignitary writes : "having visited the place, I can only highly recommend this case to M. Rector. The comity has mentioned that "the boys' classroom for 400 boys and the lodging of the schoolmaster are left in the most shameful state of ruin". The state of the girls' school is just as disastrous : "two or three impetuous men in the council want that this establishment of Sisters of Providence School would be abandoned, and the chief of the commune does not want nor can give another boost to the question". The situation so is very critical. In July 1820, the town council mentions the insufficient means of the commune, but the Prefect insists on the necessity of works to be made. In fact, the question is to have a new house for Sisters built.

In 1821, a deliberation of the council dated the 6<sup>th</sup> of December indicates that "the present city hall consists, besides the lodging of the school master downstairs, in a classroom for boys on the same level. But "it is not large enough to receive the totality of the schoolboys". We are obliged to use another room upstairs as second classroom. This is not a good solution. So the town council decides to demolish the house of the town shepherd and to build on this place a house with an upper floor; it will contain three classrooms for the three sisters of Providence and on the upper floor a room for the city hall.

So was done : on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1821, is taken the decision of having a new city hall built with ground level and one upper floor, 16,64 m in length, 10 m breadth. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1822 we find : amount devoted to the construction of city hall and Sisters' school : 20,000 francs. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 1822 the auction of works for construction for the new city hall and for the Sister's school takes place. Works progress rather quickly, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 1824 the final measurements and receipt of works are executed for the construction of the city hall and school. On 16 August 1824, vicar Thannenberger blesses the new town hall and girls school, in presence of Mayor Antoine Messner. In January 1826, a third sister of the Providence comes into Soufflenheim, and a supplementary credit is voted by the town Council.

But nothing is known about the boy's school ; they probably must have been lodged in the old building. On 24 August 1828 a new agreement is reached between the commune and the schoolmaster : he must manage the teaching, ring the angelus three times in the day, pay the schoolteacher's help ; he receives a salary of 800 francs each year, 30 measures of wood. He enjoys a plot of commune land and a free lodging. In 1831 only, the case comes back on first place, as the church had been built at this time. On 27 August, the council deliberates on the question of school buildings. It declares that "the schoolhouse for boys is an old unhealthy building and nearly ruined, the girls' schoolhouse is inside the city hall which is not convenient". A new proposition is made: the former church offers enough space to contain both schools", the ground level could serve as boys' school; a first floor could be built above and receive the girls' school, the choir and sacristy would offer lodgings for the sisters, the inferior part of the bell tower would make "a good lodging" for the schoolmaster, whereas the tower would be demolished to the level of the nave. On the same time, the ban guard's house would be transferred to the city hall; in this one, one room would serve as prison, the present lodging of the schoolteachers would turn into lodging for the scribe. The old school houses could be sold.





The town hall, built in 1924.



The church (1831) and the boys' school (1871).

But this project does not prove as good as it first looks to be. As soon as January 1833, the council renounces it. The old church will be demolished, and on its place will be built a new school near the new church. In the session on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September, mayor Messner proposes that a new school house will be built, and provides for an expenditure of 30,000 francs for it. On the same year, plans and estimates are sent by the mayor to the Prefect in a thick file.

This project is realized in 1833 and 1834, under new mayor Helmer; a boy's school and a girl's school.

There is no more heard of the schools, except in 1838, concerning the furniture of the boys' school.

This work of construction is completed in 1844 by the installation of infant school thanks to vicar Cazzeaux who pays for it. It opens the 1st of November of the same year. By decision of the town council dated the 6<sup>th</sup> of October, this infant school must be opened freely to all infant children; it will be managed by a Sister of the Divine Providence, to whom a laic help will be joined.

After Mockers, the Director of the school who died in 1814, several school teachers followed to care for the youth. In 1853, they were replaced by the Brothers of the Christian Doctrine; in fact, in November of this year, the town council voted a specific credit for three beds (326 francs) "for the Brothers schoolteachers of this commune".

But, as a consequence of the increase in population, the school does not suffice any longer. In year 1869 the construction of a new boy's school is started, which will be ended only in 1871, the time when Alsace turns German ; it costs 64,000 marks.

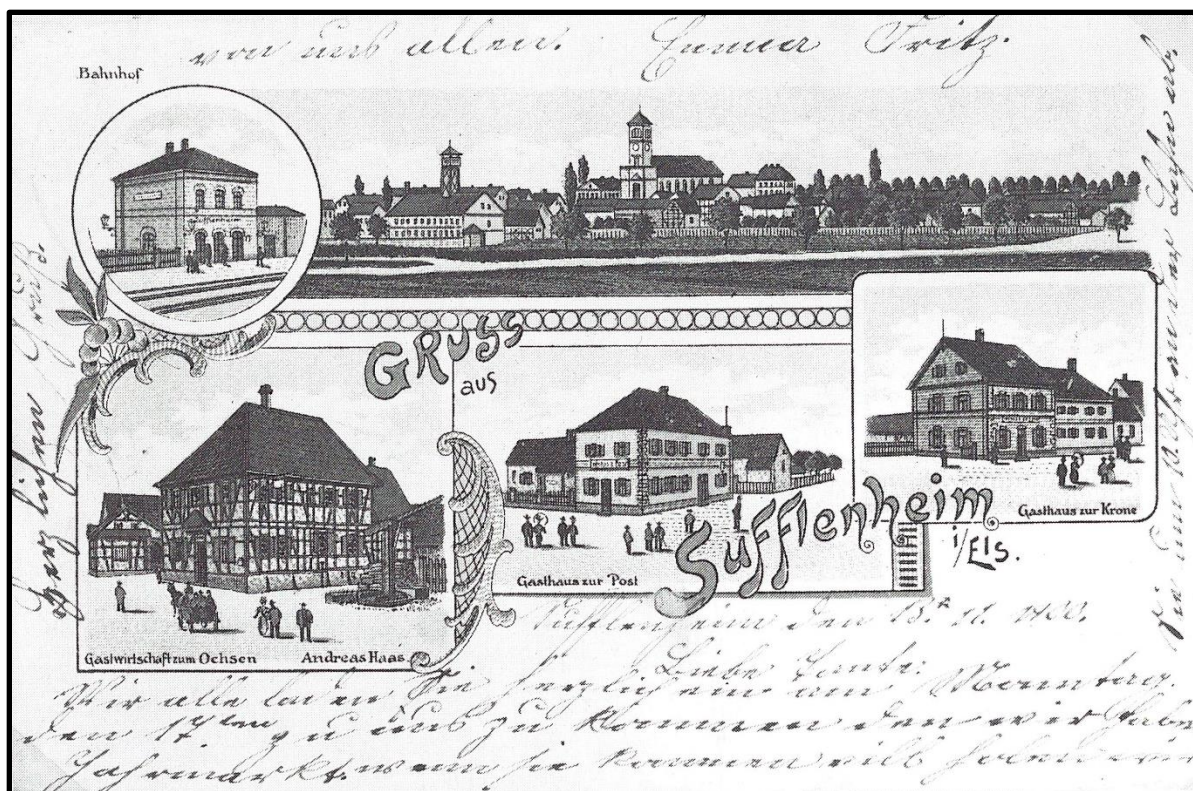
### **Village Life In The 19th Century**

Following the increase of population in the first two decades of the century (1800-1820), the fields did not suffice any longer, and it was decided on clearing of woods near the village. The division between people of the commune land prescribed by the Revolution authority had not been followed. So that in fact, the commune owned large properties, over 800 hectares, which, divided in lots, were rented to people for a given period. Large property did not exist. According to lists of 1836, 1846 and 1856, there were from 100 to 110 farming places, all of middle or small size. The cultivated land was divided according to the use of three years shift ; the Oberfeld, and Mittelfeld on the terrace and the Niederfeld in the better land of Ried which besides this contained mainly meadows. This Ried still was a wet area, where many ditches went through, and often overflowed. Now the prominent culture was potatoes and beetroot. Cattle raising was mainly horses (necessary for work in the forest) large cattle and pigs. All this farming activity was based on consumption of what was produced and not on commercialization.

So that the many houses built at this period stay of small size : one ground level with a large roof. Some of them still date back to the 18th century : 1724, 1730.

Besides farming which occupied about 1000 people (33,47% of the population in 1866), Soufflenheim counted this year many craftsmen : masons, joiners, carpenters, painters (about 10% of the population). About 800 persons lived on ceramics and pottery (26,26% of the population). Near them lived the tailors and cloth workers: dyers, shoe menders, wooden shoe makers, about 164 (nearly 6%). Those who worked on food, bakers, millers, butchers, inn landlords, in number of 174 represented nearly 6%, the carters, those working for carrying wood, and products of ceramic and pottery were 170 : 6% also. So that the craftsmen represented about 50% of the population, the rest were merchants. It is however to note that many craftsmen were also farmers. They were craftsmen-farmers.





Postcards from the end of the XIXth century.





As to industry, besides pottery, which at that time produced its most beautiful specimens, some tile factories and brick factories were created. In 1825, L. Bastiton, from Fort-Louis, contractor of the construction of the church, asks the prefect his authorization to install in Soufflenheim two ovens for the fabrication of tiles and bricks, and in the same year, a lime oven. He was granted these authorizations. In 1835, Joseph Messner, wood merchant, asks the Prefect to be authorized to build a tile factory in the ban, 1 km away from the forest, to make refractor tiles. It will be sited near other existing tile factories. Sometime later, Joseph Haasser asks a similar authorization for a brick factory, and he obtains the authorization through permission given by king Louis-Philippe (January 1847). This industry will remain well rooted in the commune. To be noted that in 1837, 55 workshops of pottery had been counted, employing over 600 persons and that this profession was at this time at its peak.

In 1828, the Prefect authorizes M. Titôt and Chastellux, contractors of the jail in Haguenau, to establish cotton weaving factories in Soufflenheim ; these will give employment to poor people in the place. However details are not known.

The social situation is far from brilliant in Soufflenheim. A charitable board is founded in 1823 ; its regulation is written in the Deliberations of the town council. It secures some relief weekly to needy people, pays for medicine and for the doctor. Since 1824, the commune has a "health officer". The first one is L. Hild, aged 30 years, native of Offendorf and who passed his exams at the Faculty of Medicine of Strasbourg.

But, due to the lack of employment, many persons are threatened with hunger. The municipality is obliged to make efforts to alleviate misery. In 1827, a charity shop is created, and according to the document, "though at this time the commune has the charge of construction of a new church, it can make the necessary effort". Works are also made to amend and create paths in the ban.

The situation does not improve in the following years. In 1846, according to deliberations of the town council, the mayor insists to pay attention to the misery "of many families without work". Coming back to what had been suggested earlier in 1827, he proposes that a new workshop charity should be created. So that a number of persons are hired to build ditches along the Obermatt fields and on the Niederfeld, against overflows.

In November of the same year, the council accounts for high costs of life, misery and lack of work, it votes a credit of 5.000 francs to the workshop charity. The commune has to suspend a project of having a new organ installed, which would have cost 9,000 francs on estimate. The workshop charity must operate as swiftly as possible.

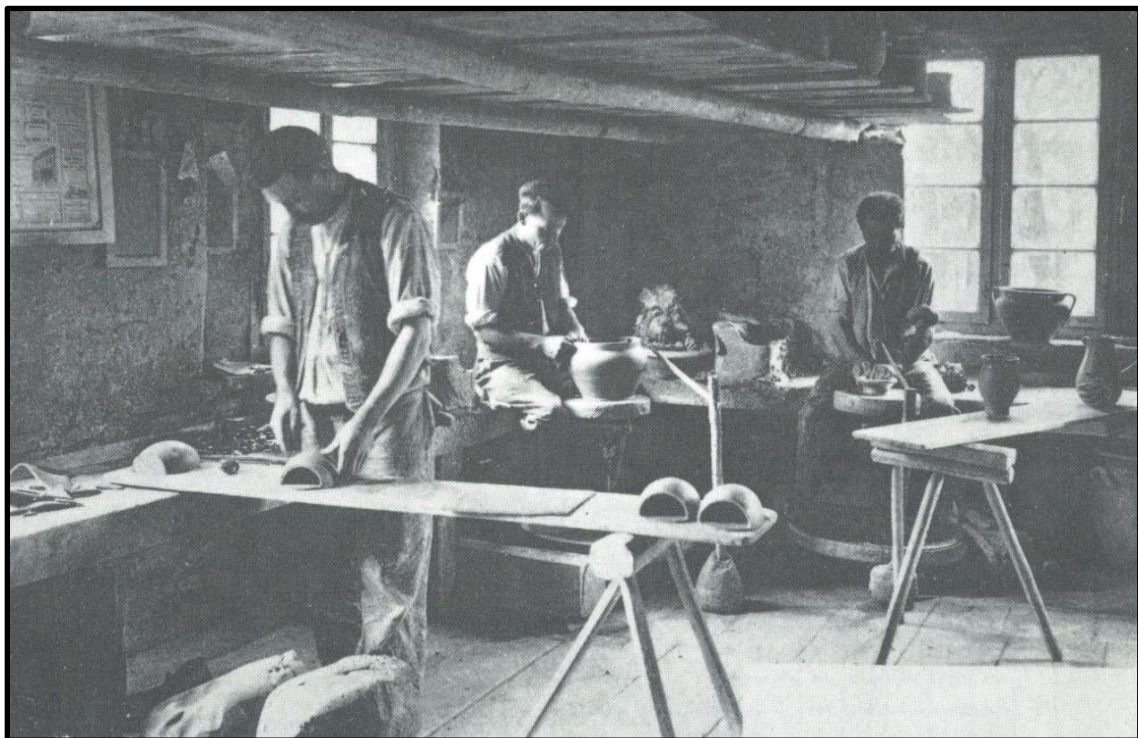
In a general way, in his "Description of the Department of Lower Rhine" prefect Migenet (first volume published in 1858) Soufflenheim counts then five needy persons, three disabled, and five individuals living on assistance. He mentions that a fifth of the population is poor, but the number of the needy is very small, thanks to plenty of work offered by farming, wood cutting, fabrication of bricks and pottery."

The municipality of Soufflenheim is searching for methods to improve the economic situation. In 1838, it takes the opportunity of the law of 10 May to install a market and fairs in the commune. The mayor ask that four fairs be created, but the prefect objects that several already exist in the neighborhood, in Bischwiller, Haguenau, Brumath, Drusenheim, Roeschwoog, Soultz-sous-Forêts, and that he so cannot accede to this request. But the ministry of agriculture gives its authorization (15 December 1829) for a weekly market, each Wednesday.

In 1839, the municipality asks again to have two fairs, one on Monday after the 24<sup>th</sup> of February, and the second on the 1st Monday of September, but once again, the ministry does not accept.



Turning and shaping workshop around 1880.



Workshop around 1880.



Concerning communications, Soufflenheim had a disadvantaged position. The road from Strasbourg, crossing Bischwiller, figures, since 1745, among the provincial roads, but as Migneret mentions in his publication "the extension was just a path without pavement between Bischwiller and Soufflenheim". In 1829, a large part of the road between both points still was natural ground. Stones are only laid down in 1832.

Same for the railway, Soufflenheim had no luck. The railway from Strasbourg through Haguenau to Wissembourg (1855) was 10 km away from the village. So that the products of the industry of ceramics had to be carried by horse drawn carriages to Bischwiller. When later, in 1876, the railway Strasbourg-Lauterbourg was built, Soufflenheim found itself once more in a blind. So that the products had to be driven to the nearest station, Sessenheim. In 1899 only the railway line Rastatt-Haguenau-Saverne was built, and Soufflenheim was one of the stations (1895). The line disappeared after 1945 for passengers.



Railway workers at the opening of the Haguenau-Rastatt Line (1895)

From the beginning of German time in Alsace, attending school became obligatory, a very necessary measure, but in Soufflenheim almost all children were already attending schools. From that time, teaching took place in German language.

The school chronicle (*Schulchronik für die Gemeinde Soufflenheim*) lets us know that boys could be received in a new building from 1871, whereas girls must stay in their old building. This same chronicle,



tells us the school attendance, but only in 1893 : 293 girls, in five classrooms. Teaching is always made by the Sisters of Ribeauvillé, with Sister Alexandrine directing. In 1911, these sisters celebrated the fifty years of their service. Sister Alexandrine receives the thanks of Empress Augusta-Victoria, who sends her a beautiful edition of the Invitation of Jesus Christ. The district director of Haguenau, Pauli, and the inspector of primary school, Wimmer, highly praise her and in particular for the forty two years of her service in Soufflenheim.

