

Chapter Five

Simon

From Jehan and Alix came a complex family tree. There was Simon, and his children who established la Rochère, a Charles and his children who established Belrupt, and a Nicolas and his children who carried on Lichecourt. (See pedigree opposite). The repetitive use of a few Christian names makes research difficult.

Each branch was associated with a particular glassworks and each branch was involved with several other glassworks at the same time. Indeed the laws of inheritance of France gave rise to the dispersal of the holdings in these glasshouses. The only thing that kept a lid on the process was the habit of the glassmaking families to intermarry. The result was that the list of owners of one glassworks showed a remarkable overlap with the list of names at the next.

Simon and La Rochère

Charles Beauvau and Lady Bonne, his wife, were Lord and Lady of Passavant. They granted land to Simon de Tissau, esquire, a favoured nobleman and glassworker, in 1496. Simon, the son of Jehan de Thysac of Lichecourt, was allowed to build houses, furnaces, and buildings appropriate for a glassworks. The grant of fief described it, "*at Rochières on the Rupt of Morte Eau, within the bounds of Passavant*". The Passavants approved it in the presence of their advisers and agents, Richard, vicar of Martinville, Philippe Picart, Pierre Tissal and Colombey Bresson of Attigny. These witnesses attended by special summons to observe the signing of the grant. ¹

To us the assembly of so many witnesses would be unusual but every formal legal contract needed its witnesses. Many of the participants could not write. Those who could read may have found reading the script of the time almost as difficult as it is for us today. Although the formation of the various letter characters is often similar from one document to another, the scribe was not always so kind. One's presence at the ceremony for the creation of the legal document would help one know the content for the future. So the witnesses all noted the contents of Simon's grant. Charles of Beauvau agreed to the liberties and the land forthwith. The yearly royalty of six small florins was not to be collected until the Glasshouse was built properly.

¹ Arch. Dep. de Meurthe et Moselle, B 380, folio 205; B 10.795; Bibl. Nat. Coll. of Lorraine, number 60, folio 361 to 363.

Two copies exist of this grant of 17 May 1496. There is one certified as a correct copy on 23 October 1531¹, and one faked in 1574 in which Simon de Tizault became Simon de Bigault.²

From 1496 until 1543, the la Rochère remained the sole property of the Thysacs. This was rather unusual; to remain in one family name for forty-seven years attests to Simon's longevity.



La Rochère still makes artistic glass like this today.

But they also make glass ice cream dishes for the mass market and to pay the wages

On the 8 February 1490, when Simon became engaged to Jeanne de Charmoille, they received in her dowry the lordships of Tranchières and of Sarrau, which are in Burgundy. It is not clear what they did with these lordships because they seem to have concentrated on la Rochère after 1496. Simon de Thysac was familiar with uncivilised waste border regions, such as la Rochère, in which he now settled. He was a child of Jehan de Thysac and Alix de Barisey. He had been brought up in the Château and glassworks of Lichecourt. La Rochère was even more of a deserted border region, where the fief holder looked after himself. It was another place where a water supply demanded the creation of a large lake. The contract for the grant of land was signed on the roadway at Morillon. Also at Morillon a big pond was created at the very limit of the frontiers of Lorraine and of Champagne. Fountains and springs abound in all seasons.

