

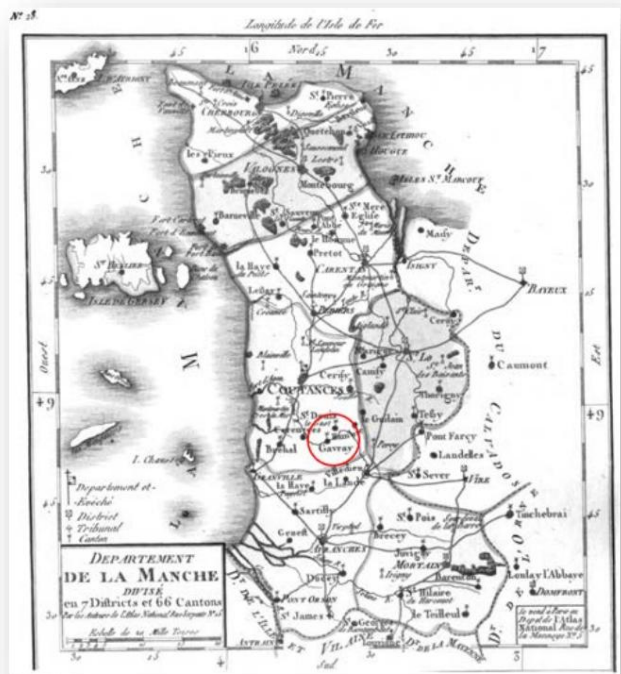


Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



Gavray and its surroundings

(Produced with the kind authorization of Bernard Beck, author GAVRAY-HAMBYE, History and Monuments of a Lower Normandy canton published by Editions OCEP)



1 Situation du canton de Gavray (1792)

I General:

1.1 Geographic location:

The canton of Gavray, about twenty kilometers from Coutances and the sea, may seem, to the busy traveler, identical to its neighbors: topography broken up by hills and valleys, same bocage aspect, same rural economy.

However, it is an original region and offers a range of interesting tourist sites for those who want to get lost in the twists and turns of its small roads.

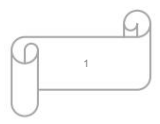
Due, undoubtedly, to its forest, the canton of Gavray constituted a sort of southern border of Cotentin from Celtic antiquity to the present day.

1.2 His:

The Sienna from the Celtic word *Seca* or *Sega* (the river), takes its source in the forest of Saint Sever (Calvados), flows, after some 90 km, into the English Channel at Havre de Regnéville (or Bay of Sienna) on the coast of Havens. It crosses the canton of Gavray between a line of ridges and hard rocks. Sometimes it nestles between rocky spurs, like those of Orbehaye de Mauny (in Hambye) or Châtel-Ogi (in Gavray), sometimes it spreads out its meanders in the middle of humid meadows. Too capricious to be navigable, it



2 Postcard from Siena to the Moulin de Gavray





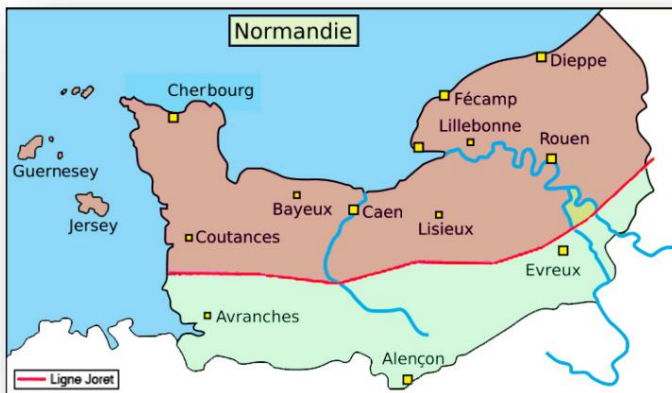
Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



from the 12th to the 19th century provided the force of its current to a multitude of mills established on the numerous breaks in the slope of its bed.

1.3 Linguistics:

A political border, Gavray is also a linguistic border. *Fernand Lechanteur* (1910-1971), Norman poet and writer, gave him the name *Ligne Joret*. *Charles Joret* (1829-1914), literary historian, philologist and botanist, author of the first studies on Norman languages at the end of the 19th century). The *Joret line* is an isogloss highlighted by *Charles Joret* in the study of "the characters and the expansion of Norman patois in 1883. This dividing line takes into account consonantal features which make it possible to distinguish Norman and Picardy dialects in north (Norman-Picards), the rest of the oil domain to the south, west and east.