After 1900, the yearly chronicle mentions the number of young girls, over 300. It also mentions an exceptional crop of blueberries in 1914, which requires several days off from school. It also echoes the fright of the commune, provoked by the declaration of war, on the 1st of August of the same year.

### **Mayors (Burgermeister) in the 19th Century**

- 1800-1809 : Antoine Messner (der altere)
- 1809-1831 : Antoine Messner (der junge)
- 1831-1837 : Joseph Messner
- 1837-1840 : Martin Helmer
- 1840-1848 : Joseph Messner
- 1848-1855 : M. Brotschy
- 1855-1860 : Andre Friedmann
- 1860-1877 : Ferdinand Uhrig
- 1877-1886 : Jacob Burger
- 1886-1896 : Johann Elchinger (\*)
- 1896-1902 : Dr. Alexandre Schlechter

(\*) Interim assure par Alois Messner, de mai a decembre 1892.

### **Schoolteachers (Hauptlehrer)**

- 1793 to 1812 : Mockers
- 1812 to 1835 : Hess
- 1835 to 1848 : Giguard
- 1848 : Bichler
- 1849 : Buchecker
- 1850 : Feigel
- 1851 to 1853 : Ross
- 1853 to 1873 : permanent change of schoolteachers
- 1873 to 1880 : Seyller
- 1880 to 1893 : Scheidecker, Jacob
- 1893 to 1909 : Schneider, Alfons

## **THE 20TH CENTURY**

## Chapter 7

### 1. The Beginning of the Century.

A ) Before 1914 :

In the first years of the century, the large commune of Soufflenheim demonstrates great activity. As far as demography is concerned, it counts in 1905, 3,265 inhabitants. There are 769 houses, most of them remain of a modest type.

In regard of the economic and social situation, (G. Strack), farming counts between 400 and 500 farms working in 1910. Nearly 751 undertakings occupy 1,990 people, whereas commerce and communications count 127 undertakings occupying 335 persons.

In the agriculture field, large farms (5-20 ha) are not many (54), middle sized (2-5 ha) are in a number of 59, the largest part stay of a modest size (50 ares-2 ha), but many (187), and those containing 0-50 ares, are in a number of 284. A large number of poor people are obliged to find work as laborers. In year 1897, the forest occupies a surface of 388 ha, meadows 387 ha, fields 865 ha.

In year 1910 are planted corn, barley, and oats on a total surface of 252 ha. Potatoes occupy a surface of 120 ha, clover 25, mangel-wurzel 42 ha, hops 23 ha. Gardens cover a large surface. Domestic animals count 120 horses, 476 heads of cattle, 318 pigs.



Conscripts of the Class of 1897.



The handcrafts bring together the most varied trades. Industry are of a small size, tile factories and refractory products occupy 144 persons, ceramic and pottery 253, wood industry and tobacco (with the creation of a cigar factory in year 1905) 115, snaffle-bridles 42, grocery shops count 74 persons, potteries (36) occupy 281 persons. Wooden-shoe makers are in the number of 6.

So that population is the population is therefore divided between small and medium farmers, craftsmen and a few merchants. Among the small farmers, many are workers in industry.

From 1902, the commune is directed by Mayor Philipp Lehmann who remains in his position until 1917. Whereas the communes does not know major difficulties, the situation however is not brilliant. Very many families lead a very modest life.

The First World War causes many troubles in the life of the commune. Material difficulties and restrictions are more and more and harder. The situation of the mayor is very uncomfortable, anguish concerning the mobilized men is a heavy weight on the families.

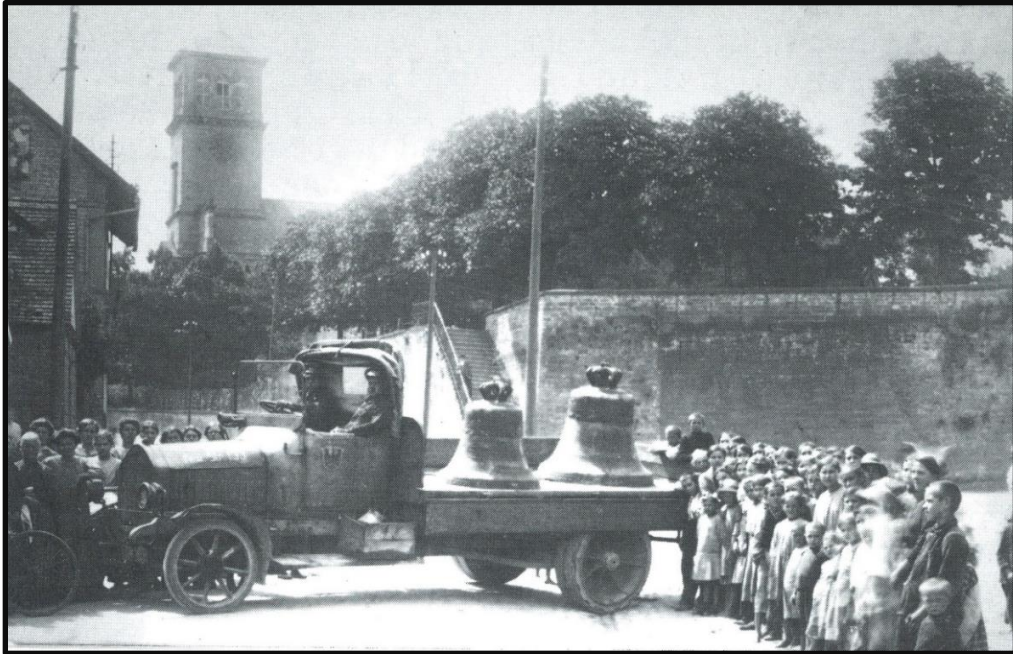


Vicar Julien Schies and the companions of the various trades who collaborated in the construction of the Vereinshaus, 1905



**b) 1918-1939 :**

The events of war do not touch Soufflenheim directly, but the commune deplores the death of many men mobilized in the German army. The sacrifice is important: 92 young men lose their life in cruel tribute to war. Their names are written on the Monument of Dead erected by the commune.



The departure of the required bells, summer 1918.



Roadmakers in the Grand Rue, 1920



In year 1918, Alsace comes back to France. A new period of history begins in the history of the country. It spreads itself to year 1939, until the Second World War. During these twenty years, under mayors Thiel, Haasser, A. Uhrig, A. Strack, E. Ott, F. Jaeck, L. Schlosser, changes take place in the economic and social situation of the village.



Rountzenheim Road around 1920



In the field of agriculture, one still finds the small property, but many peasants can take advantage, as formerly, of the commune property, which are rented to them by the mayor and allow them to cultivate larger areas. But the traditional agriculture is still prominent and farming machinery is almost unknown. In year 1936, are found 76 horses, 200 cows, 322 pigs. So an important decrease in domestic livestock. Mixed activity is important. Families who live only from agriculture are a small minority (8.3 %). As before the craftsmen, blacksmiths, carters, wooden shoe makers, itinerant merchants are at the same time farmers. As well as a number of workers, especially workers in refractory materials factories. So that in year 1936, 24% in the population are craftsmen, 59.5 % work in industry. The percentage of merchants is small. Social classes are not do clearly distinct. Agriculture is still based on self-consumption. Its produce is not commercialized.

Industry has started in Soufflenheim very early, starting with pottery, which was a family activity mainly. Tiles factories, refractory products factories stay of a small size and continue to work in a traditional way, offering small salaries.

But now, in year 1936, several industries open in Soufflenheim : Shirt factory Marchal with 53 persons, ready-made clothes factory Mavest, with about 100 persons, shoes manufactory Ott & Cie, with over 200 persons employed. A number of workers go every day to work in Haguenau, Bischwiller (15-20) Bischheim (railroad industrial units) and Strasbourg (100-200 persons). Maginot line construction, from 1930, supplies work to about 100 people.

## **2. The Pottery of Soufflenheim in the 20th Century.**

The massive arrival on the market of domestic utensils made of cast iron, enamel and aluminum led to the decline of the pottery industry in the end of the 19th century.

A certain reaction took place owing to a man of initiative : Léon Elchinger. Born in year 1871, he was the son of Philippe Elchinger, potter (1836-1906). Granted with outstanding intelligence, gifted artist, modeler, he made serious studies in specialized schools : the school of Decorative Arts in Strasbourg, Fine Arts school in Nancy, and Karlsruhe, Upper schools of ceramics of Höhr-Greuzhausen. He travelled to improve his knowledge in the field of ceramics : in Germany, in Austria, in France and Italy, even up to Hungary (Zolnay) and England (Stoock and Trent), studying processes, chemical factors, and forms. His French letters sent back home to his parents, sent from the different countries prove his curiosity, of his studies and possible achievements. Back to Alsace, he creates a workshop of art ceramics, realizes beautiful vases, remarked in the exhibitions of Strasbourg and New York in year 1895. He takes part in international exhibitions in Paris in year 1900, finding much success and winning important prizes. Owing to art ceramics, he opens new horizons, creates monumental works for parks, and buildings, medals and reliefs reminiscent of the Florentine creations of families Luca Della Robia. He is the creator of the façade of the Decorative Arts school in Strasbourg, of 1892, where his fellow artist in his promotion were Henri Loux, painter, and Henri Ott, glazier. Whereas the Director is Anton Seder at this time. He designed a large wall fountain now found in the museum of Bern. Using new methods, new chemical combinations, he covers his creations with a wonderful brilliant tinge, close to the color of bronze or of silver, or gold, and this in the well-stylized forms of the beginning of the 20th century.

At this time in Alsace, art knows a period of remarkable renewal. L. Elchinger, participates to it with his friends Ch. Spindler, G. Ritleng, who considered him as the "Hannong of contemporary ceramists in Alsace" (1907) ; also Cammissar and Weiss, and the sculptors used gladly the clay from Soufflenheim in their creations ; among them Ringel in Illzach, and A. Marzloff who worked in Rountzenheim. So that



Soufflenheim, in the beginning of the century, became a center for Alsace art. Publishing his "Memories", G. Ritleng describes Leon Elchinger : I had much regard and affection towards this upright man, sober in his clothing, gestures and words, but deep in feelings, rich of knowledge, exempt of boasting, unaffected and never bragging."



Fired Stoneware by Leon Elchinger (1900)





So, L. Elchinger worked for a new development of the Alsace ceramics. He also took part actively in the Alsace political life before 1914. He is the representative of the district of Bischwiller at the Bezirkstag (General Council) from 1912 to 1918.

After the Second World War and the return of Alsace to France, Soufflenheim continues to produce a large part of the culinary and decorative pottery, including dinner sets, small figurines (groups of Alsace dancers) others of religious inspiration. In the 1920 years, the workshop of L. Elchinger supplies several communes with monuments to the Dead with low-reliefs out of colored ceramics ; the Pieta of the graveyard in Haguenau, Resurrection of Christ in Niederbronn, Christ on Cross in Richtolsheim, memorials to de Dead in Auenheim, Ergersheim, and others; statues of Christ, scenes of nativity, Our Lady and the Infant Jesus, Saints were very frequently his subject. On the mount of Olives (Oelberg) in Soufflenheim, is found a large representation of the Last Supper created on occasion of a religious meeting (Eucharistic district congress in year 1932). The figures, in full size, are executed after the famous painting of Leonardo de Vinci. Under the direction of L. Elchinger, the ceramists Ch. Burger and the young son of Léon, (1932) participated in its creation.



The Holy Supper by Leon Elchinger at the foot of the Oelberg (1932).

The masterpiece of ceramics of Soufflenheim by Elchinger is the monumental Stations of the Cross of Mount Sainte Odile. Very original, expressive, of a deep religious feeling, also proving a fine technical success, it was realized during years 1933-1935. We can add the Stations of the Cross in basilica Our-Lady of Lourdes in Nancy (1936-1937). With the Calvary, erected south out of Soufflenheim (1937) ends the unique in France series of realizations of L. Elchinger. He experienced the general debacle of 1940,



came back to Alsace where he died in 1942, while his two sons, Raymond and Arthur, the future bishop of Strasbourg, had stayed in France ; only Fernand continued the undertaking ; G. Ritleng wrote about him that “he counts today among the best of the ceramic industry. He worked successfully in the years following the war until the 1970s, during which period he enlarged and develops the undertaking with eighty employees and workers (around 1960).

Pottery in Soufflenheim flourished again after 1945. One more slow down took place after 1950, when the market is saturated by industrial mass production. But from 1960 it knew another rise, still staying however of a traditional and familial type. A large French and international public is interested again in the fine pottery of Soufflenheim, as well in cooking utensils and decorative objects (ash-trays, flower-pots, vessels for various functions) or as “memories from Alsace”. So that the production of pottery of Soufflenheim has known a renewal, and is appreciated by a large number of customers. The family undertakings in number of about a dozen, are real hearts of popular art, and continue to create a pottery of good taste and of good presentation, which bring the reputation of “Soufflenheim” label into European countries as well as far to America and Japan.



The cantonal Eucharistic congress of 1932

### **3. The Second World War.**

In September 1939, the second world war bursts out. According to plans established previously, evacuation of villages situated along the Rhine, among them Soufflenheim, is organized. The exodus is long and hard, people leave their house and property, their heart full of anguish for their future. The trip

takes place days long in cattle wagons. They disembark in the department of Haute-Vienne, in Ambazac, and divide into nine communes in the vicinity. Times are very hard because of all type of shortages. Only several weeks later, people start living again. A good atmosphere reigns with the local population, in spite of the difficulties of language. Finally, everybody finds good lodging, and with a 10 francs allowance to each person, the Alsace population receives satisfactory supplies. Mavest factory is created in Ambazac, allowing a number of people to earn money. However, sorrow is still present in their minds, and home sickness prominent : when and how will we see our village again ?

For months, nothing happens on the Rhine front. In May 1940, the German offensive is launched, breaking the French front and, after weeks of fight, France is vanquished. On the Rhine, the German army attacks in June. In Soufflenheim the bombing causes considerable destruction, many houses are totally destroyed or damaged. When the French troops withdraw, they smash the bridges on the Eberbach and the Fallgraben.

The evacuated population can only come back in the fall of year 1940, and finds houses in very bad state, a large number of them have been plundered. Long months are necessary to bring the village back to good order, and this under the Nazis domination. The spirit in population is low, but everyone must resign and work in spite of the outstanding anxiety. The constraints of the Nazi government are suffered with dignity. The forced incorporation of young men into the German army (1942) causes a large discontent and anxiety.

The anxiety is increased considerably when in autumn 1944, the German debacle takes place. In November, the liberation of Strasbourg takes place, and in December, the American troops hold Soufflenheim. The situation of the village is not great because the fire of the German artillery, installed on the other side of the Rhine, causes damage and a growing concern. Finally, in January 1945, when the Germans launch their last offensive near Belgium, the Americans withdraw to Haguenau, and the people of Soufflenheim with them. This is a second and painful exodus, with uncertain means, often on foot in the snow, in direction of Mommenheim. From there people are conducted by trains to Vesoul and dispatched to the department of Haute-Saône. During long weeks, they endure a painful life.

On the 21st of January 1945, Soufflenheim is occupied again by the German troops. From this time, the village is bombed by the American artillery. In the following weeks, the French troops hold the dikes of Bischwiller up to the Rhine. On the 15th of March the Franco-American offensive is launched in direction of Lauterbourg. It begins by the attack on Oberhoffen camp, held by the German army. On the 17th of March, Soufflenheim is freed by the 3rd DIA (Division of Algerian Infantry) without a fight. But the degradations in the village are considerable. Many houses are badly damaged, a large number of them have been plundered. The percentage of war damage is over 50%.

The Germans are beaten. The right side of the Rhine is conquered by the French troops of General de Lattre de Tassigny, and Germany is forced to capitulate in the beginning of May 1945.

At this time, the majority of the population of Soufflenheim comes back to the place and finds it in a deplorable situation. Progressively, during the following months and years, repairs and reconstructions are done, until around 1952.

At this time, Soufflenheim is in the end restored of afflictions. In year 1948, the War Cross is granted to the village.





Soufflenheim, Occupied (1942)







Soufflenheim Liberated (17 March 1945)



#### **4. Soufflenheim From 1945.**

The years after the war saw the rebuilding of the village, and at the same time a large scale action directed by the mayors and their town council, active and efficient in the development of their commune.

