Chapter Eight

Decline of Lorraine Glass

Dispersal

We find a general decline in the activities of the Lorraine glasshouses during the period from about 1560. By 1640 there were few working and many were referred to as deserted. Lichecourt suspended its glassmaking activities at the beginning of the seventeenth century. La Rochère continued for some years but by 1636 it had been completely burned by enemies of the state. Of Belrupt, there is no detailed evidence of actual closure, but it certainly made only drinking glasses after 1575 and probably stopped completely, early in the seventeenth century. There is information on another Tyzack possession and on its owners, the Glasshouse Claudon. The dispersal of its glassworkers abroad was typical of what happened to many others as well and is worth recounting for that reason. From 1550 to 1560, Claudon Hennezel was the master of a glasshouse called the Glasshouse of Chastillon. He was listed there among those guarding the forest of the Vosge at the Border of Passavant[1]. In 1561, the glasshouse Chastillon assumed his name of Claudon and today the village there still bears his name. It amounted then to 125 days of cleared land [2] and the glassworks always worked in *grand verre*. At this time it was managed by Claudon de Hennezel and Claude du Thisalz, but the death of Claudon de Hennezel in 1573 seems to have caused a stoppage of glassmaking.

Two years later, It belonged three eighths to Claude du Thisal, Sire of Belrupt, who also worked at the Furnace of the Hut, three eighths to the children of the late Gaspard de Thiétry, and the remaining quarter to the widow and heirs of the late Claudon de Hennezel.

After that Glasshouse Claudon passed into the hands of the makers of drinking glasses.

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[1] List of the glassworkers fit to guard the forestry (BN Coll. of Lorraine 474 folio)
[2] Report on the settled glassworkers by the bailiff of the Vosge on the 28 August 1561 (BN Coll. of Lorraine 60 folio 211).

By 1614, Claudon belonged to Charles de Fagosse, with Nicolas du Houx and Salomon de Hennezel. The glasshouse was declared ruined in 1658, "*its owners deceased and there were no heirs*".

So Claudon ceased making grande verre by 1575 and then made only drinking glasses. Its operations were unclear after 1614 but by 1658 it was a ruin and had been closed down for some time. What had happened was that its grande verre specialists had quit Claudon in the seventeenth century and emigrated. Many Lorraine glassworks followed this pattern. David de Hennezel showed up in Italy in 1613. There, his presence is recorded because he succeeded in working the "*verre en table*" to such a standard that it approached the quality of cristallo. A commission reported to this effect. He married Anne de Thiétry and had four children, one of whom, Josué was to copy his father and become a very dynamic emigrant.

Josué was at Namur, in Liege, from 1635,. He signed a contract of association with Robert and Nicolas de Colnet aimed at the manufacture of "*verre en table*" and in it he engaged to provide six trained workmen for a period of ten years. This was in itself some indication of the state of the industry in Lorraine because he seems to have had no difficulty in persuading all these specialists to give up their homes, load their belongings on a cart, and to move to Liege. We find that in 1639 six gentleman glassworkers from Lorraine accepted his offer[1]. In 1642, he obtained the grant to build a glasshouse at Brussels [2]. By 1643 Josué, was trying to win another contract. In his proposal he recalled a monopoly of glass for windows, for a distance of fifteen miles all round Brussels, and asked for the same rights as those possessed by the Italian manufacturers of drinking glasses at Brussels; he justified his request by stating that he brought a rare art which had never been practised, (in Brussels) [3].

He took on both the glasshouse of Thy in Brabant and that of Dinant, in 1651. The letters patent, agreed in 1653, by Philippe IV of Castille, King of Spain, recognised the exceptional qualities of Josué. For nine years these granted the monopoly to him for the manufacture and sale of glass for windows made on table, and of quarrées made in the manner of Lorraine; chiefly at Brussel s but also, as the King said, in the other places, "*where we are obeyed* This monopoly was renewed in 1661 when Josué was given the right to make mirrors, in the manner of Venice and the "*grand verre rond*" glass, which was not made other than in Normandy[4]. This reference to "*grand verre rond* (See chapter seven), refers to glass made by the spinning technique used in Normandy. References to it do not normally crop up in Lorraine documents and so

[1] This contract was made the 3 December 1639 between Josué "master of the glasshouse of Namur". Jacques, Christophe, Clément, Nicolas, Jean, Hennezel and Jérémie de Thiétry " *all of the bailliage of Vauges in Lorraine*". (Arch. Etat Namur. Minutes T. Tilman, notary to Namur)

[2] This detail figures in VAN HOUTTE, (Economic History of Belgium to the end of the ancient regime - Gand 1920. page 131.)