3 Map of the Joret line

The north of the *Joret line* underlines a consonant specificity specific to northern Norman and Picardy. The north of the line starts from *Bréhal*, passes through *Ver*, *Catte sur Cat*, *Gavray*, *Sourdeval les Bois*, *Percy*, *Le Bény-Bocage*, *Clécy*, south of *Falaise*, *Mortaux-Couliboef*, *Orbec*, *Conches-en-Ouche*, *Evreux*, in *Pacy sur Eure*, *Vernon* and *Gisors* and leaves Normandy towards the north-east.

II The forest of Gavray :

2.1 History:

Until the 11th century, a vast intact forest called the *Gavray forest* occupied approximately the quadrilateral of *Mesnil Aubert*, *Hambye*, *Villedieu La Meurdraquière*.

And

Gavray, *Les Mesnil*, *Saint Denis le Gast*, *Montaigu les Bois* and *Sourdeval les Bois* owes their name to it as well as *Lengronne* and *Ver*. Ducal then royal domain, since



4 The forest of Gavray according to Cassini's map (18th century)



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



located in the chatellenie of Gavray, despite successive clearings, it remained until 1830, one of the most important in the Manche. Its remnants are located, today, on the steep slopes of the Siena valley and along its small tributaries: the Doquette, the Hambiotte, the Bérence and the Airou.

It separated the Gallic tribes of the *Unelles*, to the north, and the *Abrincates*, to the south. When Gaul became Roman and Normandy, or second Lyonnaise under the High Empire, was divided into eight *Civitates*, the *Civitas Unellorum* kept the same limits. Its capital was first *Crociatonum* (Carentan) then *Constatia* (Coutances) around the year 400. The bishopric of Coutances and the Cotentin were in turn limited to the south by the forest of Gavray. The district of Coutances created under the Revolution respects this division.

2.2 Its operation:

Remote, difficult to operate and profitable, it did not constitute a major source of income. Also, the sovereign ceded, from the 13th century, to the lords of the châtelainie of Gavray, in exchange for their armed service, various privileges over the forest such as the right to take their pigs there and those of their peasants, to take this or that quantity of wood, to graze their livestock there, rights which are often accompanied by exemption from taxes on the fairs and markets of Gavray.

The lords of the *Isles*, greengrowers of the forest from the 14th to the 18th century, nevertheless recognized on June 30, 1395 that they were drawing great personal benefits from it.

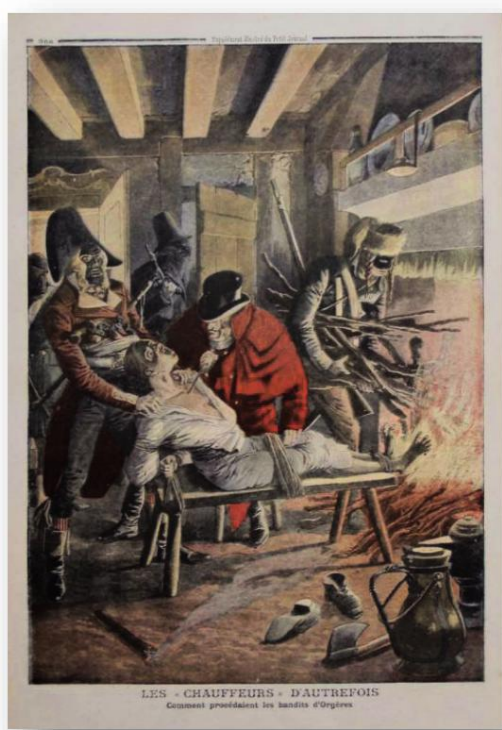
Game, wild honey, firewood and carpentry, fishing and grazing constituted its resources. The more varied and dangerous fauna than today caused significant damage to neighboring fields, especially since, until the Revolution, the capture of game was reserved for the king or his forestry officers.

The 1789 list of grievances mentioned: "the *lands neighboring the forest are annually plundered and devastated by wild beasts, wild boars and other destructive animals.....* ". Some residents sleep outside all summer until the harvest. Their only compensation, for 400 years, was the right to pasture in the forest, a right which was suspended on January 5, 1788, by an order of the Commissioners appointed by the king for the reformation of the waters and forests of the Generality of Caen, whose Gavray forest is part of it. Many residents have to sell their livestock and are reduced to poverty.

2.3 Its security:

During the Hundred Years' War, the inhabitants of Gavray were protected from the incursions of the Rovers and the raids of the Great Companies by the neighboring castle and the ramparts which ensured them relative security. They never needed to take shelter under the cover of the forest.

In the 18th century, on the other hand, it seems that it served as a refuge for people *without faith*, driven to theft or begging more by hunger, unemployment, necessity than by a natural inclination. The assistance granted concerns families with at least ten children.