From 1945, the mayors are Louis Schlosser, helped by the deputy mayors E. Haasser and G. Hickel. This last one, who died in year 1948, was replaced by Eugène Knepfler. In 1965, Aloise Scheydecker is elected mayor, on his side E. Wernert and S. Albrecht are his deputy-mayors ; later, in year 1977, E. Hickel and F. Balbierer and again S. Albrecht. In year 1983, Jean-Pierre Meyer, a teacher, succeeds him. His deputy-mayors are V. Merckel, J.P. Speeg and B. Rael.

During these periods, we can note important achievements: following the wish of the municipality, a secondary school is created whose construction was carried out from 1968 to 1969. From 1970, the number of students is 628. They come in large numbers from Soufflenheim and from thirteen surrounding municipalities. The motor-coaches of Eschenlauer Company is in charge of picking up these students.

From 1968, well developed sports societies have a gymnasium at their disposal. From 1970, a municipal hall serves the needs of trade. On each Wednesday, the market takes place, and other local events, such as Messti in spring (3rd Sunday of May) and autumn (2nd Sunday of October), are held there. Five fairs take place on a Monday in March, May, August, October and December.

In addition, village associations are equipped with new equipment with the financial support of local, departmental and regional authorities. Such as the new playing field of the Football Club, the so called majorettes and minorettes, as well as the theatrical section, build their clubhouse. The associations of fishermen and fish-breeding fits up a new pond, and the tennis club receives two courts. The town music and the senior section settle into new places inside the Socio-Cultural Center. In fact, all societies, whether in the sporting or cultural field, significantly improve their reception and way of functioning, which proves their vitality.

As Soufflenheim increases its population after the War, subdivisions are carried out with all the necessary approvals.

From 1954, is found the development of the Erzlach-Judenweg, which counts 72 houses and its extension, in year 1970, of 16 new houses ; the second development counts 48 houses in year 1964, it is situated on the so named Unter-Erzlach place.

The extension of both developments, situated on the northern outskirts of the commune, are possible with the creation in 1973 of a development zone on the eastern side of the village. A first portion counts 92 houses, a second one in 1977 counts 79 ; a nursery school is created in 1984, followed by a second extension of the zone.

To these achievements are necessarily added the water supply carried out from 1954 by the intercommunal Syndicate of water supply of Soufflenheim and surrounding places ; then the other one, as important, building the pipeline and a first water treatment plant (1957-1958). This first one is replaced in year 1979 by a new one, which can supply for 7000 people. Recently, the commune receives natural gas, which since 1983 supplies the pottery ovens and some houses. Electric connection dates back to the beginning of the century.

In year 1967 a major increase of the graveyard takes place, the surface is nearly doubled in size. The town hall is subject to large improvement in year 1976, so that this building is today worthy of the name.



In September 1984 the new Soufflenheim emergency center was inaugurated on the recently acquired municipal land, thus providing the municipality and its surroundings with essential equipment for the security of the population.

The first Memorial to the Death of Soufflenheim, close to the church, was created by sculptor Marzolf. It represents Joan of Arc. It was destroyed during the Second World War. A new war memorial, by the sculptor Steuzel, was erected on General Leclerc Place.



War memorial of Marzolf destroyed during the Second World War.



The creation of the Savings Bank of Soufflenheim, important to the population, dates back to 1886. Since 1948, it has been part of the group of the Savings Bank of Haguenau. The Mutual Bank for Savings and Loans, which also provides great services, exists since 1897. In the meanwhile, the Agriculture Credit Bank and the Alsace General Bank Society have established agencies, proof of the economic activity of the place.

Concerning the church, it had to be repaired after the damage caused by the war. Since 1943, new glass pieces by glazier Bohl were installed. In year 1955, the inside renovation takes place, thanks to Robert Gall, artist and painter from Colmar, and to canon Burger, vicar of the parish. In year 1976, a new renovation is directed by Gustave Stossopf, architect. A new altar is installed. A mobile separation, surmounted by a large stain-glass window, separates the nave from the choir which, during the week, is used for offices. In the same place, in an ecumenical spirit, are celebrated the services of the evangelical worship. A new Christmas crib is offered by potters René Beck and Jean-Pal Frindel. The chapel of the choir receives a new ceramic representation of the Stations of the Cross by the Elchinger workshop.

The Stiehr-Mockers organ dating back to 1850 is restored and renovated by the organ-builder Gaston Kern who replaces the air-pump traction of Roethinger (1932) with a mechanical one.

The choir-organ of the instrument finds again its voice, and the organ now counts three keyboards, one pedal-board, thirty stop-keys, and two thousand flutings. So that, thanks to the hard work of Vicar Martin Boell, disposes now of a remarkable sanctuary and of a new parish hall in the yard of the presbytery.

This last one in fact replaces the former Charitable Institutions House (Vereinshaus) of 1905, work of abbot Schies, which was acquired in year 1980 by the commune. This large neo-gothic building was restored and renovated with a large expense of money to become to socio-cultural center (1980-1981). Built in year 1905, it was the heart and soul of the cultural and sporting life of the community. This center is managed by the parish. During the thirty years, exceptional theatrical representations take place, attracting the crowd from the neighborhood. Some of us still remember the representation of Joan of Arc, a work in prose and music by vicar Klein.

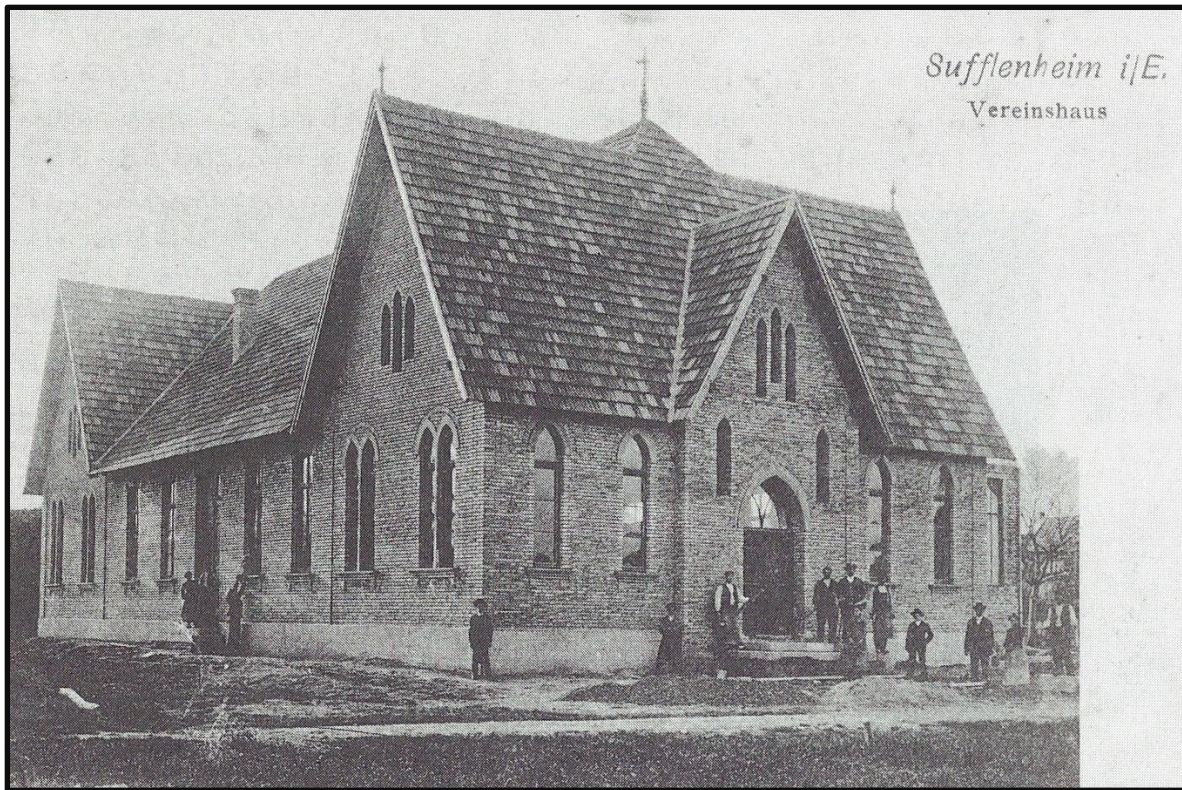
The restoration of the Last Supper scene in 1981, as well as the development of the park of the Oellberg confers on this place, in the heart of the city, a deep peaceful feeling

The economic and social situation evolves strongly in the years following 1950.

From a demographic point of view, we note, as always after a period of war, an important increase of population. Whereas in year 1941, we number only 3375 persons, in year 1954, the population reaches 3622, in 1962 3860 people, and reaches over 4000 in 1968. In year 1975, the census gives 4281 persons, in 1982, 4462.

The evolution of agriculture is on a negative scale. In 1936, 28 farms are declared, in year 1956, stay only 14, in 1965 remain 4 and in 1980, just one. The farmers have disappeared from Soufflenheim. In year 1956 subsists one farmer exploiting an area between 15 and 20 acres, 4 are between 10 and 15, 12 are between 5 and 10 acres, and 17 between 2 and 5 acres. In year 1954 farmers represent no more than 4% of the population, in year 1965 the number has diminished to 2.5%

As to the cattle, in year 1956 you still number 32 horses, 96 heads of large cattle, and 42 pigs ; the number decreases in the following years, so that today are still left, in year 1984, 3 cows. The craftsmen and workmen still keep a small farming activity, but there too you can see that the farming-craftsman disappears after the Second World War.



The Vereinshaus, built in 1905

However, the municipality has an agricultural policy through reforestation and the regrouping of communal land which covers 814 ha. These are rented, by loan of 9 years, to farmers in the vicinity who continued faithfully the farming activity : 13 in Sessenheim, 5 in Schirrhein, and 4 in Rountzenheim others in Stattmatten, Roeschwoog, Roppenheim and Fort-Louis. Thus, the lands of Soufflenheim are revalued. But it is regrettable that the young generation have neglected their ancestors' work, to choose the field of the industry, which indeed supplies better remuneration and social welfare to them.

The craftwork activity which in year 1954 reached a percentage of 16.4% in the population, maintains its position and percentage in the following years. Indeed between 1936 and 1965 some craftsmen disappear : blacksmiths, carters, wooden-shoe makers, tailors, for example ; but others appear electricians, tinsmiths, sanitary fitters, mechanics. Commerce goes on as well, in spite of the closing of bakeries, butcher shops, or groceries, replaced by small supermarkets, newly created as well as shops of furniture, electric houseware, ready-made clothes, shoes and press shops ; and also all tableware shops, complementary to the local pottery occupation. On the other hand, hotels and restaurants remain surprisingly weak. A number of persons work as employees or clerks in the field of education, banking, town administration or liberal activities.

Most of the workforce is found in local industry and constitutes, by far, the major group with 65% of the active population in year 1958.

Pottery stays a prominent activity and perpetuates the local tradition, but there only stay in year 1955 about ten workshops, essentially with a familial character.

Since 1970, pottery knows a new rise proved by the enlarging of a number of pottery shops. And by the creation of a number of factories (a total of 18 in year 1986.) The factories involved in refractory products employ several hundred people in 6 different undertakings. Today the crisis in the steel industry explains the decrease of their activity, provoking in the 70s the closing of two factories.

Today, we find in Soufflenheim a number of outstanding industries : shoes and ready-made clothes give work in 1954, to 330 persons. Around 1960, industry employs about 1000 people in Soufflenheim.

But a new fact presents itself : whereas industry in Strasbourg does not employ more than about thirty people, same as in Haguenau and Bischwiller, German industry, developed strongly from the 1960s, uses the Alsatian workers.

It offers more advantageous salaries paid in strong foreign bills. In the beginning, the number of workers from Soufflenheim is limited (about twenty in year 1959) but the creation of the bridge in Beinheim-Roppenheim allows people to reach their working point in Germany quicker than Strasbourg. From 1960-65, the number of migrants is in constant increase : 71 in year 1961, 196 in 1963, 206 in 1965. In the 1970s, the number is stable around 250, a number in decline since 1980. Effectively, Germany is also shaken by the industrial crisis striking Europe since 1973.

However, from 1968, it became necessary to overcome the important loss of local workers by calling a number of immigrants from Mediterranean countries, Italians at first, then Spanish, Portuguese and Maghrebin newcomers, finally Turkish. The insertion of this population into the local life was done slowly.

Now, many of them have established themselves in Soufflenheim and some intend to stay there because of the appearance of the second generation which benefits from schooling, medical supervision and other benefits from schooling, medical supervision and other benefits that they might not find in its country of origin, and that they do not wish to loose.

The local industry is still strong, on one side thanks to pottery, the refractory products (Haasser Company from 1864, Lafarge, Knepfler Brothers), on the other side due to the industry of ready-made clothing (Vestra, Vethal) of sporting shoes (Puma established in year 1967, replacing the Ott & Cie company, with 200 persons working there from the beginning) also the industry of wood with Paul Maechler Company which first settled with the Eschenlauer coaches in the new industrial zone, followed later by the building and tool industry.

So, in year 1980, are numbered 450 persons working in the pottery, 150 in the industry of refractory products, and 300 in the textile industry, about 180 in the shoe factories, and about fifty in the wood industry. Handcraft, commerce and tertiary sector occupy 150 people. In total, the amount of employed people of the locality counts about 1700 persons. To this must be added the workers and employees working outside, about 300 people.

In May 1984 are also numbered 111 unemployed, a figure which is likely to worsen with the closure of important manufacturing units in the region such as the Refinery of Herrlisheim, Mechanical Constructions of Lauterbourg, or to the return of persons having worked on the other side of the Rhine, due to the recession in certain industries in Baden district.

However, the commune stays economically strong, and this due to the diversity of its industry, of its commerce and handcraft occupations. The middle size of the undertakings and craft shops confers them a quality of adaptation to the market and flexibility.

A last economical aspect to underline and not the least is : tourism. Soufflenheim with its potteries have become a center of attraction in Northern Alsace. Daily, in summer or winter, hundreds of tourists pour into the city of potters to visit the craft shops. The arrival of this touristic phenomenon not only benefits pottery, but has indirect spinoffs on the general activity of the commune. This is why a tourist office was created in year 1976. Its dynamic character works constantly for the promotion of Soufflenheim, through the organization of the Festival of Pottery, by the creation of a tourists office reception desk, by the drawing up and publishing of documents that make known and will continue to make known this typical and dear village of Alsace.

## **APPENDICES: Page 206**

### **Mayors from 1902 to 1982**

- 1902 to 1917 : Philipp Lehmann
- 1917 to 1918 : H. Van Thiel
- 1918 to 1919 : J. Haasser
- 1919 to 1928 : Alexandre Uhrig (General Counsel in 1925)
- 1928 to 1930 : Antoine Strack (Interim Mayor)
- 1930 to 1937 : Emile Ott
- 1937 to 1938 : Ferdinand Jaeck
- 1938 to 1965 : Louis Schlosser
- 1940 to 1945 : During the occupation, Charles Peter is Burgermeister
- 1965 to 1982 : Aloise Scheydecker
- Since 1982 : Jean-Pierre Meyer

### **School Directors since 1909**

- 1909 to 1910 : Ludwig Ball
- 1910 to 1919 : Albert Nussbaum
- 1919 to 1922 : Gopey
- 1922 to 1945 : Joseph Fournio
- 1945 to 1965 : Paul Gerrlein, who became first principal of the new college
- 1965 to 1975 : Aloise Scheydecker
- Since 1975 : Alphonse Schall

## SOUFFLENHEIM, A LOOK BACK INTO THE PAST

*Soufflenheim, ein Rückblick in die Vergangenheit* (Soufflenheim, A Look Back Into the Past). Translated from German to English with DeepL Translator by Michael J. Nuwer, February 2024. More writings by Michael Nuwer can be found at: <https://sites.google.com/view/nuwerfamilyhistory/home>

### Translators Note

*Soufflenheim, ein Rückblick in die Vergangenheit* and *Soufflenheim, Une cité à la recherche de son histoire* have much in common, including the same "Forward" by the mayor. However, each has its own photographs and information can differ.

Example of differences in the French and German text, in bold.