1 M. M. B 850 number 33

2 Lorr. 60 folio 361.

Glassworks	Owners	First	Last
Name	or Occupants	Mention	Mention
Bains	du Houx, des Preys, Garnier, Jacquotz, Bonnet, Finances,	1563	1626
.....Bains	Pillier, Gérard		
La Bataille	Tisac, Hennezel, Thiétry	1556	1632
Belrupt	Hennezel, d'Esclé, Tyzal, Bongard, du Houx, Bigots, Robichon	1392	1626
Beauregard	de Launoy, du Houx	1561	?
Bennevisse	Hennezel	1407	?
Finance	Finance	1524	1657
Biseval	Bysvale, du Hou, Jacquot, Danicolle, de Mozon, Fricaudel,	1448	
.....Biseval	Briseverre, Finance		
Boyvin	Tisal, Dardenet, Bonnet, Hennezel , Bisval,	1524	1605
Catherine	Thiédry, Tizal, Hennezel , Fredault, Vioménil,	1477	1585
Clairey	Thiédry, Hennezel, Duhoux, Polliers, Finance,	1555	1629
Claudon	Thiétry, Coeffy, Hennezel, Thisal , Houx, Pillemin, Fagosse	1496	1658
Couchaumont	Houx	1554	1658
La Frizon	Tizal, Dardenet, Philibert, Massel, Pullemin, Finance, Lallemand,	1505	1658
.....La Frizon	Launois, Houx, des Preys, Bongard, Vernet, Hennezel		
Grammont	Hennezel	1510	1624
Hatrey	Hennezel, Tissaut, Donneval	1539	1658
Haudompré	Houx, Finance , Jacquots, Bigot	1557	1644
Hautbois	Houx, Choiseul, Massel, Bigault	1508	?
Hennezel	Hennezel, Barisey, Thisal, Thiétry , Garnier	1494	1650
Henricel	Héridel, Pillemy, Hou, Bradelot, Basot, Garnier, Henricez, Bonnet,	1448	1614
.....Henricel	Puy, Jacquot, Mouzon, Mathieu, Bonnet, Henricé, Gérard, , Massey		
Houldrichapelle	Hennezel, Massey	1555	1586

Glassworks	Owners	First	Last
Name	or Occupants	Mention	Mention
le Humbert	Pullemin, Houx, Bigots , Monsoon, Catel, Caput,	1555	1573
la Hutte	Hennezel, Thisal, Chevalier	1554	1587
Jacquot	Jacquot, Jacob, Henricé, Briseverre, Puix	1448	1572
Leppenoux	Massel, Prés	1554	1605
Lichécourt	Tixot, Barisey, Hennezel, Certain, Brun, Thiétry, Collignon, Dardenet,	1473	1600
.....Lichécourt	Errard, Massey, Fourot-Toignart, Mussey, Gauthier, Houx, le Jeune,		
Pile	Hennezel, Thiétry	1556	1656
Morillon	Massey, Garnier, du Houx, Bigot, Finance,	1523	1694
Neufmont	Le Clerc, du Houx, Mathieu,	1507	?
La Neuve	du Houx, Finance, Pilliers, d'Arbois,	1563	1679
Onzaines	Finance, Hennezel	1492	1635
Rawfaing	Ranfaing, Magnières, Launoy,	1631?	
La Rochere	Thiétry, Tissau, Charmoille, Vougrey, d'Aubour, Hennezel,	1477	1636
.....La Rochere	Bouvot, Guichard		
Selles	du Houx, Roncourt, Thévenel, Barnay, Bigot, Massels,	1583	1620
Senennes	Hennezel, Thisal, du Houx, Bègue, Jacquot,	1521	1658
Soison	Massel, Picart	1548	1548
La Sybille	Thiédry, Hennezel, Bresson, Mareschal, Champs, Niocourt, Finance,	1501	1658
Tendon	Hennezel	1492	1512
Thiétry	Tyson, Thiétry, Mareschal, Hennezel, Bisevalle, Circon,	1448	1622
Thomas	Thiédrich, Mareschal, Hennezel, du Houx,	1475	1658
Tignécourt	du Houx, Prés	1554	1600
Tolloy	Hennezel, Thysac, Thiétry, Fresnée, du Houx,	1517	1630
Torchon	Hennezel, Tisal, Bressy, Jussey,	1501	1621
Trois Bans	Bonnet, du Houx, Chavigny, Bongard, Mathieu,	1555	1622