5 "drivers at work"

The forest limits cultivable land to one time when the population begins to increase again, forcing day laborers and younger children from modest families to emigrate. Furthermore, the administration and public opinion were not very kind towards vagrants and poor people revolted by poverty, which necessitated an increase in the Marechaussee (1786).

Gavray, at the entrance to the forest and close to the brigades of Avranches, Coutances, Granville and Villedieu, was selected to receive a brigade. It is the necessary passage from Avranchin to Cotentin and it is a country of forests whose surroundings have poor fame.

Once the Revolution broke out, it would become one of the lairs of the Chouannerie, then the privileged location for the sinister exploits of the Drivers.

2.4 Clearing:

In the 11th century, the first clearings reduced the forest with the appearance of numerous parishes. To the north, Saint Denis le Gast, Hambye, Pont Flambard (commune of Lengronne), and Mesnil Aubert. To the south, the Mesnils: Rogues, Amand, Villeman, Garnier, Hue and Bonant. To the east, Oberhaye, Montaigu les Bois, Sourdeval les Bois and La Haye Comtesse.

In the middle of the 12th century, all these villages seemed firmly established around their lord and their church.

In the middle of the 17th century, the forest still extended over a thousand hectares south and east of Gavray. The civil status of Gavray-bourg and Gavray-village (1782-1792) notes the sole presence of three or four carpenters and joiners.

On a map from 1837, the limits marked by the Royal Commissioner of Water and Forests, Monsieur de Chamillart, during his visit in 1666 are unchanged.



6 Clearing scene Bayeux Tapestry 11th century



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



In 1886, although no official document attests to it, 400 to 450 hectares still constituted the forest.

At the start of the 20th century, only 170 remained, barely more than today.

2.5 The sale:

Lande les Bains, Lande Saint Luc and the mound of the castle were given by Louis Counts of Toulouse.

On December 5, 1832, the Compagnie du Cotentin, exercising the rights of the Maison d'Orléans, transferred free of charge to the commune of Gavray, due to its former rights of use, the 5/6th of these assets represented by two buildings for use as Markets located in Gavray and 106 ha 49 ares of moors and wasteland. The commune bought the last 6th and in turn sold 19 hectares in 42 lots on the 16th, 17th and 18th. February 1845.

On December 24, 1833, probably under the law of March 25, 1831 authorizing the alienation of several national forests, the Gavray forest was sold.

For various reasons, no document relating to this sale is kept in the Departmental and National Archives.

III The story:

3.1 Gallic and Roman antiquity:

History and archeology have left little from this period.

Gavray probably owes its name to the Celtic language and the forest. From the Gallic word *Voberna*, meaning *more or less hidden stream* then *wood*, then by successive transformations *Vobera*, *Vabera*, *Vabria* to which is sometimes added the suffix *etum*. In the 12th century, Gavray was called *Wavretum*, then *Wavreium*, then *Wavré* and later *Gavré*.

Ver, for its part, derives from the Celtic word *Verno*, alder, tree of humid regions.

The region located on the borders of the *Unelles* tribe took part in the uprising of Armorica against Caesar in 57 BC. Caesar, busy subduing the *Veneti* and concerned about his rear, sent one of his best lieutenants, *Quintus Titurius Sabinus*, to meet the troops raised among the *Abrincates*, the *Lexovians*, the *Aulerques*, the *Unelles* and commanded by *Viridovix*. This meeting took place on the border of the country of *Unelles*, Gavray can correspond to this place. Some historians place the location of the battle at *Châtel-Ogi* or *Mesnil Villeman*.

Caesar victorious, the *Unelles* had to put up with the Roman presence.

Châtel -*Ogi* may well have been used by the Romans. Located above the Sienne, one kilometer east of Gavray in the direction of Villedieu, we could distinguish on the sides of this spur a ditch and an earthen rampart which could have been a *castellum* (fortified camp capable of sheltering a cohort from 500 to



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



7 The "Roman Camp" of Chatel-Ogi.

1,000 men). It could be useful for pacifying this country of forests, monitoring the valley which crossed it and protecting the approaches to the great Roman road which went from *Alauna* (Valognes) in *Condate* (Rennes). This route, later called *Chemin Chaussé*, passed through Coutances, Trelly, Cérénces, Bourey, Le Loreur, Le Repas.

3.2 The Middle Ages:

Following the first major clearings (11th and 12th centuries), the Gavray forest saw the establishment of small estates of enterprising farmers. However, these transformations took place slowly, and the forest remained the dominant landscape in the hollow of which around 1145, twelve Benedictine monks coming from the abbey of Tiron au Perche, chose to build a new retreat which became the abbey of Hambye.