From the French	From the German
<p>The village has formed itself in the first centuries of the Middle Ages, at a time when the Merovingian and Carolingian kings ruled the new born France, as its name can prove, probably around the VIIIth century.</p> <p><b>The historians indeed admit that the places whose name ends in "heim" are older than those whose names end in "bach, feld, dorf, haus, hof" and who formed themselves in the IXth and Xth centuries.</b></p> <p>What does the name Soufflenheim mean? It will be written from the XIIth century in different ways: Sufelnhem, Suvellheim, Suofflenhem, or Sauflenheim. It has been thought that the root could be the Celtic "sawell" which means burning oven and could apply to the old Soufflenheim potteries (1). It could so mark a continuity in settlement and life, this industry of baked clay having been exerted without interruption</p>	<p>From the VI century to the VIII century, numerous villages were formed, often on the same sites as the previous ones. This was also the case for Sufflenheim, which was founded in the VIII century at the latest. century at the latest.</p> <p><b>Historians assume that the villages on heim auf - ingen are the older ones, and that the villages on: - bach, - feld, - dorf, - haus or -hof were formed later.</b> All the villages were small, consisting of a few farms with only a small population, which gradually increased.</p> <p>One would like to know what the name Sufflenheim means. Later, from the XII. Century, Sufelnheim, Suvelnheim, Suofflenheim also written Sauflenheim. Does the name come from the land, from a stream, from a person, the first owner? It can also be linked to the Suffel stream, which flows 30 km further south, Sufela in the Middle Ages, but the meaning of the name is not known here either. There is another interpretation: Heim: house, residence, settlement, home. <b>In the Franconian-influenced language area, this "heim" has become an "um": Süfflum.</b> Suvelnheim = home near the "Sawelln", i.e. near the furnaces.</p>

## **Contents**

### **Soufflenheim, A Look Back Into the Past**

- I. To Prehistoric Times.
- II. The Grangia of Neuburg Abbey.
- III. The Rich Village of Sufflenheim.
- IV. The Potters of Sufflenheim.
- V. Church and Parish.
- VI. Sufflenheim from the XVIIth Century Onwards.
- VII. Sufflenheim Potter, Yesterday and Today.

### **Soufflenheim, a Look Back Into the Past**

Blessed by nature with riches and beauty, Alsace has been famous for centuries as a land of highly developed culture. But it is also admired for the creativity and achievements of its hard-working population. Agriculture and viticulture, the numerous industrial enterprises, the fruitful initiatives in the economic and intellectual fields and, last but not least, artistic creation have given the country its importance.

Sufflenheim, located in the north of Alsace, 30 km from Strasbourg and 15 km from Hagenau, is one of these villages famous for its artistic creations. For many centuries, it has been home to a pottery industry that has attracted the attention of the Alsatian population and an interested European public.

#### **I - To Prehistoric Times.**

The Sufflenheim pottery trade is due to the occurrence of layers of loam or clay in the Hagenau forest. This material is easy to mold and is also fireproof. These very important properties were already recognized by prehistoric man, who began to use these clays to make vessels.

In distant geological times, millions of years ago, the streams of the Northern Vosges carried these materials and deposited them in thick banks covered by pebbles and sands. The Hagenau Forest was formed on the latter.

In the Neolithic period (around 5000-2000 BC), the first people settled in the area, on the edge of the dry terrace overlooking the wet Rhine lowlands. We have to imagine that dense forests, through which the streams meandered, stretched out everywhere; that these first people had to work very hard to survive. They built low huts covered with leaves and branches, kept domestic animals and devoted themselves to primitive agriculture. They sought out the better soils, not the damp lowlands, and used the forest for the necessary firewood and timber, as well as for grazing cattle. A first small community developed. However, it is not known where these people came from or which ethnic group they belonged to.

Gradually, the lives of these people improved, especially during the Bronze Age, 2000 or 1800 years before Christ. They became acquainted with metals, first copper and then a compound of copper and tin called bronze, which was harder and much easier to use than soft copper. However, these metals were not found in our region, but came from distant lands. The settlers or new arrivals also devoted themselves to agriculture, both in cleared areas in the forest and in the Rhine lowlands, although less so in the Ried,



as it was too often flooded. The forest was also used in particular for fattening acorns for the herds of pigs.



Haguenau Historical Museum. Middle Bronze Age burial  
(1550-1200 BC). Haguenau Forest, canton of Kurzgeland, mound 7, burial II

Here, in the dry sandy soil, the dead also found their burial places, in tumuli, which can be found in large numbers in the vicinity of Sufflenheim.

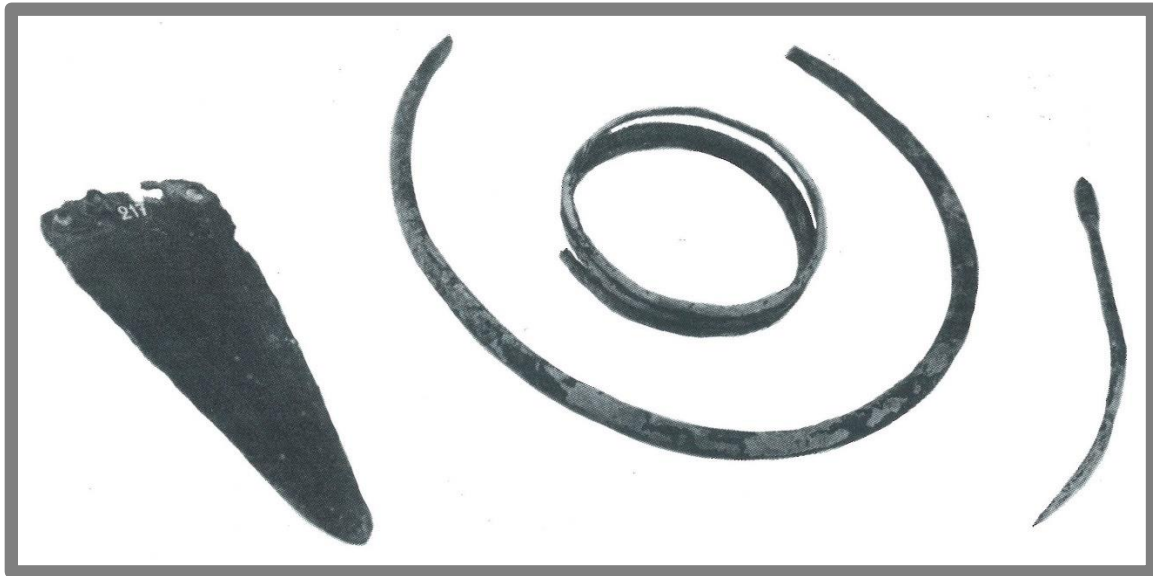
In the last century, these burial mounds were investigated by an eminent archaeologist, Xavier NESSEL, mayor of Haguenau. He carried out numerous excavations and made rich finds: bones, axes, knives and other utensils, especially pottery in large numbers, in various shapes and sizes. These are kept in the Haguenau Museum.

At the beginning of our century, the Strasbourg archaeologist F.A. SCHAFFER studied these finds in detail and published a large-scale work with numerous illustrations: "Les tertres funéraires préhistoriques dans la forêt de Haguenau, Tome I" and "Les tumulus de l'Age de Bronze" (Haguenau 1926), which he followed up in 1930 with a second volume "Les tumulus de l'Age de Fer".

In this work of great scientific value, he showed that these tumuli, small mounds of earth about 20 meters long and wide, are usually grouped in clusters of 20, 30 or more, especially near Sufflenheim. They testify that this place on the higher terrace was already settled in early times, where the Brumbach joins the Eberbach and where the Rhine lowlands are dominated. The "Kürzgeländ" plot near Sufflenheim contains 98 tumuli, while the "Weissensee - Oberfeld" plot contains 63. These are real necropolises, to which one can add those of the Donarberg. The name Donar-berg means that the mountain was dedicated to the Germanic deity Donar.



Numerous clay dishes (mostly shards), which were added to the dead as offerings, were uncovered. The material used came from the clay pits near the village. These are still exploited by potters today. The original inhabitants of the area recognized the value of these clay deposits and used them to make vessels, cups, plates and platters. What is particularly striking, emphasized Mr. SCHAEFFER, is the beauty of the shapes and the diversity of the vessels, despite the limited technical means of those people. They are decorated with incised notches and strings and indicate great skill in their manufacture and a real sense of art. They bear witness to the well-developed civilization of these people, who lived here three or four thousand years ago in the peace of work.



Hagenau Historical Museum. Early Bronze Age burial  
(1800-1550 BC). Hagenau forest, canton of Donauberg, mound 12, burial I

As indicated by the tools and weapons found, these clay vessels date from the Bronze Age - from the second millennium BC - and it can therefore be said that the Sufflenheim pottery is the oldest and most authentic craft industry in Alsace.

Not much is known about the tribes that inhabited Alsace at that time. Professor J.J. HATT, curator of the Archaeological Museum of Strasbourg, calls them the "Proto Celts". Around 1600 or 1500 BC, they came from the Swabian plateau and established settlements in the Hagenau forest. They devoted themselves less to agriculture than to animal husbandry and had an original culture. Agreeing with Mr. SCHAEFFER's statement, Professor HATT also notes the existence of an important pottery industry with elegant and noble forms.

Towards the end of the Bronze Age, there were ethnic changes, often of a violent nature, but little is known about them. New groups of people, also of Celtic descent, came from Würtemberg or Bavaria and invaded Alsace. Around 800 BC, they possessed iron weapons and tools, marking the beginning of the Iron Age. While the previous population mainly farmed livestock, the new arrivals were more interested in agriculture. They also lived on the edge of the higher terrace. Their graves contain iron objects, bracelets, fibulae, belt plates and poles, as well as various types of clay vessels, but less beautiful and less

decorated than those of the Bronze Age. However, they show the continuity of settlement in the Sufflenheim area, as well as the continued existence of the pottery industry, which knew how to use the clay to make dishes and jugs.

In Roman times, in the last century BC, the area continued to be inhabited by Celts, who were joined by elements of the Germanic tribes. The main town was Brocamagus (Brumath). In the first centuries of the Christian era, the pottery of the Sufflenheim region was less popular, the Romans brought their artistic creations from Italy. New potteries were established in Alsace, in Heiligenberg, especially for the production of red sigillata pieces. However, the simple earthenware from Sufflenheim continued to be used by the long-established population. At the same time, brick and baking stone kilns were established near today's Schirrhof kiln. A Roman road from Brumath to the important station of Saletio (Seltz) passed through Sufflenheim.

The Roman period came to an end at the beginning of the 5th century with the violent invasions of Germanic peoples: the Alemanni and, in the north of Alsace, the Franks. At various times, they crossed the Rhine and, after a century of unrest, insecurity and destruction, settled in the country. The Gallo-Roman population was for the most part destroyed or expelled. Whether the village of Sufflenheim survived is questionable. The Alemanni colonized most of Alsace as far as the Hagenau Forest, while the Franks came from the north, settled in the Weissenburg region and advanced as far as the Sufflenheim area. The two influences can still be seen in the language today.

From the VI century to the VIII century, numerous villages were formed, often on the same sites as the previous ones. This was also the case for Sufflenheim, which was founded in the VIII century at the latest. Historians assume that the villages on heim auf - ingen are the older ones, and that the villages on: - bach, - feld, - dorf, - haus or - hof were formed later. All the villages were small, consisting of a few farms with only a small population, which gradually increased. One would like to know what the name Sufflenheim means. Later, from the XII. Century, Sufelnheim, Suvelnheim, Suoflenheim also written Sauflenheim. Does the name come from the land, from a stream, from a person, the first owner? It can also be linked to the Suffel stream, which flows 30 km further south, Sufela in the Middle Ages, but the meaning of the name is not known here either. There is another interpretation: Heim: house, residence, settlement, home. In the Franconian-influenced language area, this "heim" has become an "um": Süfflum. Suvelnheim = home near the "Sawelln", i.e. near the furnaces.

## **II - The Grangia of Neuburg Abbey.**

Sufflenheim is only mentioned from the XIIth Century. In 1147, a bull from Pope Eugene III confirmed various properties in the area to the Cistercian Abbey of Neuburg, including the "Grangia de Suvelnheim".

The Cistercian order was founded by St. Bernard at the beginning of the XIIth century. Its originality consisted in the foundation of monasteries that cultivated large areas of land, called granges, where agriculture was of great importance as the monks carried out large-scale clearings. The order's first settlement in Alsace was Lützel in the extreme south of the country in the Alsatian Jura, close to the Swiss border. From here, members of the order moved to northern Alsace, appointed by Count Reinhold von Lützelburg (near Zabern) and Frederick the One-Eyed of Hohenstaufen, Duke of Alsace and Swabia, who provided the monks with large tracts of land.

In 1133, the two princes founded Neuburg Abbey on the western edge of the Hagenau Forest, which they endowed with large donations. Here the monks built granges, provided with financial and legal rights, large farms with barns and stables, surrounded by fields, forests, meadows and pastures. Under their

supervision, lay brothers cultivated the land, cleared vast tracts of land, which they converted into fields and provided the abbey with the fruits necessary for life through this flourishing agriculture (1). In this way, the Sufflenheim area was greatly supported by the Neuburg monks. Houses were gradually added to the Grangia; the village, which was of little importance at the beginning, grew more and more. Sufflenheim thus owes its upswing to the Cistercians of Neuburg.



Seal from 1362, Neuburg Abbey / Seal of Neuburg, "Jean-Abbé 1356"  
Seal Museum (La Petite-Pierre).

After the confirmation of the abbey's goods by Pope Eugene III (2) in 1147, they were again confirmed by Pope Alexander III (1177); his bull states that the goods of Neuburg consisted of fields, meadows, waters, forests, cultivated and uncultivated pastures (3). Shortly afterwards, in 1208, Pope Innocent III reconfirmed this property of the abbey and repeated the decrees of his predecessors. The Grangia of Sufflenheim is mentioned each time (4). More important are the decrees and confirmations of the emperors, especially that of Frederick I Barbarossa. The document of 1156 confirms the ownership of the abbey and also mentions the "curia de Suvelnheim" (5).

But a change in these decrees brought serious disadvantages to the abbey and also to Sufflenheim. An exact date is not known, but it is to be placed in the fifties of the XIIth century. There is only a "notitia" of the monks, not an official document: the donation of Count Reinhold von Lützelburg, which had been approved by the Duke of Alsace and Swabia, was modified by the Emperor. They had granted the abbey "the third tree", i.e. the third part of the Hagenau forest. It is not clear whether the count had this

right of disposal, as it stemmed from an inheritance. Emperor Frederick I of Hohenstaufen annulled the donation, thus securing possession of the entire forest and giving the abbey the farm of Selhofen (near Rothbach in the Northern Vosges) in return. The monks had to comply with the imperial order; the Notitia painfully notes this and only states the loss "*propria quad habuimus... apud Suhvelnheim ac in Sacra Silva a Reinholdo comite...in foresto cum aliis bonis tertiam arborem...*" This loss also affected Sufflenheim, where, however, the important farm, the Grangia of the monastery, continued to exist(6).

Another document, from Emperor Frederick I from 1158, grants the abbey the right to graze in the Holy Forest as well as the right to firewood (7). However, it makes no mention of the "third tree" of the forest.

Later, the emperors continued to confirm the abbey's ownership in the form always stated, for example in 1196, Emperor Henry VI, the son of Rothbart (8), in 1209, Otto IV (9), and in 1219, Frederick II, who took the abbey under his special protection and confirmed the right to graze in the forest and the right to firewood in addition to the ownership of the property (10). The abbey's ownership of Sufflenheim is always mentioned in these documents.

Abbé Grandidier, the great ecclesiastical historian of the end of the XVIIIth century, adds that the document of 1219 contains the following sentence, which is important for Sufflenheim: "after we (i.e. the Emperor) claimed this court, we took it according to our custom. He adds that the document of 1219 contains the important sentence for Sufflenheim: "After we (i.e. the emperor) claimed this court, we built it according to our custom, with the consent of the brothers of Neuburg and according to the will of the abbot (11). However, ownership of the Grangia passed to the emperor and it was divided between the two. The origin of the later imperial village of Sufflenheim can be traced back to this document.

In 1291, King Rudolf of Habsburg reconfirmed the abbey's estates, including the Sufflenheim estate (12). In the XVIth century (1356) Emperor Charles IV did the same: among the estates is the Sufflenheim farm, "*Curtem Sufflenheim cum iuribus et appendiciis suis*" (13).