[3] NORD C. Intendance supplement 1141

[4] NORD B 1670 folio 151

this grant to Josué is unusual and acknowledges the fact that he has access to skills from regions other than just Lorraine. This place clearly accommodated asylum seekers and was a meeting place for skills from other regions.

By setting up and working in Thy, Josué Hennezel was following his relative, Paul Hennezel, Lord of Hennezel, and a son of Antoine Hennezel [1], who from 1608 had dwelt at the Glassworks of Quiquengrogne in Clairefontaine[2]. (Bongard, a Norman, who presumably had the technique of disc glass, was also recorded at Quiquengrogne.) Although these glassmakers were prepared to migrate to find work they still owned property in Lorraine and so fearing for his possessions back home, Paul Hennezel returned to Hennezel and requested an official authorisation from the duke to allow him to work in the Duchy of Brabant. He got it in 1618 [3]and founded, his glassworks in Brabant. It was a glassworks to make window glass and was located at Baisy-Thy, near Wavre, for the Count Lord Maximilien of Ghistelle, [4]. There he made the panes for the stained glass windows of the chapel Notre Dame in the church of the Cordeliers at Namur [5]. Paul Hennezel worked at Thy with other glassworkers of Lorraine [6]. So the migrations of these Lorrainers from about 1560, show that many were off seeking their fortunes or futu res abroad. They went to a wide variety of places and they went for a wide variety of reasons including but not restricted to religion. But they appear to have upset the local Catholics: the bishop of Namur mentioned in 1621 that the "*glassmakers of Lorraine threaten a scandalous life against the Rules of the church*" One imagines that their skills were much sought after abroad. Those going to Brussels were not going to a Protestant country. They abandoned their homes for economic reasons. Often the glassworks they left in Lorraine were then reported as deserted.

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[1] Antoine is described as Lord of Monthureux before Baulay, sire of Tollois.

[2] The abbey Saint Nicolas of Clairefontaine was situated at four kilometres to the South West of Fourmies. The Glassworks of Quiquengrogne in Thiérache appears have been an important place for the coming together of Lorraine and Normandy glassworkers. Colnet, (Arch. Chantilly series of Carton 45), and Bongard, (AN. R4 1109 fo 375), a Norman, worked there in 1568.

[3] The agreement of the 31st January 1618 stipulates that Paul Hennezel can continue to work in the Duchy of Brabant for twelve years for four months per year: October, November, December and January (M.M. B10415 fo 53).

[4] Baisy Thy (District of Gemappe) The a ct was signed the 19th May 1618 and required the furnace to work for twelve years; the furnace of Ways was commonly called the Glasshouse of Thy in Brabant. (F.COURTOY - The Gentleman Glassworkers of Lorraine at Namur and Thiéry Lambotte 1626 - 1657 in Ann. Soc. Arch. of Namur, Volume 49, 2nd edition - Years 1058 -1959, pp 223 - 247) p. 224 - See also TARLIER and WAUTERS - The Brabant Walloon - Namur 1859 p. 28 and p. 35.