A charter from Duke William the Bastard, dated April 20, 1042, grants the abbey of Cerisy la Forêt the viscounties of Cotentin, Coutances and Gavray (Waretus in the charter). Gavray is the center of one of the administrative and financial districts of the duchy. It did not take long to become an important strategic point due to the defensive position offered by the neighboring height and its location on the road from Coutances to Mont Saint Michel.

Gavray, center of a viscounty, is also the capital of a lordship. Military district having as its base the ducal castle, it is supervised by it, its income is used for its maintenance and its defense, defense for which various neighboring lords owe armed service (Ver, Le Mesnil Garnier, Le Mesnil Hue, Montaigu les Bois, Orbehaye and Mesnil Bonant).

At the beginning of the 13th century, only the royal fortress of Gavray and the seigneurial castle of *Paisnel* in Hambye constituted important military places. Only the town of Gavray formed an agglomeration worthy of the name.

Also, Gavray obtained from the King of France Philippe Auguste (1165-1223) the municipal franchises of a commune at the same time as Saint Lô, Avranches, Valognes and Cherbourg. The inhabitants had the possibility of calibrating weights and measures, of having a municipal barrier, of bearing arms, of choosing the leaders of their militia and their municipal council.

At the beginning of the 14th century, the number of noble fiefdoms increased through divisions and successions. Apart from the king, direct lord of Châtellenie, the most powerful is *Foulques IV Painel*, lord of Hambye. A century later, the *Painel* fortune increased with the marriage of *Guillaume*



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



IV Painel with *Jeanne Bertrand* from the powerful family of lords of Bricquebec. Two new families appear: the *Maunys* and the *Isles*.



8 Coat of arms of Olivier de
Mauny

Olivier de Mauny, cousin of Bertrand du Guesclin, accompanied him in his campaign against the *Navarrese* (1364-1365), it was undoubtedly at this time that he settled on the *Painel lands*, bought them he ? Did they give him the enjoyment of it in exchange for any service? Still, he never ceased to demonstrate his attachment to the *Painels* during the political vicissitudes of the Hundred Years' War.

In 1378, he participated alongside *du Guesclin* in the capture of the Château de Gavray.

The *Isles* appeared in Gavray at the time of *Charles de Navarre* (1332-1387) whom they served with loyalty. He entrusts them with the *Verderie* of the forest, that is to say its guard and administration.

The rights, duties and privileges left by increasingly fragmented and numerous feudal constituencies constitute an inextricable tangle difficult to untangle by the royal secretaries. Most families disappeared one by one in the 14th and 15th centuries.

Gavray remained in the royal domain until the Revolution and never had any other lord than the sovereign.

3.3 From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment:

The 16th, 17th and 18th centuries were not marked by events as important as those of the Middle Ages; sporadically the discontent caused by the decisions of the royal power was expressed by revolts, sometimes serious like those of 1639.

The Château de Gavray no longer constitutes a military support point, but the domain annexed to it still has enough interest for the sovereigns to periodically reward their faithful servants or members of their family.

3.4 16th century:

François I, grants Jean d'Argouges the land of Gavray in Cotentin for having discovered in due time the great betrayals and conspiracies of Charles de Bourbon, constable, and his allies.

Until 1588-90, the wars of religion only little echo, the Protestants meet at Valjoie.



9 Louis I of Bourbon Condé, main
leader of the Protestants



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



The year 1562, during which the Huguenots damaged most of the Norman churches and monasteries, was not fatal to the Benedictine abbey of Hambye.

After the victories of Henri de Navarre, future Henri IV, at Arques and Ivry, his stays at Argentan, Sées and Falaise, the Norman squires of the Protestant party became emboldened.

The lord of Dragueville (Mesnil Villeman) ravaged the region of Gavray. Pursued by Catholic troops, he was captured and executed.

3.5 17th century:

In 1636, King Louis XIII resurrected the viscounty of Gavray. This operation allowed him to sell 18 offices: viscount, advisor, king's lawyer, king's prosecutor, registry commissioner, seven lawyers, four prosecutors, seizure commissioner, and police commissioner.

Two years later, it was the military's turn. Gavray must accommodate four companies of one foreign regiment of Scottish infantry.

Direct taxes tripled from 1631 to 1643, while the Gabelle regime was reorganized to the detriment of the hitherto privileged Normans. The tax is now too heavy: the king's tax, the lord's tax, the Church tax, the blood tax.