Earlier, in 1215, the Abbot of Neuburg acquired two marshes known as the large and small "Hundelouwe". Brother Hartung, the cellar master, and Brother Rudolf "Magister", master of the court, examined the marshes and found them to be useful; they acquired them from "Lampertus de Suovilheim" (14).

A mill in Sufflenheim is mentioned in 1338 (15): the abbot of Neuburg had a pond built near the village with the permission of the ruler, Ludwig the Bavarian, which again demonstrates the sovereignty of the emperor.

Furthermore, in 1245 Selz Abbey sold the tithes of the farmers of the village of Sufflenheim to the Neuburg abbot (16).

Thus the abbot of Neuburg possessed property and rights under the sovereignty of the ruler in Sufflenheim (17). However, we do not know the details of these. The register that contained a copy of all the deeds, seen by Abbé Grandidier before the French Revolution, no longer exists. Either it perished at that time, or later when the Strasbourg library burned down during the German bombardment of the city in 1870, as L. PFLEGER assumes (1). Grandidier writes that folios 29 and 30 contain everything concerning the goods of the Abbey of Neubourg, which it owned in the village of Suvelnheim (*concerne les biens que possède l'église de Neubourg dans le village appelé Suvelnheim*).

From the second half of the XVIth century onwards, as L. PFLEGER (1) writes, the abbey began to decline, particularly as a result of the plundering by the "English" in 1365 and again in 1375.



Emperor Sigmund confirmed the abbey's estates in 1417, but without listing the various farms in detail. Later (when?) the Grangia of Sufflenheim was probably leased, as was often the case for ecclesiastical estates. Grandidier states, but without referring to documents, that the abbey kept the farm in Sufflenheim for several centuries. He wrote this before the French Revolution (he died in 1787), and therefore still had a good knowledge of the situation. But a few years later, this revolution brought about the downfall of Neuburg: the buildings were destroyed and the important Cistercian settlement disappeared from the face of the earth.

### **III - The Rich Village of Sufflenheim.**

Next to the Grangia of Neuburg Abbey was the village of Sufflenheim, which is only mentioned from the XIIIth century onwards. But, as the name testifies, it existed for a long time, but probably only as a modest community.

In 1245, the village is mentioned by its farmers (16). The document mentions the tithe, the customary tax that people had to pay to the church and the parish priest. As no precise details were given, this tax had existed for a long time, which presupposes the existence of a church, or at least a chapel.

Shortly afterwards (1251), the young King Conrad IV certified that for the peace of mind of his deceased father (Emperor Frederick II, who had died in 1250), he exempted Neuburg Abbey from its levy, an annual interest that they had to pay for fields between the castle (castrum) of Sufflenheim and the forest and between the Brumbach and the Eberbach, and he forbade his Schultheiss of Hagenau to interfere with the abbey's ownership of these fields (18).

The document uses the word "castrum" but nowhere is there any mention of a fortification in Sufflenheim. Had the ruler started to build a castle? The document from 1219 mentioned above suggests this, where the word "aedificavimus", we (i.e. the emperor) have built, is found. In any case, the village had come into the possession of the ruler. Later documents attest to the fact that at the beginning of the XIIIth century, the sovereignty of the village had passed to the Empire and the Abbot of Neuburg only retained the use of his Grangia with fields and meadows. However, no further mention is made of a castle or fortification in Sufflenheim, as the Hohenstaufen dynasty collapsed and the Great Interregnum, the period without an emperor, began (1250-1273).

Subsequently, King Rudolf of Habsburg (1273-1293) endeavoured to collect estates and he established the imperial bailiwick of Hagenau, an organization on which, in the following times, besides the ten Alsatian imperial cities, forty villages in the surroundings of Hagenau depended: the imperial villages, including Sufflenheim (22).

In 1331, King Louis the Bavarian decided that the citizens of Hagenau should release the two villages of Mommenheim and Sufflenheim, which had come in pledge to the Strasbourg knight Petermann von Duntzenheim, from this pledge; in future they would belong to the imperial sheriff's office of Hagenau and could no longer be pledged. In the following year, 1334, this knight declared that he was giving up all rights to the heathen villages and releasing the "Gebürschafft" of Sufflenheim from all claims on his part (19). This farming community was the parish of Sufflenheim.

In 1370, the then imperial bailiff Wenzel, son of Emperor Charles IV, promised that ten imperial villages, including Sufflenheim, would remain in the care of Hagenau and the mayor's office of Hagenau for as long as he held the imperial bailiwick (20).

Shortly afterwards, in 1372, Emperor Charles IV recommended that, by imperial decree, these villages should remain dependent on the care of Hagenau for all eternity and could not be pledged or lent in any way (21).

In the XVth century, we get to know the organization of the imperial bailiffs better. The villages depended on the Reichslandvogtei, also called Pflege Hagenau, directly from the Reichsschultheiss, who presided over the Reichsgericht of Hagenau; his court formed the Appellhof for the Reichsdörfer.

The Reichsschultheiss, who was directly subordinate to the Reichslandvogt, had councillors at his side, according to the regulations of 1527. A Zinsmeister was in charge of finance. He collected the taxes and interest, administered the levies collected in cash or in kind, took part in the administration of the Holy Forest and drew up the budget with income and expenditure. The forester and forester supervised the felling according to the established forest regulations, punished transgressions and forest crimes and kept an eye on the game population (22).

The inhabitants of the imperial villages had to swear an oath of obedience and loyalty, similar to the citizens of Hagenau. For this purpose, the villagers of Sufflenheim had to go to Neuburg, which was more than 20 km away. This is a remnant of the former dependence on the abbey. Every time a new Reichslandvogt took office, the people of Sufflenheim owed this oath, either to the Reichslandvogt himself or to a Unterlandvogt.

The villages, at least the most important ones, had a court with a mayor. This was the case for Sufflenheim, while smaller villages in the area had to make use of the Sufflenheim court for their affairs.

The court was made up of seven aldermen drawn from the citizenry (perhaps the origin of the name Schoeffer?), who were each appointed by co-optation. The Schultheiss presided over the hearings; he also supervised the appointments. The Schultheiss had to swear to act in the best interests of the realm and the village and to administer good justice (23).

Above the village court was the arcade court of Hagenau, which was presided over by the Reichsschultheiss; it served as a court of appeal for the village courts.

The Schultheiss of Sufflenheim had to ensure public order, to supervise the work of the troops and to administer justice in court. Details are given for the year 1560: Heinrich SCHLIPPER has been appointed; he must undertake to keep a horse at his own expense, as well as a rifle, armor, spear and everything that belongs to a good armament. He swears obedience to the Reichsschultheiss, the Zinsmeister and the councillors of the Reichslandvogtei, promises to perform his office faithfully, to administer equal justice to all, and to protect the villagers in their rights and freedoms. Together with the forester and the foresters, he must also work in the forest and punish forest crimes and poaching. As remuneration, he receives 25 Rhenish guilders, 5 cubits of cloth and 6 cubits of fodder cloth for a winter coat. For the horse he receives 30 sacks of oats and 200 waves of straw. He has a quarter of the fines for poachers. He also has grazing rights for 4 pigs and the use of 10 meadows. Later, in 1600, he receives 40 guilders; the other privileges remain in place (24).

In addition to the Schultheiss, there was another village authority, the Heimbürger, a kind of mayor, an institution that existed in most village communities in Alsace. For Sufflenheim, the Schultheiss court judges and three "Heimburgers of the village and parish of Sufflenheim" are mentioned in 1476 (25). The Heimbürger, with or without deputies, was elected annually by the inhabitants. He represented the interests of the community, had to administer its property and assets, make the accounts of income and expenditure, collect taxes and duties and represent the community to the outside world.

There is no information as to when this organization of Schultheiss and Heimbürgers came into existence. As the Reichslandvogtei was established by Rudolf of Habsburg at the end of the XIIIth century, the various organizations were created shortly afterwards, at the beginning of the XIVth century. These institutions existed for several centuries with the same administrative facilities. In 1447, it is stated that the mayor and the court of Sufflenheim had to deal with the morality and disease police : if an inhabitant was suspected of having leprosy, they had to inform the Hagenauer Zinsmeister, who, accompanied by the Scherer-meister, examined the person concerned : if he was found to be "unclean", the court had to exclude him from the community (26).

The Schultheiss was responsible for maintaining public order and good morals. In 1616 (27), the then imperial bailiff, Archduke Maximilian of Habsburg, ordered the Schultheiss to report to him on any disorder and circumstances that arose.

The mayor of Sufflenheim complained about the lavish banquets at weddings and baptisms, especially about the excesses on the eve of weddings with drinking, singing, dancing, swearing, blasphemy and quarrels in the taverns. The document mentions a "Sauffelnheim order", but this could not be found. The Schultheiss also complained about the negligence of the work on the fronts: "When the bells ring for the fronts", some come straight away, but others are not in a hurry and come "over an hour later".

At this time, just a few years before the disastrous Thirty Years' War, the material situation of the peasants was good, they were able to indulge in feasting and feasting, and were not so particular about fulfilling their duties to the lordship, which suggests that the regime was not very harsh.

What were the financial obligations of the citizens of Sufflenheim for "des riches pflegede zu der Stadt hagenau gehörig"? The information on taxes and duties can be found in the "Zinsmeisters Büchel von den Gefällen", for the years 1454-1456 (28).

According to this register (folios 12-15), Sufflenheim paid taxes called "wynacht bette", 14 pounds (28a) and the "Entebette" 10 pounds. There was then a body tax, "Schultheissen Wynacht lipbette geheissen", which amounted to 2 pounds, 10 shillings and 6 pfennigs. Another tax was the "Forstzinse" for gardens and meadows: 3 Schilling and 8 Pfennig. A special tax was levied on the stove-makers who paid the "Zinsmeister" 3 pounds annually for the earth and firewood required, as mentioned for example in 1576.

The register for the year 1500 gives the same information, especially for the Christmas tax and the harvest tax. The body tax concerns 116 citizens. Another document from the Hagenau town archives lists 126 paying citizens in 1476. If one counts 5 members for each citizen's family, the total population of Sufflenheim at that time amounted to 600 to 650 inhabitants. To these must be added a certain number of servants and maids, as well as assistants in the potteries, whose number is not given (perhaps a hundred), so that the total population of Sufflenheim for the XVth and XVIth centuries can be calculated at around 700 people. A rather high number compared to other imperial villages, which have significantly lower numbers. Mommenheim: 33 - Ohlungen: 30 - Batzendorf: 24 - Niederschaeffolsheim: 23 citizens. Thus Sufflenheim can be described as a large village until the XVIIth century.

Other taxes levied on the inhabitants of the village were the Carnival hens, 118 in 1576, a forestry fee on Weiher, on the "Hundthuss", which was inhabited by the foresters, and 3 sacks of fruit from the mill.

The inhabitants had to carry out corvée work, as was customary in all Alsatian villages, and especially for the imperial villages, which found protection and help in Hagenau in times of danger. The people of Sufflenheim had to "crown" with horses and carts for the lords and officials of the imperial bailiwick (ordinance of 1527), for example making and driving wood, working 18 man-mats for them and providing fruit and wine carts. For example, it is stated that 80 people from Sufflenheim were given food for cutting

wood; in 1536, 75 wagons and 250 people from Sufflenheim were needed to load and unload wood. However, the number of days required for the work is not given.

The register of 1454 also lists the fines imposed on the inhabitants of the imperial villages and collected by the master of the interest; for quarrels and disputes, for cattle offenses, for letting cattle graze in forbidden parts of the forest ("überlouff der swine im Forste"), for timber offenses, for unauthorized clay extraction or taking the earth from another potter.

Sometimes disputes arose between Sufflenheim and Hagenau, for example, in 1496, the then imperial bailiff Elector Philip of the Palatinate wrote to the lower bailiff Jacob von Fleckenstein that he was negotiating with the town of Hagenau about the dispute concerning grazing rights and firewood, which was dividing the town and the villages; he demanded that the town release the prisoners, return the horses and conclude a settlement between the two parties.

On another occasion, a dispute arose between the inhabitants of Sufflenheim and the Niedheimer von Wasenburg family (1606-1608) over a district with a pond in the Sufflenheim ban, which the villages had plundered while the Niedheimers had rights there. Burial slabs of the Niedheimers were placed in the Olberg chapel.

#### **IV - The Potters of Sufflenheim.**

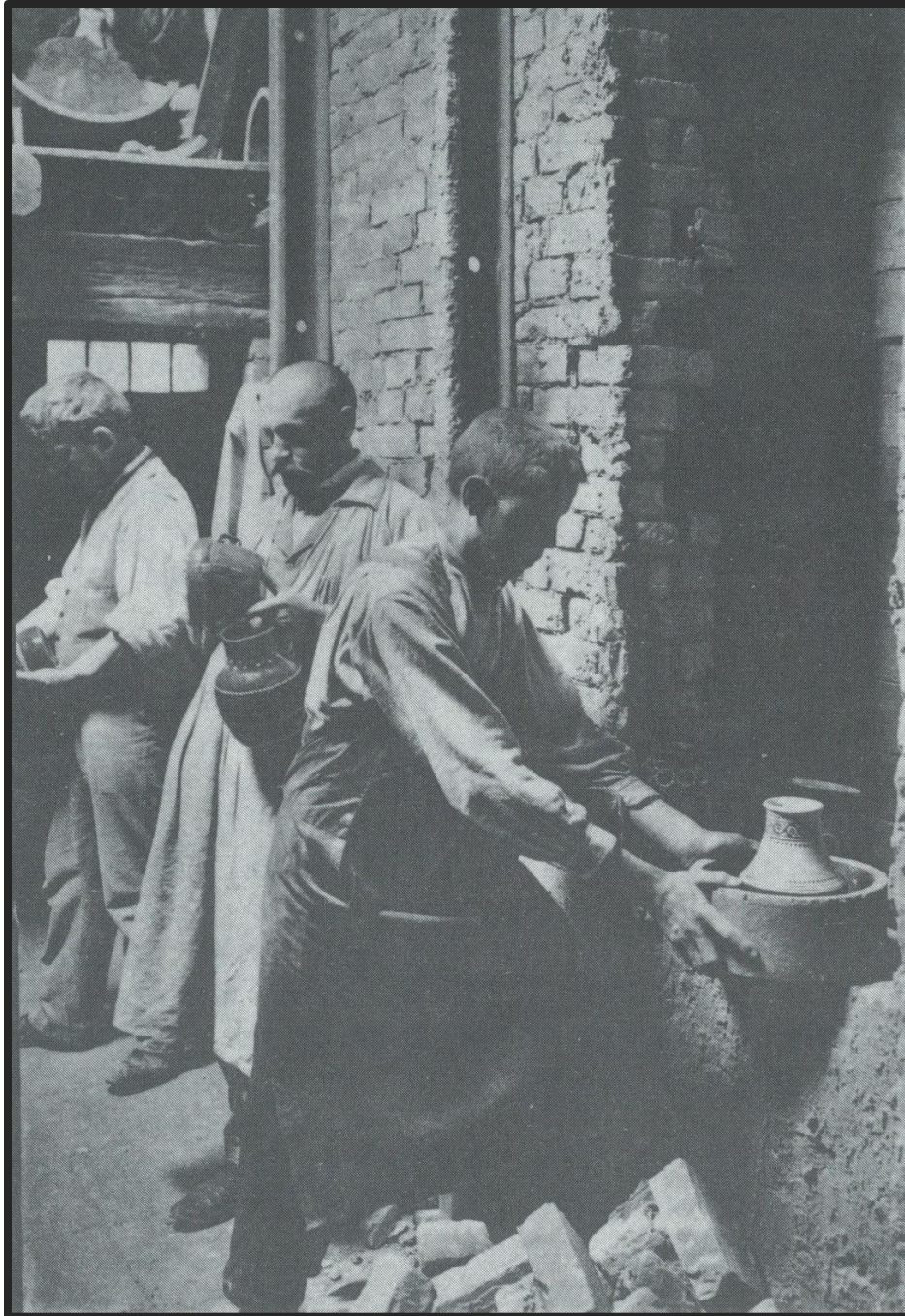
During the Middle Ages, the Sufflenheim potteries continued to manufacture and sell their products throughout the country. Their activity was only slowed down or even interrupted by the many wars that often ravaged Alsace. For a long time, however, the documents remain silent about the trade; it is only from the XVth century onwards that we get some information.