[5] F.COURTOY. op cit. p. 225

[6] Francis Tisacque, who worked in 1620 at the glasshouse of Clairefontaine, had followed Paul Hennezel in his emigration, to Thiérache in Brabant, which was encouraged by the invasion of the Spanish. Francis Tisacque died the 14th July 1653 at the Glasshouse of the Folliette, located at Namur; the reco rd of burial gives his description as "glazier". (H. Fallon the Commune of the Namuroses - Namur 1907 p 15 note inf. number. 2)

During the later years of the sixteenth century some devastation and destruction was caused in the region by the passage of Spanish troops along what was known as the Spanish Road. The dukes of Lorraine and Bar, held the land between Franche Comté and Luxembourg, which separated Philippe of Spain from his lands in the Netherlands. Years before, in 1475, they had trouble with Charles the Bold when he had forcibly occupied a number of strongholds in Lorraine in order to provide a corridor to connect his territories. However, after 1559 when France occupied Metz, Toul and Verdun, the duke was prepared to forgive and forget his forebears' quarrel with Burgundy and to treat Habsburg and Valois even-handedly and so gain from both. His own position was strengthened when in 1547 France and Spain agreed to guarantee Lorraine's neutrality. This treaty was frequently renewed, although the duke himself recklessly broke it in 1589 by intervening in the French wars of religion to support his claim to the French throne. Later Louis XIII ignored it in 1632-3. Lorraine's neutrality treaty permitted free passage to troops of all powers provided they did not stay more than two nights in one place [1]. Troops marching from Italy to the Low Countries through Lorraine went through Darney and the surrounding border regions occupied by the glassmakers.

Lorraine was in all respects independent and the passage of any troops had to be preceded by diplomatic activity. Late in 1566 special ambassadors were sent by Philip II to Lorraine to seek permission for Alva's army, the first military users of the '*Spanish Road'*. Subsequently the need for military movements, unforeseen in 1567, helped to establish more permanent diplomatic arrangements

From 1567 to 1620, twenty four Spanish commanders marched troops along the Spanish Road. Typically the number of troops was around 5,000 and the bulk of the traffic was concentrated in the earlier years. Records do not talk about the number of *soldiers* on the march, only of the number of 'mouths' *(bouches or bocas)* to be fed. This substitution was understandable because the ratio between soldiers and 'mouths' could be up to four to one. In 1567 the duke of Alva led 8,646 Spanish infantry veterans and 965 cavalry troopers to the Netherlands. Communities along the way were made to cater for 16,000 'mouths' and 3,000 horses. A reckoning of 1573 presumed that 3,000 Spanish infantrymen on the march, with their lackeys, women, children and horses, would be 5,000 'mouths' and 1,000 horses.

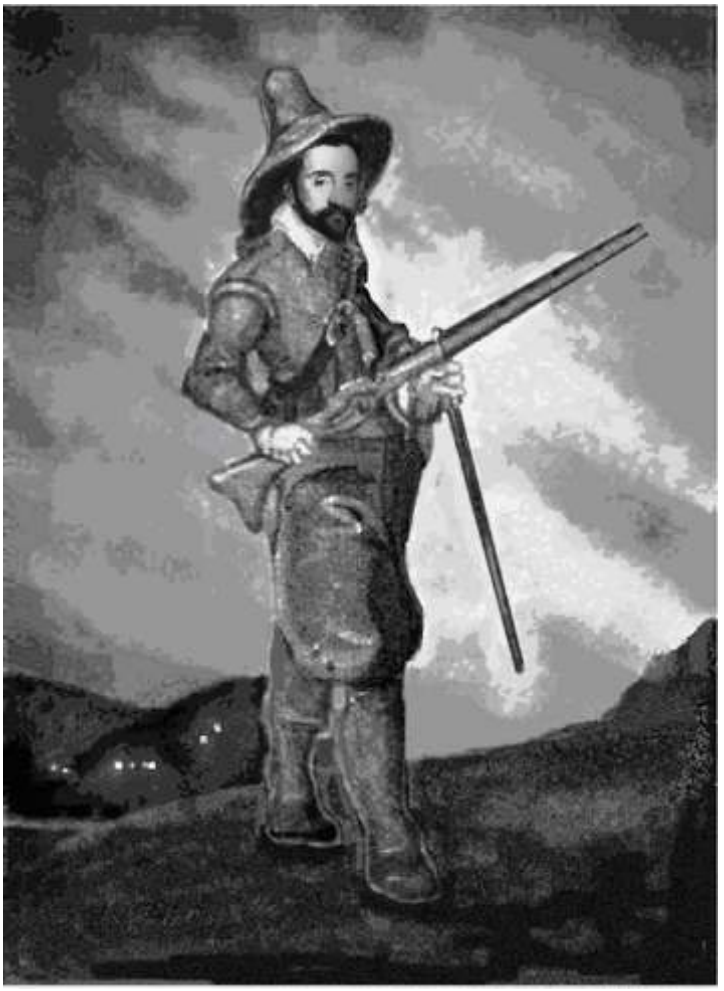
Troops made for a village or group of villages, which was usually unaware of its impending fate, and quartered themselves wherever they chose. The normal method of provisioning such armies was primitive in the extreme. Everything necessary for the soldiers was ordered on the spot, sometimes without compensation. When the unfortunate houses were inhabited, on which they descended, the hosts were made to provide free food and room services Soldier who found billets in empty houses were