On July 16, 1639, the great revolt of the *Nu-pieds* broke out with the assassination of a lieutenant at the presidential office of Coutances. On August 13, Caen rose up, on August 25 Bayeux, on September 6 Coutances. *The Army of Suffering* is made up of 5,000 to 5,500 poorly armed men.

Gavray is in the center of the first zone, tax collectors and officers of all kinds are numerous there and the population is undoubtedly unhappy. On October 18, at the Saint Luc fair, 26 men led by *La Fontaine-Rigaudière* attempted to rouse the population. The Farmers (tax collectors) and their clerks are forced to withdraw while part of the population shelters the *Barefoot*.

On November 30, 1639, Jean de Gassion sent by Duke De Richelieu fought battle at Avranches and put an end to the revolt, the leaders were hanged. The discontented in Gavray are careful not to let their feelings show.

Louis XIV, in 1697, granted the viscounty of Gavray to Louis-Alexandre de Bourbon, count of Toulouse, son of the king and the Marquise de Montespan. The Gavray domain includes: vices and



10 Louis-Alexandre de Bourbon



butchers' and bread halls, the castle, the auditorium and the jurisdiction with the gaol and the prison, the Saint-Luc moor with the customary right to the Saint Luc fair, the Lande des Bains and that of Noés.

3.6 18th century:

The town was ruined by the passage of soldiers and the obligation to house companies of soldiers.

In 1770, the canton had more than 10,000 inhabitants, they requested the opening of a *charity workshop* intended for the maintenance of roads by the poor (men, women, children). This workshop operated for a few years and stopped due to lack of subsidies.

The contribution of the inhabitants of Gavray to the *list of grievances* (spring 1789) is interesting for more than one reason.

The citizens, while remaining full of reverence towards the king, have become very sensitive to inequalities, very hostile to privileges, dissatisfied with the administrative and judicial complexity, they want a simpler and more rational organization.

Permeable to questioning the role of the Church, they judge its charitable action insufficient and demand the use of a fifth of ecclesiastical income for the maintenance of the poor and sick.

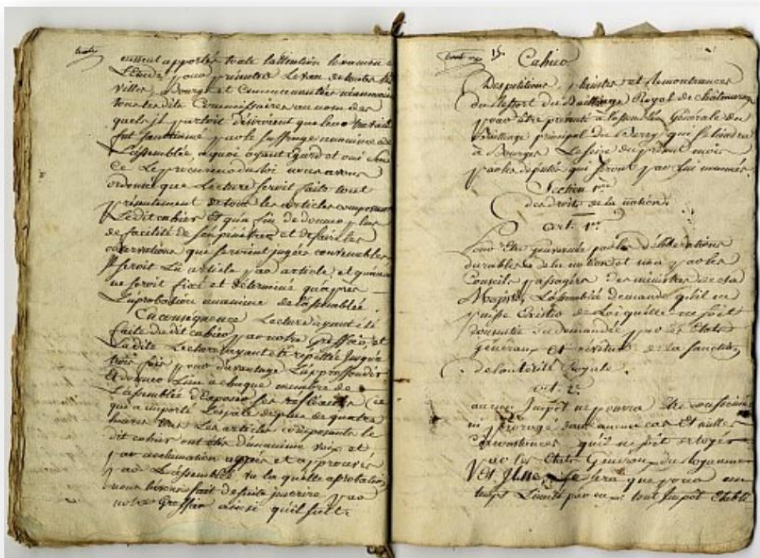
Place of passage of troops from Brittany to Cotentin, seat of a very extensive viscounty and a considerable market, since the imposition of corvées for the construction of the main roads, the town of Gavray and the parishes of the canton have paid considerable amounts without having the advantage of major roads. They asked for the construction of the main road from Coutances to Gavray, already granted by the assembly of the department of Coutances, then from Gavray to the towns of Avranches, Vire, Saint-

Lô and Granville. They ask

also that a road be made from Gavray to Bricqueville les Salines for the transport of sea fertilizers, suitable for fertilizing the lands of all

neighboring parishes whose soil is of poor nature. They request a bailiwick or district court.

Gavray, seat of the viscounty, at its head the viscount *Master Jean Jacques Nicolas Guichard*, President of the assembly of the Third Estate of Gavray and one of the main editors of the notebook grievances. It is, furthermore,



11 Extract from the 1789 registers of grievances from Donville-les-Bains (Manche) and St-Nicolas-de-Granville (Manche)



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



lawyer in the Parliament of Normandy and advisor to the king. Mayor of Gavray in 1793 and major voter, he was arrested and executed on 3 Thermidor Year II (July 21, 1793).

Finally, the inhabitants of Gavray ask permission to run over and kill the savage without incurring penalties.