Let us recall, echoing a very old tradition, the legend according to which Emperor Frederick I, Barbarossa, who built the imperial palace in Hagenau, gave the young town its status (1164) and enjoyed hunting in the Hagenau forest, gave the potters of Sufflenheim the right to dig clay free of charge in the Hagenau forest, which they needed for their trade. The legend is told in two ways : while hunting in the forest, the emperor (or his son) was attacked by a wild boar and was in mortal danger ; a potter who was working nearby rushed over and saved the prince. In gratitude, he gave the Sufflenheim potters the specified right. A second version tells that the potters gave the emperor a nativity scene with numerous figures made of clay. In return, he granted them the right to dig clay free of charge. A document is said to have been kept in the town hall of Sufflenheim, but it was destroyed when the building burned down during the Thirty Years' War. However, the tradition of the right to take pottery earth free of charge remained alive.

What do the documents say? In 1435, a settlement was reached between Count Palatine Ludwig, imperial bailiff from 1437-1449, and the town of Hagenau: the potters of Hagenau and Sufflenheim could use the pieces of felled trees, waste wood and all wood that was not used for construction purposes for their trade. The potters, known as "Schiisseldreher", thus possessed this pre-existing right, which was held by the people of the Grangia of Neuburg Abbey.

In 1454, the potters of Sufflenheim owed the bailiwick of Hagenau 3 pounds as a tax for the extraction of potter's earth ("3 liber habent mir die Hafner von Sufelnheim geben von der Erden zu graben und von Holz reth"). This sum had to be paid annually; in 1576, for example, the clerk of the master of the interest register noted in his register: "Von Gruben zu Suffelnheim, bestendigt: von Hafner zu Suffelnheim zu Grubgeld entpfangen 2 lieber, 10 Schilling". The stove makers had the clay free of charge, but had to pay a tax for the removal.



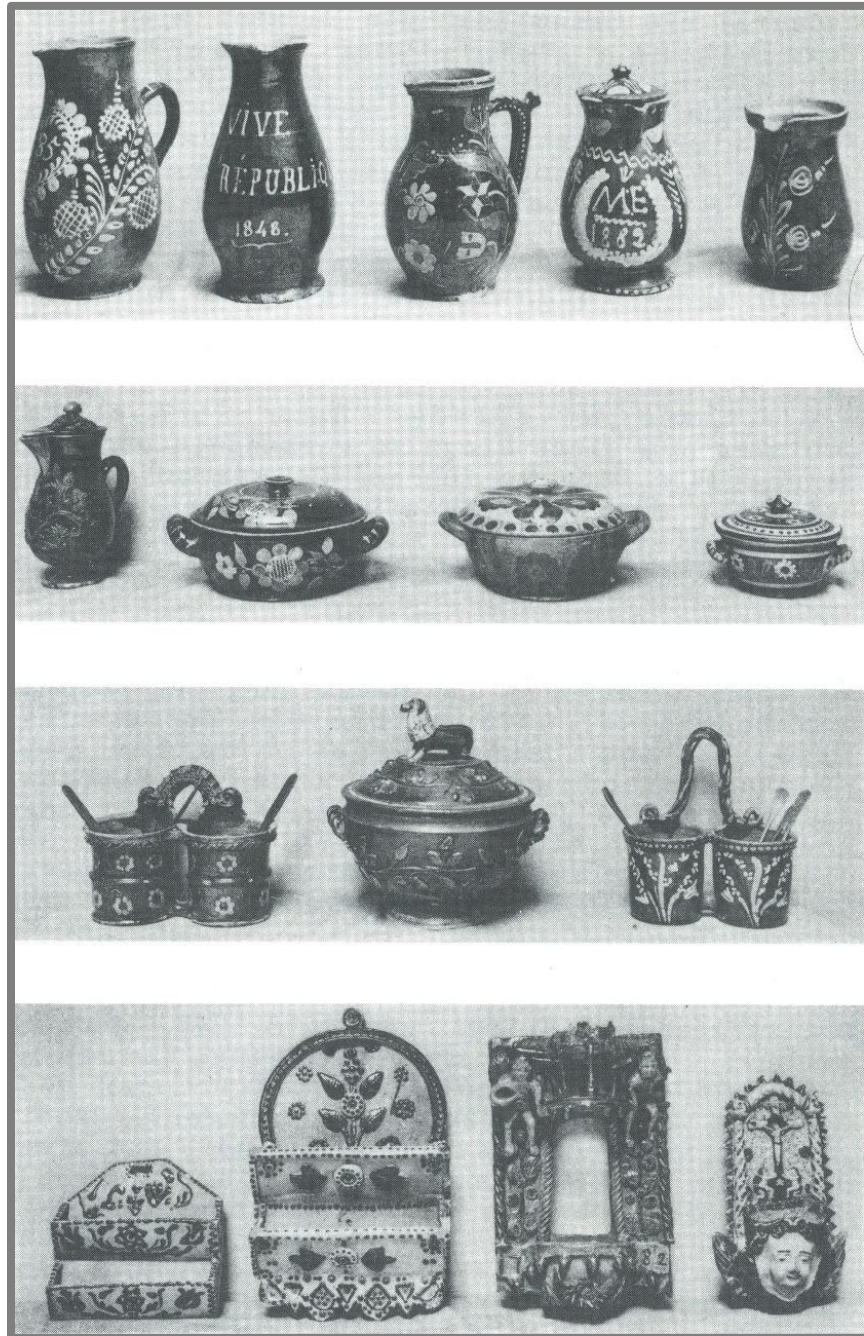


Potter Ph. Elchinger installing the kiln (1880)

In the last centuries of the Middle Ages, the trades in Alsace had their own organization, the guilds. This was also the case for the stove-makers of Sufflenheim, but we do not know the date of their foundation, it is probably in the XIIIth century. In 1442, the city of Strasbourg sent a letter to the "Antwerck gemeintlich der Hafener zu Sufelnheim". The word "gemeintlich" means the entirety of the Hafner, i.e. their association, guild or brotherhood. Strasbourg writes that the stove-makers of Sufflenheim have changed the size of their ware, which is "of old", and that the town wants Sufflenheim to return to the old format, as



it was before: "make the ware of the port in the sizes it was forty years ago". The harbour owners had also increased their prices, so Strasbourg said that this increase was not justified and that they should return to their previous prices. The trade should send three of its members to Strasbourg to negotiate these matters and bring them to a good end. At that time, the stove makers' trade was well organized to be able to discuss with the Strasbourg municipality on an equal footing.



Ceramic from Soufflenheim (19th century)

At this time, there was a large association of all the potters in this region, between Strasbourg and Ravensvurg (north of Lake Constance), which therefore included the potters of Alsace and a large part of southern Germany. Their annual meetings took place in Breisach. However, it has not been possible to determine whether the Sufflenheim potters belonged to this association, but it can be assumed that they did.

In the following years, the Sufflenheim stove-making trade continued, but the Thirty Years' War, from 1618-1648, almost brought it to an end. In 1622, Sufflenheim was plundered by the troops of General Ernst von Mansfeld, the parish hall went up in flames and all the documents were burnt. A little later (1632), the Swedes invaded Alsace and the country suffered terribly. In the following years, which became a general theater of war, all parties of the warring powers lived here in the most cruel way. The soldiers plundered, burned and killed the population, who suffered terribly from famine and epidemics. We do not learn anything specific about Sufflenheim, but the village fared no better than hundreds of other villages.

In 1648, after the Peace of Westphalia, Sufflenheim and most of the land came under the French crown. The wars of King Louis XIV continued to bring difficult times with troop crossings, requisitions and plundering. Gradually, only at the beginning of the XVIII. It was not until the beginning of the XVIIIth century that peaceful times returned and the potters were able to resume their trade.

In 1682, the High Royal Council of Alsace (Conseil Souverain d'Alsace) confirmed the order of the stove makers in Alsace between Strasbourg and Basel, but only repeated the decrees that Emperor Ferdinand II had given in 1622. These were based on older regulations that were no longer observed due to the long period of war. In 1688, nine harvesters from Sufflenheim were subjected to the old taxation for the removal of alumina. Between 1696 and 1701, these nine potters had difficulties with the administration because they had collected earth without paying the tax. As nine potters were cited each time, it can be assumed that only this small number of potters existed at that time due to the war.

The regulations of the brotherhood (known as the Confrerie) between Strasbourg and Basel were confirmed again in 1725 and 1740 in 43 articles: only registered potters could produce and sell pottery items, while foreign potters were only allowed to sell their products at fairs. The Sufflenheim potters probably belonged to this brotherhood, which came to an end with the French Revolution.

## **V - Church and Parish.**

The oldest mentions date back to the XIII and XIV centuries. The tithe is mentioned in 1245, but the beginnings of the parish go back much further. It is not known whether there was a chapel in the Grangia of Neuburg Abbey; in any case, it is very likely that the beginnings of the parish are to be found here.

Around 1350, "Ludovicus rector ecclesie Suvelnheim", who accepted citizenship in Hagenau, as well as "Arnoldus sacerdos vice plebanus" are mentioned. A rector is the parish priest of an already important parish, who usually has a "plebanus" or "lieutenant priest" at his disposal, the clergyman for the people, as the name indicates, while the rector, who enjoys the main benefices, is not always present.

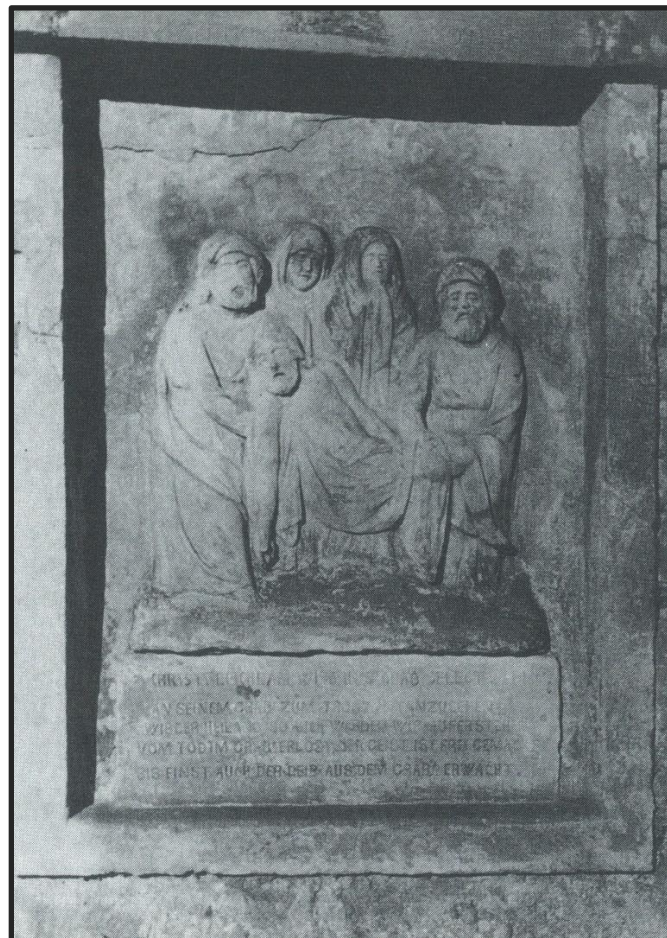
In 1371, the parish is mentioned again as well as the plebanus and also a "primissarius", the early sacristan who reads the first mass. In the XVth century, Emperor Sigismund levied the so-called royal tithe from the parishes (1419); "conrat SCHILLING, Kirchherr und Erzpriester zu Sufelnheim" and the early sacristan are mentioned. These details indicate a large parish with several clergymen. It initially depended on the Beinheim archipresbyterate, then (1454) it belonged to the "Unter-Hagenau" rural

chapter of the diocese of Strasbourg. In 1486, there was also a chaplaincy of St. Wendel, the popular and much invoked shepherd saint and protector of domestic animals. The chaplain is mentioned again in 1492, as is an altar to the saint.

The tithe belonged to the ruler Emperor Frederick III of Habsburg bestowed one third on several members of the family. Reinbold, Gross and Hüffel (as well as a third of the tithes of Sessenheim, Runtzenheim and Dalhunden). In 1540, Emperor Ferdinand confirmed this property to the members of the Hüffel family.

The Reformation did not find its way into Sufflenheim, as the House of Habsburg, owner of the imperial bailiwick, was a defender of Catholicism. The right of patronage (the right to appoint the parish priest) belonged to the Abbot of Surburg and came to the Chapter of Hagenau in 1758. After the terrible Thirty Years' War and its destruction, the religious situation had to be restored and the parishes rebuilt.

In 1660, the vicarage had to be repaired and this led to a conflict between the parish and the tithing lords who, as the collectors of the tithes, had to maintain the religious buildings. At that time, the tithe was divided between the parish priest and the nobles of Hüffel and Steinkallenfels. In 1662, the Sufflenheim church owned 22 acres of land and the vicarage included a house, barn and stables.



Way of the Cross (1880), Paul Messmer

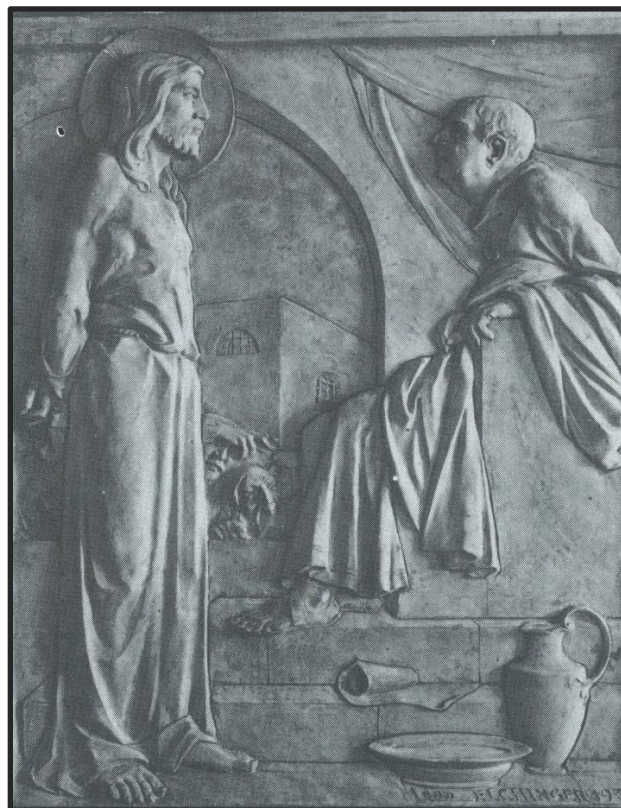


The "visitation report" of the diocese of Strasbourg dates from 1666. It mentions Mary as the patron saint (which is a mistake, however) because the church had a Marian altar and a rosary brotherhood. Grandidier reports that the Archangel Michael was the patron saint of the church, although he is only mentioned as such from 1758 onwards (to this day, St. Michael is the patron saint of the church and he also appears on the coat of arms of the village). The church had three altars: the high altar, dedicated to St. Michael, the altar of St. Mary and the altar of St. Wendelin. However, we do not know the appearance of the church, its architectural style and other decorations. There are also no documents about any restoration of the church after the wars of the XVIIth century.

The report from 1666, twenty years after the end of the Thirty Years' War, states that the parish had only 30 souls, a rather modest number, but one which testifies to the heavy losses caused by the war. The situation was no better for other villages. Beinheim and Leutenheim together had 59 souls. The parish had no priest, it was served by a priest "Pater Societatis e Missione Beinheimensi".

The turbulent period of the French Revolution and the persecution of priests who had refused to swear allegiance to the constitution saw the exile of the parish priest Ign. Lempfried, who only returned after religious pacification and was replaced in 1818 by Franz Thannberger, who came from Blotzheim in Sundgau. Under his leadership, the present church was built over a period of six years from 1825 onwards and was solemnly consecrated on October 2, 1831.

There were no longer any documents relating to the demolition of the old church or the construction of the new church. Having died in 1837, the venerable, long-serving priest is buried next to the church entrance.



Way of the Cross - Odile mountain, Léon Elchinger



## **VI - Sufflenheim from the XVIIth Century Onwards.**

As previously reported, Sufflenheim suffered greatly during the vicious Thirty Years' War. The troops of General von Mansfeld plundered the village in November 1621 and again in May 1622, when Sufflenheim, along with other villages, went up in flames. A letter from the Reichslandvogtei Hagenau to the Habsburg government (1624) states that it is impossible to collect the taxes as the villages have been completely ruined by the war.