**Glassworks of the Darney region of Lorraine and persons dwelling there
Showing also the years mentioned in documents**

Claude II de Tissac, Jean and Francis de Thiétry sons of Guyot, then ran the glassworks. It still produced only grande verre, that is window glass. From its foundation the la Rochère certainly always enjoyed wide privileges. However from 1566 it was decreed that this glasshouse would pay taxes in the same way that the other glassworks did. A special order of the duke Charles of the 15 February 1566 told the "*people of the accounts of Lorraine*" to deal with one called Robert Mouzon. 1

Maybe they did knuckle down to actually paying the taxes but the owners refused to "*endure the residence (in their glassworks) of any clerk of the tax gatherers*".

In 1572, Gérard de Hennezel joined the management team at the glassworks. He obtained this right because his mother was Melcionne de Thiétry. His father was Nicolas de Hennezel, founder of Houldrychapelle.

Claude II de Thysac must have had some good friends at court in France because when the Baillif of Chaumont sent in his Officers of Waters and Forests to protect and preserve their waterways and woodlands, the King of France intervened. Until 1584, la Rochère was an integral part of the Duchy of Lorraine but the frontiers between Lorraine, Franche-Comté and Champagne were the objects of many disputes. An allotment of 1584 gave la Rochère to the King of France, Henri III, who sent a letter to the Baillif of Chaumont, summoning him to maintain Claude de Tizac in possession. Knowing the amount of damage that a fully operational glassworks the size of la Rochère can do to a wood, it is not surprising that the baillif had tried to stop it. On the 20th September 1585, the King of France Henri III, wrote to the baillif, telling him to call his people off. He demanded that Claude de Tizac be left in possession of the glassworks. The letter says that they should be allowed to continue and that the allotted entitlement in the forest of Passavant made in 1581, be maintained. The king claims that the baillif's Officers of the Waters and Forests are trying to disturb the glassworkers there. He records that the living Claude, glassworker, is the heir of his father the late Simon de Thisac and that Francis de Thiétry, is part owner of the glassworks and is Claude's cousin and partner. 2

We cannot help wondering what power Claude could lobby to get this support from the court of the French king. It seems unlikely that the gesture was entirely altruistic, but it may have been just an opportunity for the king to make his own ownership clear.

This partitioning of 1584 3 was just one of a series of revisions of the disputed border region.

1 M. M. B 643 number 5 and of Lorraine 667 folios 18 and 19 .

2 Arch. Dep. de Meurthe et Moselle, B 10795

3 A.M. R 4 1162 folio 1484

When Charles of Beauvau died, his widow naturally inherited his fiefs. However, it was the custom for the fief to notionally go to the new lord and for him or her to swear homage and fealty for the inheritance. So when Charles died, to satisfy the duke of Lorraine's decrees in this matter, Barbe of Tallenge, the widow, made a return to the duke. This showed the status of all those who belonged to the castle, its dependencies and to the forests of Passavant. She made this return on 10 March 1519. She records first Simon de Tisal, esquire, glassworker of the glasshouse of the Wood of Passavant. She gives his age as about fifty-six years. ¹

This corresponds well with his receiving the grant in 1496. At that date he would have been thirty-three years old.

Simon's son Claude, controlled the glasshouse of la Rochère, with his first wife, Bonne d'Aubour, from the 16 April 1526. When Bonne d'Aubour died, Claude married his second wife, Barbe de Vougrey. Seventeen years after Claude had assumed control, he and Barbe sold half their glasshouse to Guyot de Thiéry of Coiffy and Claudine Odin his wife.