Thirty people lived from the law, justice or other public functions, none were noble, but they were privileged in the Third Estate, exempt from part or all fiscal imposition which did not prevent them to demand tax equality. They do not seem to have been worried since we find them at the head of the Municipality in 1790, 91, 92, 93 and 94.

3.7 Chouannery:

The Chouans appeared in 1795. Count Louis de Frotté, commands them in Lower Normandy, he inaugurates his command by making a point at Gavray. On July 10, he camped in the forest with his king's hunters. The next day, he forced the Sienne bridge which the inhabitants of the town had barricaded. Two residents lost their lives and the town saw some 600 ragged men march past who left in the evening towards Hambye Abbey.

Winter 1795-96, the Count of *Ruays* and the *Poitevin du Moutier* raided Saint Denis on Gast where there is an arms depot and public coffers to loot. Greeted with gunfire by the national guard, they dispersed it and marched on Coutances, leaving behind them bloody traces of their passage from village to village.

The Count of *Frotté*, with 2,000 men, attempted a final expedition against Coutances. He was beaten at Hauteville la Guichard on November 8 and 9, 1799. In March 1800, he was arrested and executed in Verneuil.



12 Louis de Frotté painting by Louise Bouteiller

Du Moutier emigrated and returned to France with Louis XVIII, became colonel, a position he did not exercise and retired to Coutances.



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



3.8 The Drivers:

The Directory, incapable of maintaining order in the countryside, the few and scattered gendarmerie brigades, the national guards of the large towns made up of volunteers with limited efficiency and range of action, the accomplices of the Chouans, assured of impunity, bandits come out of the shadows. Coming mainly from working-class backgrounds, but not exclusively, they ransom the inhabitants in the name of the king. The recalcitrants are tortured, even killed, the culprits remaining unknown.

The band of *Prével*, of Mesnil Rogues, is confined in the cantons of Gavray and Cérences. In 1797, the Government began to react, it arrested, judged and executed the guilty.

3.9 19th century:

According to Monsieur de Tracy in his work "Gavray and his castle", published in 1863, the districts of Gavray have changed in appearance while retaining more or less their old layout.



13 Photo le Petit Journal
today's drivers

From the bridge over the Sienna and at the bottom of the *Haute rue* which leads to the castle, the *rue du Val* extends towards the south then the *hamlet of la Planche* which owes its name to the fact that it is crossed by the Bérence on which small bridges were built. Finally, the old road to Villedieu and Mortain took the *Chemin de la Cavée*.

Beyond the Planche, between the castle and the Baths, a desolate-looking valley crisscrossed by the Bérence and called *the Noës* extends, surrounded by hills covered with heather and gorse up to the limits of the forest that we still find it in the direction of Mesnil Garnier.

At the northern end of *rue du Val* we find the Gavray mills, whose existence dates back to the Dukes of Normandy, *rue du Moulin* leads to the old four-arched bridge over the Sienna. The first arcade supports houses. Crossing the bridge, you enter *the Grande rue* or *Pavé du Roi*, on the left are the Viscount Court and the Prison, opposite the large house of the village called *Maison de la Carbonnière* then comes the Church surrounded by the cemetery (currently *Place des Tilleuls*).

Rue de la Poterie is bordered by an old market hall, then the market square completed towards the north by the *Douve du bourg* (filled in at the beginning of 1800).

Opposite the viscount's house *Grande rue*, today Town Hall and *Place de la Mairie*, *the Old street* or *rue de l'école* leads to the *Grands Prés Le Roy* dependent on the castellany of Gavray. Then, meadows lined with poplars lead to the block called *the Hôtel Saint Denis*. Beyond, *the*



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



Saint Jean chapel stands in the middle of the cemetery formerly reserved for the inhabitants of *Gavray-village* then for the entire parish following the destruction of the village cemetery.

For 150 years, Gavray was a large trading town whose vitality is manifested by busy fairs.

At the end of the 18th century, agricultural activity was quite complete (wheat, barley, almost planted with apple trees, meadows) despite the importance of moors, heaths and forests. The town makes horsehair cloth for bags, wire cloth and parchment.

The civil status for the period 1789-99 mentions the presence, among the active population, of:

- agriculture: 107 people (ploughmen, cultivators, day laborers and others),
- rural crafts: 126 people (parchment makers, paper makers, thread makers, sieve makers, dyers/launders, weavers, spinners, canvas makers, tanners, coppersmiths, shoemakers, farriers and grinders),
- woodworking: 30 people (carpenters, clog makers, charcoal burners and others),
- commerce: 76 people (food, clothing, merchants, construction and miscellaneous),
- service and administration: 24 people (medicine, justice and legal professions, administration, army and miscellaneous)

That is 363 people for a population of 1,450 inhabitants. Gavray was then an agricultural town and an important industrial center both because of the diversity of production and the number of employees employed.