The years from 1632 onwards were the most unfortunate for the Alsatian rural population and certainly also for Sufflenheim. The Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 brought a major political change; the imperial bailiwick, together with the imperial villages, was granted to the French crown and the French king appointed a French imperial bailiff.

Alsace was badly affected by the long years of war. As the bishop's visitation report of 1666 states, Sufflenheim had only 40 inhabitants. In 1658, the ban was re-examined to determine the property of the citizens; shortly afterwards (1662), an assessment determined 60 farms, which were probably in poor condition. The wounds inflicted by the war were slow to heal. At that time, the ban comprised 511 fields and 291 meadows, 169 of which were communal estates.

But the region was once again plagued by warlike events, first the Dutch War (1673-78), which led to the burning of the town of Hagenau by French troops (1677), then the war of the League of Augsburg (1688-1697); in 1694, the troops of the imperial general, Prince Louis of Baden, invaded northern Alsace and plundered the villages along the Rhine, looting livestock and supplies and advancing as far as Brumath. The War of the Spanish Succession at the beginning of the XVIII. In 1702, the Margrave of Baden advanced as far as the Moder and established his headquarters in Bischweiler. Once again, the villages had to suffer greatly from the passage of troops and requisitions. In 1705-1706, the fortress of Fort-Louis, founded by Vauban on the orders of the French king, was besieged by imperial troops, who lay in the Sufflenheim area during the winter, taking cattle and supplies from the farmers until the French marshal Villars recaptured the area. There were no battles at Sufflenheim, but the population suffered greatly from the outrages of the armies and the constant threat of war.

As a result of these events, the economic situation was once again thrown into disarray and the ban of Sufflenheim had to be renewed in 1685. The population had increased only slightly; in 1693 there were 60 families and 200 communicants, and the village had around 400 inhabitants. The XVIII. Century then brought a long period of peace and allowed the village to recover well. In the sixties, after the Thirty Years' War, the government and lords in the surrounding countries had already issued and subsequently renewed calls for immigrants. Numerous people, especially from southern Germany, responded to the call and actively helped to rebuild the village. Agriculture developed again and trade and commerce made rapid progress.

When a necessary renewal of the ban was carried out in 1722, Sufflenheim had 189 houses, which may have amounted to a population of around 1000 souls. Fifty years later, in 1778, 180 Catholic families and 800 communicants were counted. The increase in population continued, and by 1800 the number of inhabitants had risen to 1547. In the XIX century, this increase continued at an accelerated rate to reach 3000 in the middle of the century.

However, there were more bad days in the course of the War of the Austrian Succession. Under the command of Prince Charles of Lorraine, the Pandurs or Redcoats invaded northern Alsace in July 1774, followed by the Austrian troops under the command of General Bärenklau, who besieged Fort-Louis and plundered the villages near the Rhine, including Sufflenheim. Charles of Lorraine took up his

headquarters in Hagenau and his units advanced towards Zabern. The French army, under the command of Marshals de Noailles and Belle-Isle, took the offensive and forced the Austrians to retreat through the Hagenau forest. They hurriedly threw up earth ramparts in front of Sufflenheim. The French attacked again and, on August 23, a fierce battle ensued. The Austrians suffered heavy losses (two thousand dead) and had to retreat. Another battle took place during the night; the French troops under Marshal Belle-Isle inflicted heavy losses on their opponents (1200 dead). The Austrians hastily retreated via Fort-Louis and crossed the Rhine at Beinheim and Selz. But the Pandurs had inflicted heavy damage on the Alsatian population and left the worst possible memory.



Church choir "Caecilia" (1923)

The wars at the time of the French Revolution once again brought great difficulties to northern Alsace. Time and again, troops passed through and the people had to supply them with provisions, wagons and horses. As a result, they suffered severe hardship.

The French Revolution also brought about an administrative change with the creation of departments, districts and cantons. In 1790, Sufflenheim belonged to the canton of Fort-Louis. However, this canton was dissolved a few years later (1800) and the villages were incorporated into the canton of Bischweiler.

In the XIXth century, Sufflenheim grew rapidly and became the largest village in Alsace. On the eve of the French Revolution, there were 200 families, which corresponded to a population of 1000 to 1200



inhabitants, but in 1812, the number had reached 2000; in 1851, 3000. This figure rose to almost 4000 at the beginning of the XXth century. Around 1900, the number of houses amounted to 695.

In economic terms, the population devoted itself to agriculture and trade in the last century. Statistics from 1866 show 1017 farmers, 450 people in trade and industry and 174 people in the food industry. Agriculture and animal husbandry fed a large part of the population, who managed medium-sized and numerous small farms. Land ownership was very fragmented. At the end of the century, there were 865 ha. fields and 387 ha. The livestock amounted to 120 horses, 476 cattle and 318 pigs.



Gymnastics club "Aloisia" (1923)

At this time, new businesses were added to the old stove-making trade, particularly for refractory products and brickworks, where a certain number of workers found their livelihood. The majority of families lived modestly and wages were low. There were no sickness or pension funds. The pottery industry continued to give Sufflenheim a good reputation far and wide and employed many people; it still consisted of family businesses.

In the course of time, other charitable buildings were erected which adorned the village. A girls' school is mentioned in 1790; there was also a schoolmaster at that time, so there was also a boys' school. A new boys' school was built between 1869 and 1871. A new town hall was built in 1828. The old church stood

on a small elevation surrounded by a cemetery (which was probably originally fortified). The new church was built between 1825 and 1831 and the old cemetery was replaced by a new one in 1874.

For a long time, connections to the outside world were poor. Since the construction of the Strasbourg-Hagenau railroad line (1855), mail and passenger transportation to Bischweiler was carried out by horse-drawn vehicles. The distribution of industrial products, especially pottery, was also carried out by horse-drawn carts. After the Strasbourg-Lauterburg railroad line was built in 1876, it went to nearby railroad stations such as Sessenheim. It was not until 1894 that the Rastatt-Hagenau line was built, which brought a station to Sufflenheim (1895).

Political events affected Sufflenheim, as they did the whole country. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870-75 led to the annexation of Alsace to the German Empire. The First World War claimed the lives of many of the village's young people. After the German defeat, Sufflenheim returned to France in November 1918. But the peace was short-lived. Very soon the war spirit developed again in Germany; France felt threatened and had to build the Maginot Line with its numerous fortifications along the Rhine (1930). The Second World



Soufflenheim occupied in 1942



In September, the population was evacuated. With heavy hearts, the inhabitants of Sufflenheim had to leave their homes, farms and businesses. They were sent to the department of Haute-Vienne in the southwest of France, where they were poorly housed and hoped to return home soon. However, this did not come as expected or desired. After the unfortunate campaign, Hitler's Germany annexed Alsace in July 1940 without any right or treaty. Sufflenheim had suffered severely from bridge demolitions, a certain number of houses were damaged or even destroyed. The returning inhabitants of Sufflenheim found their village in a sad state.

War broke out in 1939 and Sufflenheim suffered greatly.

For several years, the people endured the harsh Nazi dictatorship. But then, in the winter of 1944-1945, when the defeated German troops had abandoned France in a hurry, Sufflenheim became part of the front line. The Germans defended northern Alsace against the invading Americans. And so it was that the fighting in the Sufflenheim area was long and vicious; the village suffered from heavy shelling, so that part of the population left their homeland for a second time and found shelter in the department of Haute-Saone, in the Vesoul area. It was not until March 17, 1945 that Sufflenheim was liberated by the offensive of the 1st French Army under General De Lattre De Tassigny by General Guillaume. But the destruction and damage was significant; 50% of the houses, as well as the church, were bombed. When the population was able to return in May, they had great difficulty in rebuilding and repairing the damage. The village was cited in the French army order and awarded the War Cross 1939-1945.



Soufflenheim liberated (March 17, 1945)

The work was again very actively tackled, not only for the reconstruction, but for the whole economic life. New conditions soon emerged and there were numerous and significant changes in agriculture and trade. The newly emerging industry attracted a large workforce and the number of workers increased sharply. Agriculture, on the other hand, declined sharply; in the sixties, only 15 farms remained. The refractory factories employed almost 400 people and other industries such as shoe factories, a sawmill and wood processing expanded. The age-old pottery industry with its family businesses was able to survive despite some difficulties.

## **VII - Sufflenheim Potter, Yesterday and Today.**

In the old days, pottery was the great specialty of Sufflenheim and gave the village its reputation. However, not many early testimonies have been preserved. From the XVIII. Several vessels preserved in the Alsace Museum in Strasbourg date from the XVIIIth century; from 1773, 1782, 1790, 1799, as well as beautiful pieces from the XIXth century (1825, 1831, 1833, etc.).

The importance of the trade was highlighted above all by a major lawsuit brought by the municipality against the town of Hagenau and the state over the extraction of clay from the Hagenau forest and the potters' right to do so. During and after the French Revolution, they exercised this right in a so-called "wild" manner, extracting clay at will and free of charge, without asking for rights. Now, however, the town of Hagenau and the state, as owners of the forest, objected to this practice. The potters then demanded official recognition of their centuries-old use. The process began in 1831 and lasted twelve years. An initial ruling by the Strasbourg court in 1833 granted the Hafner the right to exploit the forest's clay pits free of charge. The state and the town of Hagenau opposed this and demanded that the potters prove their "immemorial possession (=possession immémoriale=) established since time immemorial" by means of deeds and legal titles or expert opinions (1835).

In reality, there were no documents. The old tradition, which referred to Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, could not be used as evidence. But the community of Sufflenheim called witnesses, namely older people from the village and neighboring communities. Six elderly people between the ages of 79 and 86 testified in court that the stove makers had always fetched the clay for free in the days of their fathers and grandfathers, thus confirming that the stove maker's right dated back to before 1700 and certainly existed before that, i.e. long before the introduction of the "Code Civil" (1804). Thus, on July 1, 1843, the court handed down its judgment confirming the first judgment of 1833: officially, the Hafner were granted the right to extract clay from the pits of the Hagenau forest free of charge. Since then, no further objections have been raised.

In the course of the XIXth century, the pottery industry in Sufflenheim took off. In 1837 there were 55 workshops, in 1872 there were still 43, employing around 600 people. In 1891, the number had reached 50 again; all were family businesses dedicated to a real craft.

Pottery was sold at the markets and fairs in Alsace on the one hand and by itinerant traders throughout the country and beyond in Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria, Lorraine and further east in France as well as in Upper Alsace and Switzerland on the other. The "Gschirrmann" with his two-wheeled cart was popular everywhere. Others traveled further into the country with horse-drawn carts. The products were mainly intended for the kitchen - pots, bowls, jugs, platters and tureens (for sauerkraut or baked coffee), plates and cups, cake tins for Kugelhopf in particular; some were round, others shaped like figures, often symbolic, star, fish, lamb, doll and others.



Decoration with grinding horn.

The simple pottery products were brown and yellow or yellow-grey in color, especially milk pots and various jugs, all covered with glaze. Plates and bowls were decorated with drawings and decorative patterns, with plant motifs and flowers, more or less stylized, also with animals such as roosters, birds, fish and rabbits. In addition to the kitchenware intended for everyday use, there were already large numbers of flower vases decorated with patterns, as well as the usual reddish-brown flower pots. Early on, articles of simple folk art were added, especially of a religious nature, holy water pots, Christ on the



cross, small statues of saints. The skilled potter was able to produce not only very popular but also quite original ceramic items.

In general, the potters continued to use the old motifs; new patterns and shapes were also added, the colors changed and enriched. The original colors, especially brown-red, remained predominant, but the potters introduced new ornaments in yellow, blue or green. Black or black-brown made it possible to achieve stronger contrasts. In general, the colors became more intense and friendlier. On the whole, however, the Sufflenheim stove-makers continued to be practitioners of a lively folk art and thus enriched Alsatian folklore. This is still the case today

Towards the end of the XIXth and the beginning of the XXth century, however, the pottery trade suffered severe setbacks due to the emergence of kitchen utensils in cast iron, enamel and aluminum. This resulted in a real decline. Before the First World War (1914), only around 30 businesses remained and the number continued to fall after 1920; by 1930 there were only 20 pottery workshops left.

After the Second World War, and especially after 1960, the trade experienced a new upswing due to its artistic character. A wide public, both French and international, became interested again in the beautiful Sufflenheim pottery, and in the kitchen utensils required by a refined gastronomy, platters and tureens, but also in decorative pieces: ashtrays, flower vases, fruit bowls, objects of various kinds to decorate the home, which, as "souvenirs d'Alsace", interest and delight numerous tourists. Today, Sufflenheim pottery is highly appreciated by a large number of customers.

Art ceramics deserve a special place. Various realizations of the XIXth century show the attempts to use fired clay for works of art. A holy water font in the Alsace Museum in Strasbourg bears the date 1782. A crucifixion of Christ from 1818 can be found on a grave in the Sufflenheim cemetery. A Christ on the Olberg and the apostles in natural size (from the chapel of the old cemetery) date from the first years of the XIXth century. The small museum in Sufflenheim has a collection of statues and statuettes dating from 1823, 1838 and 1866, in particular the Virgin Mary with the dead Christ on her lap. The walls of the present cemetery are decorated with relief panels depicting the fourteen stations of Christ's Passion, the work of Paul MESSNER in 1885, who also built and painted the much-appreciated cemetery chapel.

Towards the end of the century, a talented young ceramist, Leon ELCHINGER, began to develop a fruitful artistic activity. In 1892, he decorated the façade of the School of Applied Arts in Strasbourg; in 1895, he created a large wall fountain for the Museum of Bern. His works met with great approval and success at exhibitions, for example in New York (1895), Paris (1900) and Turin (1902). Friendly with CH. SPINDLER and other Alsatian artists, especially the sculptor RINGEL d'ILLZACH, L. ELCHINGER took an active part in the upswing of artistic life in Alsace from 1900 onwards.

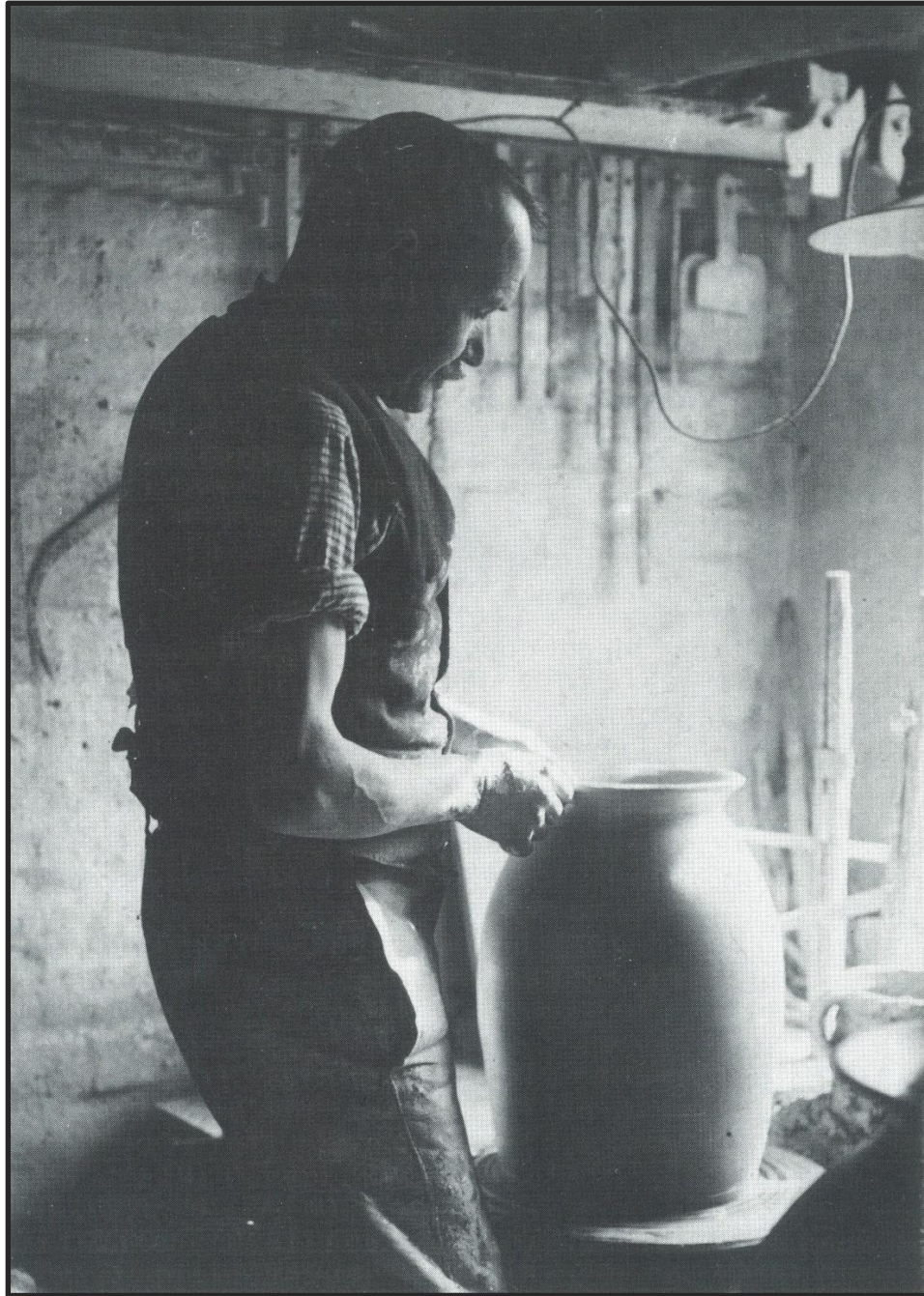
Between 1920 and 1930, Sufflenheim ceramics produced several memorials to the dead of the First World War, which were decorated with large multicolored bas-reliefs, namely the Pieta at St. Nicholas' Cemetery in Hagenau, the resurrected Christ in Niederbronn and Christ on the cross in Richtolsheim. Other ceramic creations included statues of Christ, the Nativity, the Mother and Child, and statues of saints. Statuettes of Alsatian women in traditional costume and groups of young Alsations can also be cited as fine examples of artistic ceramics.