[1] Copies of these little -known treaties of 1547, 1557 and 1596 may be found in A.D. Meurthe, *3 F* 438, ff. 92-I09 and *3 F* 439, ff. 310-37.

entitled to collect contributions from the neighbouring residents to pay for their bed and board. This was a terrible burden for a poor family to bear, especially in time of shortage. The normal speed of armies using the 'Road' seems to have been about twelve miles a day. So a village would be affected for several days with the troops spread out in groups.

Expeditions which used the Spanish Road were preceded by special commissioners from Brussels or Milan who arranged the itinerary of the troops, the stopping-places, the quantity of food to be provided and the price with the governments of Luxembourg, Lorraine, Franche Comté and Savoy. However the compensation was sometimes not paid until years later.

Civilians were horrified by the lodging of hordes of rough, tough, dirty, penniless and probably plundering soldiery in their towns. Some expeditions carried out numerous crimes against the civilian population. A Spanish company lodging at Annecy in 1603



was accused of forty-three offences (the sergeant led the way: he was charged with six crimes of violence, more than anyone else), while at Aime-en-Tarantaise no less than fifty separate cases of robbery were reported against the men of another Spanish company which lodged in the town for just one night in 1597. Livestock, silks, kitchen-ware and furniture as well as money were stolen in copious quantities. On other occasions the troops burnt down the entire village in which they stayed, while granaries and isolated dwellings were often callously destroyed by passing troops.[1] Most of the glassmaking communities living in isolation, may have suffered disproportionately and this may explain some at least of the desolation and quittance of glassworks at the time.

Use of the Road moved eastwards towards the end of its employment. In 1624 Richelieu became the chief minister of France and set himself to restore the natural frontiers of France. For him this meant gradually moving French frontiers towards the Rhine and of course apart from Metz, Toul and Verdun, Lorraine was in the way. After Richelieu's influence became stronger, his push to the natural limits of France directed attention to Alsace. French forces occupied that province after 1638 because it commanded the surest passage from France into south Germany. Alsace had to be occupied. The same military logic lay behind the French invasion of Lorraine in 1632-3. Although there was an element of personal vendetta in this action - the duke had tried to dethrone Henry IV in the 1590s, invading France in support of the *Ligue*, and the duke at least had given overt support to Louis XIII's turbulent brother, Gaston of Orleans - Richelieu's motives for occupying the duchy was overwhelmingly strategic. Lorraine was the gateway to Germany and to effective French intervention in the Thirty Years War. This and other French successes completely disrupted most of Spain's military corridors[2]. The French invasion of Lorraine by Louis XIII in 1633 cut all the major military supply-routes of the Spanish empire at one blow, since the routes from the Tyrol and from the Valtelline together with the well-trodden Spanish Road all depended on the right of passage through Lorraine. Even before the fall of Nancy, France made it clear that she would not respect that right: in April 1633 an expedition of 3,000 Burgundian recruits marching to the Netherlands, was forced to turn back by French threats of attack.