The rural exodus began to slowly empty the countryside from 1870, in 1911 the population was 1,382 inhabitants.

3.10 Agricultural activity:



14 *The apple market.*

In the 18th century, wheat, barley, buckwheat, oats and flax coexisted with natural meadows and apple trees. In the 19th century, with potatoes and fodder beets.

Meadows are gradually taking the place of plowing. In 1886, their surface area was 380 hectares, 765 in 1913.



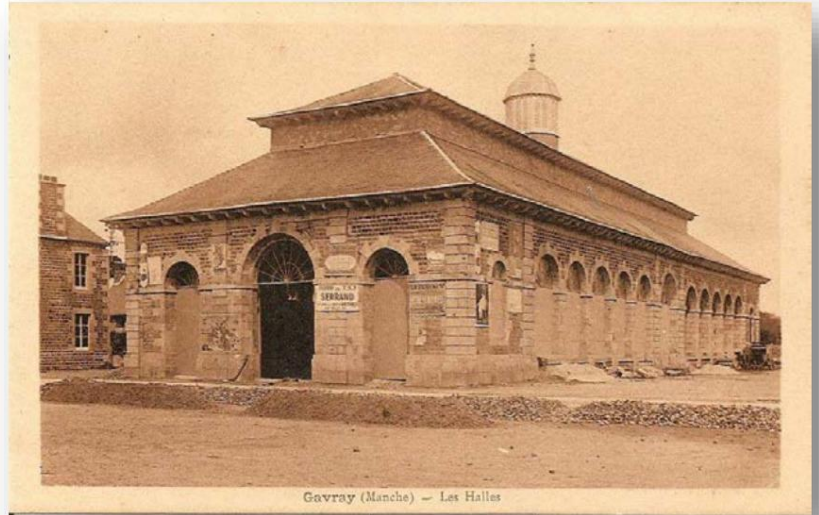
Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



The vitality of agricultural activity is evidenced by:

- an important fair, dating back to the 12th century, held on the feast of Saint Luke and the following days,
- the market halls built in 1898 for the cereal market.

311 Industry:



15 The halls

At the end of the 18th century, the region's assets in the era of the industrial revolution were a large, undemanding, skillful and courageous rural workforce, wood from the forest and the hydraulic energy of its rivers. The industry, which represents 40% of the active population, is however doomed for lack of:

- raw materials for large industry,
- presence of a major traffic lane,
- local capital.

Metallurgy is represented only by the bell foundry of the *Grente brothers*. Arriving in 1780 from Lorraine, nomads like their colleagues at the time, they ended up building a workshop. Their bells adorn practically all the bell towers in the canton and are even exported to the United States. Unfortunately, the foundry did not survive them.

Another foundry, managed by the *Jourdan sirs*, existed in Ver for a few years, it seems having disappeared after 1830.

Stationery plays a more important role thanks to the manufacture of parchment. In the 19th century, two regions of the Channel made it their specialty, including that of the middle Siena valley. Three factories exist in Montaigu les Bois, Saint Denis le Gast and Gavray.



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



16 Hambye Canvas

Fabric manufacturing occupies especially in winter, the majority of rural workshops. Gavray, Hambye and the canton of Cerisy la Salle brought together, between 1750 and 1850, 2,000 looms scattered across farms and operated by hand. THE ticking, thread, cotton, muslin are shipped to the North, the South and the colonial empire. The stringers were ruined in the Second Empire by Flers who monopolized this activity.

Horsehair weaving around Gavray, in the Sienne valley, was secondary for a long time until the ruin of the drapers and parchment makers. Its heyday was between 1830 and 1880, the horsehair coming from Russia, Argentina then Italy was washed in the river then formed into bundles or bundles. The *nouvaines*, girls aged 10 to 14, then tie the hairs and cut them to obtain threads of identical length, then the weaver working on a vertical loom intervenes. The last artisans of Gavray, who lived in the Planche district due to the proximity of Bérence, did not survive the 1914-18 war.

Activities, born in the 17th and 18th centuries, came to a definitive end and with them the hope of the industrialization of the country.

3.12 The Saint Luc fair

Probably created by Henri II Plantagenêt in the middle of the 12th century, it is the second most important fair in the department.

A long religious and commercial festival, after having taken place for eight centuries in the village, it has taken place since 1969, on Lande Saint Luc, on the Friday following the third Thursday of the month of October and for three days since 1900. Previously , it lasted up to five days.