They signed the contract of sale in front of Hacquerel, the official scrivener to Mirecourt, on 15 May 1543. In 1563, Jean Chevalier, the receiver, visited the glassworks to collect their taxes. During his visits he listed many glassworks and recorded the ownership². His list shows glasshouse la Rochère owned jointly by Francis de Thiéry, Jehan de Thiéry, brothers, and Claude de Tizal.³

One night however they all went to eat at Jean de Thiéry's house. It was a bad mistake for Simon de Tissat, who went with them. Maybe they drank too much or maybe they were not agreeing over how to operate the glass-furnaces, but they certainly fell to quarrelling. Simon became a victim of another Thysac tantrum. He died dramatically. Now Dr Ladaïque, in his thesis of 1973, says that Simon was the founder of la Rochère and was very aged, but he would need to have been over one hundred years old. Another version has this Simon as Claude's cousin, perhaps therefore the founder's son. This seems more likely, particularly the twist, which suggests Claude's motive was to accede to the control of La Rochère! Whichever Simon he was, during the supper given in Jean's de Thiéry house, he had a quarrel with Claude de Tissac. Claude killed Simon by one stroke of his sword. { Letters of remission were agreed at Nancy the 20 April 1565.} ⁴

Cases of refused remission did occur but we do not have any refused letters. Perhaps such letters were not kept or perhaps only agreements were written down.

¹ Arch. Dep. de Meurthe et Moselle, B 850, number 62; 10.798, D, number 12.

² See pages 46 & 47

³ Arch. Dep. de Meurthe et Moselle, B 1932

⁴ M. M. Reg. L.P. B 37 folio 12 to 14

At the end of sixteenth century, Claude de Thysac, Christophe de Thiétry and Jérémie de Hennezel managed la Rochère. This Claude was the son of another Claude, who, on the 15 May 1563, had married Isabeau Lespine daughter of Hector, Lord of Martigny, St. Ouen and Mandre. With such a grand title it is not surprising that he was also a lieutenant in the guards of His Highness. This connection may explain why their son Claude (4), later became such a confidant at the court of Lorraine. Although Claude (4) lent his name as a manager to the family glassworks, he had little time for the glass industry. He had his eyes fixed on the social scene. Not content with being a nobleman, Claude was a social climber and became a confidant of the Duke. Claude became a "*gentleman server of his Highness of Lorraine*". He left his cousin Christophe de Thiétry, to roll up his sleeves and do the sweating at the glassworks.

On the 3 February 1593, Claude (4), married Marguerite Bouvot, daughter of Anthony, who became President in the elections of Langres. They had four children, Antoine, Catherine, Jean-Baptiste and Elizabeth. Antoine had no connection with glass and went away to St. Mihiel to be an attorney in Parliament there. On 22 July 1628, in the house of her mother in Graffigny, Catherine married, Humbert de Vidranges. He was the son of Adam, Chamberlain to His Highness, and of Magdeleine de Vergeolles. On 27th August 1623, Elizabeth married Michel d'Ormes and Jean-Baptiste is mentioned below.

In his first wedding Antoine de Thysac, married Anne Menu of Roncourt, daughter of Étienne Menu de Roncourt, on the 5th January 1621. Antoine was an attorney at the court of St. Mihiel. The couple lived at Graffigny but Anne Roncourt died without child in 1626. Antoine married again and his second wife was Gabrielle Piétrequin, daughter of Philibert Piétrequin, counsellor of the king of France, special lieutenant with a bench at court and chief officer of Langres.

There exist some precious documents regarding Claude (4) de Thysac. Charles III, Duke of Lorraine, sent a letter of invitation, dated the 30 June 1602 and addressed to the Gentleman of the la Rochère. This summoned Claude de Thysac to go to Marsal. On 25 April 1603, the duke wrote another letter addressed to the lord of the la Rochère. In this he summoned Claude to return to Nancy where he desired the presence of his principal vassal. On the 27 May 1608, we find that Henri has now become the duke of Lorraine. Henri addresses the lord of the la Rochère, and this time summoned him to return to Nancy to assist at the funeral of the late Duke, Henri's father.