Loss of colour

So the glassworkers eventually gained relief from passage of Spain's troops but only by being overrun by Richelieu's armies in 1633. These armies also caused devastation and they stayed longer, not just passing through in a day or two. Closure of the Spanish Road was bought at a terrible price. Much damage was done. There is a consensus in several books on stained glass arising from this. June Osborne for example says: *In 1636 the district of Lorraine, which had been the*

[1] *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road 1567-1659*, Geoffrey Parker
[2] AGRB SEG 207/293-4V, Infanta Isabella to the king, 24 Oct. 1633.

chief source of pot-metal, (coloured glass for stained windows included), was overrun by the troops of Louis XIII and all the glass furnaces were destroyed. So pot-metal became virtually unobtainable, it was inevitable that glass-makers should turn to enamelling[1].

Certainly coloured glass had come from Lorraine in the past. In fact the region was probably ideally situated to produce glass of many colours. Professor R. G. Newton has shown that by the use of beechwood ashes a combination of iron and manganese oxides could be instilled into the glass mix. When this was then furnaced with varied degrees of oxidation or reduction in the furnace, depending upon the conditions of ventilation, a variety of colours could be obtained at will. Surprisingly these range throughout the spectrum with the exception perhaps only of the stronger reds. Here are extracts of the Eighth W.E.S.Turner Memorial Lecture given by Professor Newton[2]

"*Colour slides shown confirmed that samples of glasses containing only added iron were pale blue or pale yellow, those containing only added manganese were white, pink, or purple, whereas those containing both added iron and manganese were pale shades of blue, green, amber, pink, and purple as the extent of oxidation increased*.

Controlling the colours of medieval glasses

A glass containing suitable amounts of both iron and manganese could assume any colour from blue to violet (in fact all the colours, except red, used in 12th century stained glass) depending on the type of atmosphere in the furnace in which it was melted. These two oxides could be introduced into the glass by the simple expedient of using beechwood ash as the source of alkali. But there must have been many disappointments in the glasshouses arising from the need to adopt a trial-and-error approach to the melting of coloured glasses in medieval times. So we now have a link between beechwood ash and the colours in medieval stained glass, but what has this to do with our third item, that of the 'northern furnaces', i.e. those north of the Alps? Consider what is known about the distribution of beech trees in Europe at the end of the Dark Ages. Pollen counts show there were more beeches in the forests of central Europe (sometimes more than 50% of the pollen came from beech trees). Thus, if the glassmakers knew that they needed beechwood ash for making coloured glasses, then it would be sensible for them to migrate to central Europe! In addition, I am prepared to believe that there would be greater opportunities for controlling the draught, and hence the state of oxidation of the melt by using a northern (rectangular) furnace than by using the three tiered, circular southern type. "

[1] Stained Glass in England, page 67, June Osborne.
[2] Glass Technology Vol. 26 No. 2, April 1985, page 100 -101.

Following this line of research, others have now carried out detailed measurements and show a direct connection between colour and the degree of oxidation when iron and manganese are present in suitable ratios.

So we can conjecture that the coloured glass techniques practised in Lorraine may well have been based on the adjustments of ash content and more particularly on ventilation in the furnace. Those secret gatherings and oath ceremonies probably dealt with how to manage the draught among other things. We may guess at least some of the nostrums that were transferred in the secret transfers of crafts from father to son. Indeed when François Tyzack went to Murano in 1492, the records there appear to indicate that it was his skills in making clear red glass (!) that softened the resistance of the Muranese glassblowers! (See chapter three) What is surprising is why there did not appear to be a transfer of these skills to England when the migration occurred. Few findings of coloured glass have been made from UK sites, except cullet scraps. G.H.Kenyon spent some time looking for coloured glass for his book " *The Glass Industry of the Weald*". He concludes that "*there is no evidence from the sites that coloured glass was made in the Weald*." This is not because of a lack of beech trees. In the will of Henry Strudwycke of Kirdford in 1557 Henry leaves to his son "*all the beches that I have bought, and halfe the beches in and uppon Idehurst and Croftes aforesaid*". One can only surmise that although the Lorrainers could do it in Lorraine, perhaps they did not know the crucial part played by beechwood. They could perhaps repeat the process in Lorraine, perhaps even in Namur or Brussels but did not know why. Its transfer required all the ingredients to be not only available but their function understood.