The first years of the 13th century, it produced no profit, Jean Sans Terre having devastated the mills.

In 1639, on October 18, four times, twenty-six *Nu-Pieds*, armed with muskets and pikes, burst in, recommending not to pay taxes and other duties, the fair being free of everything.

In 1697, when the town was ruined by the passage of soldiers, it took place and grain and sassiers were trafficked there.

In 1840, on June 21, the Mayor announced that the fairground was in need of urgent repairs and essential for holding fairs.



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



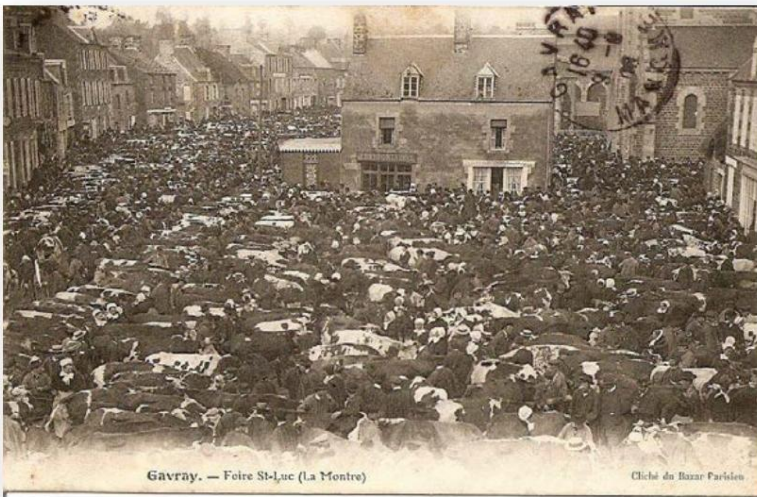
In 1864, 4,100 horses, 4,500 oxen and cows, 1,600 calves, 1,200 sheep and 800 pigs were traded.

In 1886, on August 9, the Mayor explained to the Municipal Council: " Everyone knows the importance of the Saint Luc fair, the most important in the department for transactions in cattle, horses and the goods of all sort which are presented there »



17 The rise

In 1916, on October 15, the weekly La Croix de la Manche of Coutances and Saint Lô wrote: " The Saint Luc fair, with shows the day before.....Before the war, there were usually 2,000 horned animals and more than 1,500 horses. She established the courses of management for apples. Last year, it marked a significant recovery which can only be accentuated this year. »



18 The livestock market at the St Luc fair

In 1922, on October 14, Le Granvillais wrote: "let us wish that the Manche Railway Company organizes special trains to encourage the arrival of walkers from Cerences, Bréhal, Granville And Coutances. »

In 1935, on October 19, Le Journal de Coutances et de l'arrondissement wrote: "the numerous demand created a business movement among buyers from Bretons and brokers from Yonne and the Paris region "

Trading: 3,000 cattle and 2,000 horses and foals.

In 1945, 2,000 cattle and 2,000 horses.

In 1958, 4,500 head of livestock including 3,500 cattle.

In 1999, 100,000 visitors.



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



IV The buildings of Gavray

4.1 Town hall:

The building housing the Town Hall was modified during the work carried out to make the crossing of the more rectilinear town. Built in 1780, by the Viscount of Gavray, *Jean Jacques Nicolas Guischard*, it was the seat of the viscounty until the abolition of this office. In 1842, the Municipality decided to buy it to house the Town Hall and the Justice of the Peace.



19 The town hall

4.2 Holy Trinity Church:

The old church was located on Place des Tilleuls, built in the 12th century, remodeled over the centuries, it presented a mixture of Roman and Gothic styles. The decision to destroy it, given its catastrophic state, was taken under the Second Empire and carried out in 1900.

Construction of the current Church began on May 16, 1865 and was due to be completed in November 1877. But a fire broke out in the Planche district, destroying 140 houses and stopping the work, the Town Hall could no longer pay. A grant granted by the Ministry of Religion allowed them to be restarted in 1887; they were received on January 21, 1892.

In 1896, a square tower, without a spire, was built, due to lack of resources, to house the bell of the old church.



20 The tower of the old church



Association de Sauvegarde du CHATEAU DE GAVRAY



21 The current Sainte Trinité church of Gavray

4.3 The Bridge over the Sienne:

Built in 1847 and 1848 with cut stone from the granite quarries of Saint-Sever and Coulouvray-Boisbenâtre, and rubble from the Gavray forest and the castle.

It was mined and destroyed on July 29, 1944 by the German army, a Bailey bridge was established by the American army. It was rebuilt in 1947.



22 The bridge over the Sienne