In March 1594, Henry IV of France had triumphantly entered Paris and his internal wars were over. He concluded that the only major threat to France was now from outside in the shape of the Hapsburg Empire and in particular, from Spain. In 1595, he issued a formal declaration of war with Spain. At various times, Spanish troops obtained rights of passage from the Duke of Lorraine so that they could pass northwards to the Spanish Netherlands. However we read that in 1595, the "*borough and the village (of la Rochère) were entirely burned and ruined during the wars of Comté by the Burgundians*". The survivors of this

new devastation quite naturally went out into the forests there to "*cut to rebuild and replace their houses*". The French war with Spain was over in 1598 and it was then that the Master Officer of the Waters and Forests of the Court of Chaumont found the damage done in the forest and condemned the inhabitants to pay a charge of five hundred ecus. In particular, Christophe de Thiéry was asked to answer for some damage in Passavant.

An announcement made in 1603 by the officers of Passavant, show the population of la Rochère: "*There reside there four gentlemen glassworkers, several widowed single ladies and some ten or twelve households of ploughmen and labourers*". Letters of the King of France, Paris, 19th April 1613, show clearly the la Rochère in the hands of Claude de Thysac and of Christophe de Thiéry. ¹

However, the "Master Officer of the Waters and Forests of France", is silent. He says only that the glasshouse belongs to Christophe de Thiéry, to Jacques, Abraham and David de Thiéry, to Jérémie de Hennezel and Francis Guichard, and finally to "*the heir representing the late Simon de Thysac*". This he recorded on 7 May 1613, and he does not mention in his confirmation who was "the heir of the late Simon de Thysac". Perhaps he could not be bothered to find out. Maybe he had gone home to write his report and forgotten to ask!

The ovens at this glassworks always produced grand verre or window glass. The number of furnaces and households was considerable and the use of fuel was great. Wood was the only fuel used and so the inhabitants of Passavant denounced the pillage caused to the local trees. A significant Forest lawsuit took place in 1620. It was a verbal deposition, as was the custom, and was in the usual place. Chief prosecutor was Master of Waters and Forestry for the Court of Chaumont. He accused Jérémie de Hennezel, Christophe, Salomon and Abraham de Thiéry also Francis Guichard. "*They continue their clearings of the woods, --- slashing the oaks of only fifteen to sixteen feet in height. They carry away even the marks of the boundary and plough into the beyond. They sow (in) the paths ----.*" Such a lurid report calls to mind a scene of abandon, with high powered machines crashing through the bushes and unable to stop. Of course they only had horse or ox-drawn ploughs, so the prosecutor's description seems a bit over the top. The glassworkers admitted that for some time they had operated their ovens all the year around and that eight masters worked in relay alternately there. They admit also that now the new houses are built these require the felling of even more oaks. In fact, the la Rochère numbered twenty-two fires and households. They confirm, that "*Passavant lost some of its inhabitants and they admit that the place of la Rochère, is exempt from any ordinary thing towards the King*".

So here was another cause of friction; while Passavant itself had lost population, the glass community had increased its operations and did not pay any normal taxes.

¹ Arch. Communales de Passavant. 106. V. 1871 ,

La Rochère was obviously an isolated community. It distanced itself from the town of Passavant itself and, because of the problems discussed, from its people. So the relationship between the locals and those of the la Rochère became frosty. Ostracised by the townspeople the la Rochère workers all became members of a Reformed Religion. They had not been too isolated to have found out about the new religious preaching. Thus we read that *"Messieurs of the glassworks had required and obtained that a chapel, settled for Huguenots, be set aside in the choir of the Church of Passavant.*

The papers also show that their belief was so strong that when it came to abjuring, (that is recanting), or abandoning their livelihoods and homelands, they chose the latter. The records of la Rochère in particular are full of items showing glassworkers who left the area for their religious convictions.

In 1643 the presence of Salomon de Thiétry and of the "*sire of Tissac*" are noted but the latter's first name is not given. 1

Some of those who left La Rochère definitely reached England.