In the old cemetery near the church in Sufflenheim there is a large-scale depiction of the Last Supper, with life-size figures, based on the famous painting by Leonardo DA VINCI, which was created in the studio of L. ELCHINGER (1932).

The masterpiece of this artistic ceramics remains the monumental Stations of the Cross on the Odilienberg, very expressive and original, carried by deep religious feeling, a technically outstanding



achievement by L. ELCHINGER (1933-35). The Stations of the Cross in the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Lourdes in Nancy, by the same master (1936-37), should also be mentioned. A crucifixion group at the southern exit of Sufflenheim (1937) concludes the work of L. ELCHINGER, whose realizations are unique in France. He died in 1942, his son Fernand continued the art-ceramics business, while another son was elevated to the episcopal see of Strasbourg.



The turner on his disc.

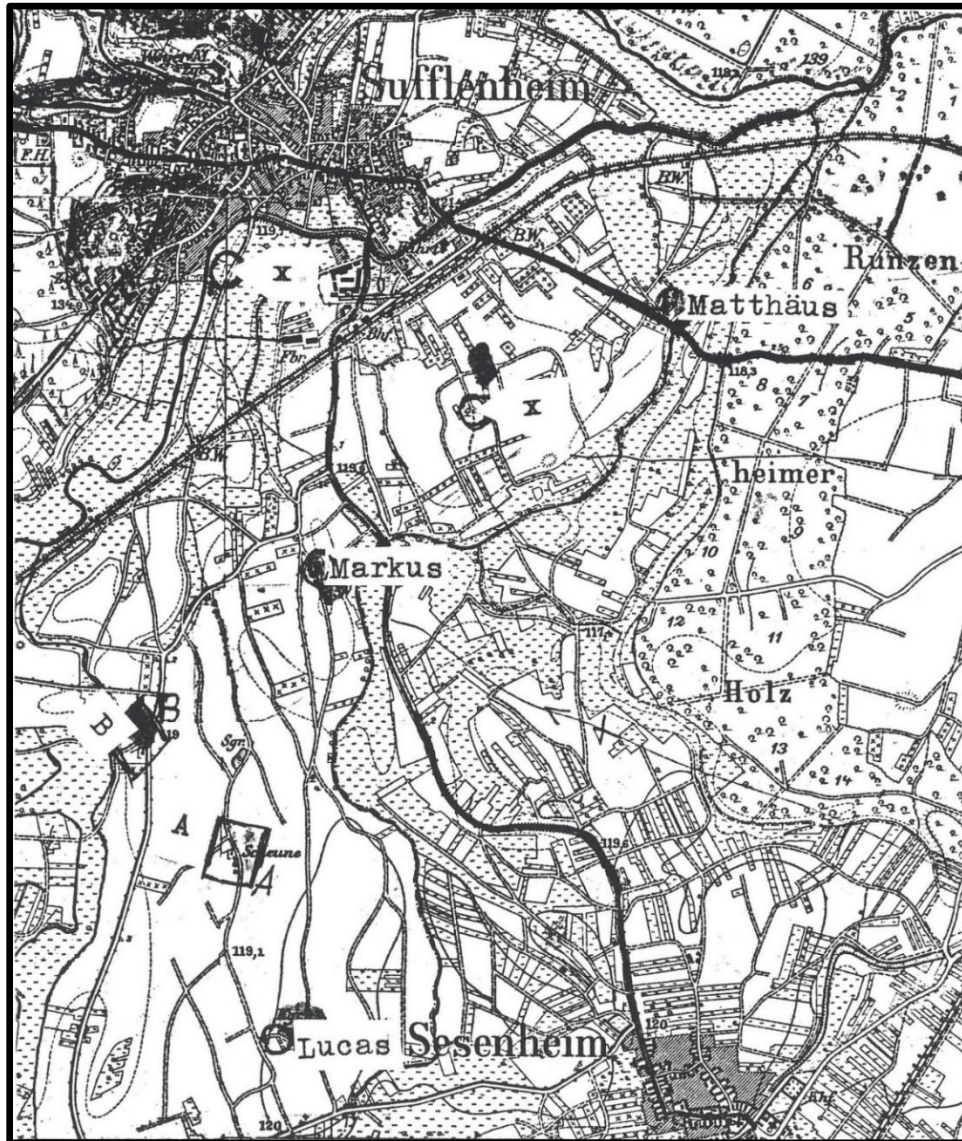
In this diverse way, the Sufflenheim potters carry on traditional but also innovative work in their family businesses, creating products of good taste and beauty that find favor and carry the reputation of Sufflenheim ceramics as true folk art all over the world.





## CROSSES OF THE EVANGELISTS IN THE BANN OF SOUFFLENHEIM

Quite often appears to us that a problem has been first read with the glasses of simplification, and later it must be admitted that this was not true and that more and more questions are raised. This is also the way it happened to me with the question of the rural crosses, as I began (1986) with these and considered them altogether as the Crosses of the Evangelists, which in fact, I had to admit, had been somewhat too early a conclusion.



To begin with, there were not four, but five Crosses, among the four, the oldest bore the year of 1786, and another one erected as late as 1809, which means that where another older one stood, it had fallen as an offering to the Revolution.

As the field crosses in their narrower meaning as well as all other types of pictorial carved stones are not exactly common in the North Alsace Rhine lowlands, those found in Soufflenheim deserve a very special consideration, especially since they fall out of the usual context that is known elsewhere.

## Questions

Three of these crosses are clearly devoted to a specific Evangelist, when we can, and must, follow the line order of those, the eastern St. MATTHEW (1809), the southeastern St. MARK, the south ST. LUKAS. Halfway between the first Crosses of the Evangelists is found a cross without inscription (except the date of 1786, same as another one in the southwest direction of the place, between the railroad line and the bridge over the Fallgraben. The exact position of these crosses is noted on the map joined. Concerning their aspect and typology, these four older crosses are the same in their height (about 2.20 m, breadth ca 60 cm = 1 measure or Elle) when we observe their significance, that is their name, outlook and symbols of the Evangelists. So we understand there must have been in an earlier time one Cross dedicated to ST. JOHANNES with the symbolic eagle, which seems the more so probable when we go back to the EZECHIEL verse in Chapter 1, V. 5, and the only place in the New Testament concerning Revelation 4, V. 6-9, remembering the four symbols, that is the four shapes of the "Being".

The map is an extract in 1/25000 dated 1885, which outshines all later reprints in terms of precision. The place where the rural crosses are found is situated in the middle of a marked and numbered circle. One notices that meaningful trees are also entered, some of which are still standing today, such as a lime tree close to No. 2, close to No. 3 a sycamore tree, the tree close to No. 4 has probably disappeared, on this place has now grown a small wood.

The sycamore tree close to St. Mark's cross is about 150 years old, this same type of tree can be found in the "barn" with fountain and on the map, the largest example is found on the right of the road to Drusenheim (square "A" and "B"), also close to the last one is found a fountain name "Ochsenbrunnen", the remains of which could still be seen until nearly 1945. This place consisted of a large building, which served as a shelter in case of thunderstorms or as a place of rest for people and cattle, there was also found usually a fountain out of wood with its pail and the before named sycamore tree. Nobody seems to remember of the second fountain. There were for sure no crosses on any of both places.

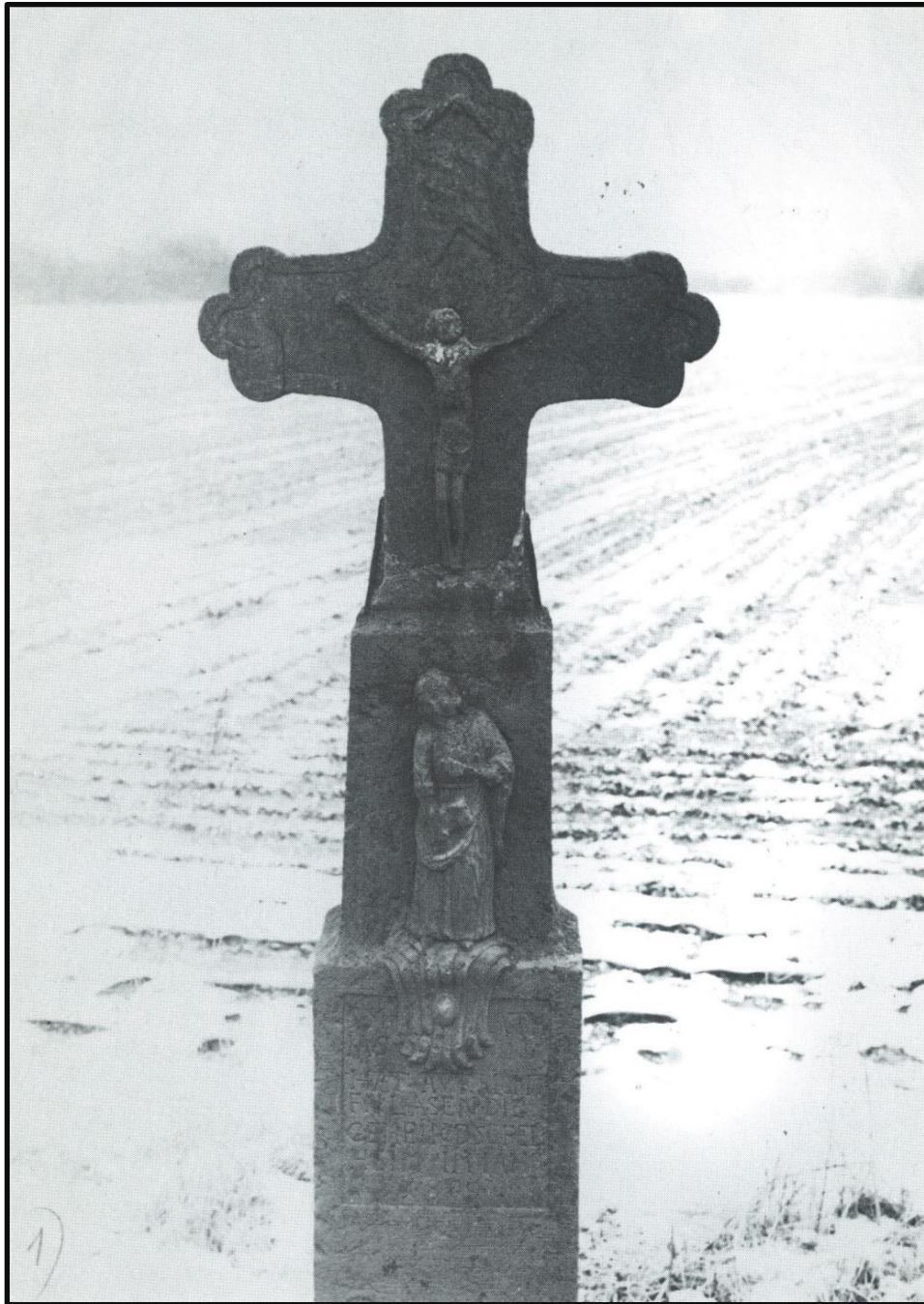
A regular distance between one cross to another seems to have been a rule. Following the Gospel a logical distance between the church and the cross of St. Mathew is about 1.5 km, from there to the "middle cross" about 750 m. and the same distance to St. Mark's cross, so a total of about 1.5 km again from the last one to St. Lukas's cross again 1.5 km and from this last one back to the church about 3 km. We can suppose that the missing cross of St. Johann stood at a place close to a newer cross, which was found near the road to Drusenheim, located at the end of the new district (so again at a distance of 1.5 km).

When looking for the original reason for the selected distances, the metric system, which was unknown in 1786, had to drop out, the French country mile (lieue de terre ou lieue commune = 4,445 km) was also ruled out, although 1.5 km corresponded to about one third of a mile but the intermediate mass (750 m) does not seem to make sense. The old Roman mile is a credible option (milia passum), i.e. the 1000 double steps = between 1470-1480 m for comparison, whereby the 750 m intermediate spaces correspond to half a unit.



In this context, the question must be asked where else are the same distances between crosses or shrines known? In the more recent literature on the question, for instance in "Rural Crosses" by R. ENGEL, 1974, 1983, no answer could be found.

Fritz GEISSERT



Number 1: The cross of St Mathew.  
The inscription reads: Has been erected by the community of Soufflenheim in year 1809.



Number 2: The first "middle cross". This one and the following one date back to year 1786.





Number 3: Detail of the same cross



Number 4: St. Mark and the Lion. We can observe the important damages on the whole memorial.





Number 5: St. Lukas' cross. On the left of the Evangelist is the bull's head.



Number 5: The second middle cross (between the disappeared cross of St Johann and the church).  
The former body was replaced in later times by a bronze lead one.

## ***The Crosses of the Evangelists Round Soufflenheim***

D'Evangelische-Kritzer Um Sufflum

(from 1786 to 1809)

(Original poem in Alsatian)

One time on the first of January  
I took a walk to where these gentlemen are.  
On this day when one goes to meet them,  
They sometimes speak with you.

### **1. Saint Mathew's cross on the road to Rountzenheim**

First you reach Saint Mathias,  
How cold and wet his cross is to-day !  
Hello ! You Old man, I spoke  
And asked him how it feels now.  
He told me "Wow, the time is no longer beautiful,  
No man is hardly no more to see ;  
They believe that they would look like monkeys,  
If they would come a hundred here".

### **2. Saint Mark's cross behind the new ward**

Over there, in direction of Sessenheim,  
You find Saint Mark and his lion.  
How are you ? what can I do for you?  
He answers earnestly but half laughing too :  
"Go to the vicar for any question,  
He should one time bring a bunch of flowers,  
And for my lion a liver sausage  
And a jug of water for his thirst ! "

### **3. On the outside of the ban the Saint Luke's cross**

Oh you, Saint Luke, we never see you,

Without your bull on your side !  
He answers : "Why do you mind my bull ?  
Is not often a man likes a bull inside his home !  
I stay here in the hedges,  
And very peaceful in my mind.  
No more procession comes here,  
Look if any people still live around"

#### **4. On the place, where the cross of Saint Johann was standing**

I could not find him, St Johann,  
He has disappeared from here a long time ago.  
His cross was destroyed by time and war.  
They did not make a new one for him !

#### **5. My question to all of them**

I asked each of them,  
A question that I had already for a long time in my mind :  
Should we not bring you back inside the small city ?  
For fear that in the end you would be stolen.  
As to-day everything can be used,  
When you cannot sell it, you can lay low !  
Each of them answered : "We are here now,  
Happens what will or must be.  
And what is a true word is :  
We stay here for two hundred years.  
We are from yesterday, and all know for sure that :  
An old tree cannot be settled elsewhere !"

**Fritz GEISSERT**