

Walhain and Hollertt: a question of identities.

The maps of Ferraris and Capitaine clearly mark the villages of Walhain and Sart-à-Walhain, remote for about 1800 metres. North of Walhain was the hamlet of St.Paul. In 1822 Walhain, St.Paul and Sart-à-Walhain were merged into one community with the name of Walhain-St-Paul and Sart-les-Walhain. Nowadays the name of Sart-lez-Walhain (the former Sart-à-Walhain) is still in use, as well as the name of Walhain, with attached the hamlet of St.Paul.

In all his reports, letters and orders Grouchy refers to a village called Sart-à-Walhain. It still remains unclear why Grouchy did so, while there is compelling evidence that it was actually the village of Walhain where Grouchy halted in the morning of the 18th of June. ¹

This evidence is the house where he stayed for some time, the one of notary Hollertt. ² The fact that it was this house in particular can be derived from details given by general Gérard himself, colonel Simon Lorière, general Valazé and the intendant Denniée. It was a detached mansion with a large, walled garden, and in it, on a small height, a green, open summer-house. More importantly, Gérard mentions Hollertt's name. ³ Also, at Sart-à-Walhain no single building meets this description, but at Walhain one does, and that is the house of the notary Hollertt, also called the ferme de la Murette or chateau de Lonpré. ⁴

The house is located at the extreme south-side of the village, some 600 metres from the church, opposite the farm de la Basse Cour. A lane led towards the arched entrance of the house and which was lined with large trees. In 1815 there were only stables to the left of the entrance, but after the transformations of 1900 and 1937 more outbuildings have been constructed, resulting in a courtyard. The 18th style house was to the right. A part of it has disappeared since 1815. On the other side was the garden, half of it was an orchard and the other half a kitchen-garden. The summer-house has since long disappeared. ⁵

Joseph Hollertt was born in France in 1775. In the period 1792-1795, Hollertt had served as a medical officer in the French army. In that capacity he had also served in the campaign in the Netherlands. In June 1802 he was nominated as notary at Corroy-le-Grand, where he lived for 13 years. He was also appointed as notary at Nil-Saint-Vincent and then lived for some time at Walhain-St-Paul. In 1819 he went living in the hamlet of Hayettes, at Nil-Saint-Vincent. In 1829 he terminated his career as a notary and died at te Hayettes. Hollertt was in 1815 not the official notary at Walhain. This post was vacant from 1810 until 1818. However, it was during this period that Hollertt acted as a reserve and that is the reason that in 1815 he waited for the events in the farm of la Murette. Hollertt died at Hayettes on 26th of May 1861, at the age of eighty-seven. According to his wish, after his death, Hollertt was laid in state on the stretcher onto which general Gérard had been carried into his house on the evening of the 18th of June 1815. ⁶

¹ Contrary to Grouchy, Gérard speaks about Wallin or Sart-à-Wallin and of Walhain, Sarra-Walhain and Serra Walain. Cf. Letter of Gérard to colonel Simon Lorière, dated 10th August 1819. In: SHAT, nr.C15/5

Le Sénécal writes about Sart-à-Valain. Cf. his statement dated 2nd June 1830. In: SHAT, nr.C15/5

Bonnemains mentions "Valhain".Cf. Journal. In: SHAT

² The fact that Grouchy didn't stay in the massive 13th century chateau at Walhain had to do with the fact that this was in ruins, after it had been left in the 17th century and had collapsed after a thunderstorm in 1790. In: Touring club de Belgique. No.7 15th April 1909

³ General Gérard. In: Quelques documents sur la bataille de Waterloo p.23
Colonel Simon Lorière. In: Quelques documents sur la bataille de Waterloo p.16
Denniée talks about a *maison de bailli*. In: Quelques documents etc. p.19
Valazé. In: Dernières observations p.31-32
Cf. colonel Rumigny. In: Souvenirs du général comte de Rumigny p.105

⁴ The fact that the house carried the indication of *chateau* was because of the seize of the private dwellings in the building as well as the tower on top the gate of the complex. The name of the house changed with its respective owners, like Lonpré and Mr.Marette. Around 1850 the name of ferme Lardinois can be found. Cf. sketchbook of the British historian A.H.Kennedy-Herbert. In: NAM, nr. FA 7303-73-2 to 21 - store 185
From this sketch it can be seen that details of the house have been changed in the course of time.

⁵ Aerts, W. – Les etudes etc. Livre V p.203-205
Speeckaert, G.P. & I.Baecker - Les 135 vestiges etc. p.58-59

⁶ The right spelling of his name has been given by mr. Viandier, Hollertt's great-grandson.
Cf. Aerts, W. – Les etudes etc. Livre V p.203-205
Also see: Varlier, H. - Liste alphabétique des notaires de Belgique depuis les origines du notariat jusqu'en 1864. Cf. Aerts, W. – Les études etc. Livre V p.203-205
The name is also spelled as Hollërt and Hollaert.
Cf. Houssaye, H. – 1815. Waterloo p.297
Charras. La campagne de 1815 Vol.II p.37

Cf. Aerts, W. – Les études etc. Livre V p.203-205
J.Martin. Notes sur le village de Walhain au temps des Révolutions (1789-1815). In: Le vécu du hain. Nr.15 sept.1990 p.21
Intendant baron Denniée. In: Quelques documents p.19