

## Reffannes

by Sue Burgess

The commune of Reffannes is within the area of the Communauté de Communes du Pays Ménigoutais. There are approximately 370 Reffannais and Reffannaises. Reffannes (Rufenias, the land of Rufenius) was for a long time merely the western part of the parish of Vautebis.

The hamlet of Reffannes was about 4km from the parish church and so the inhabitants decided to build a chapel at Reffannes. The land for the church and the cemetery were donated by the Count and Countess of Liniers in an act written in 1871. The new church was built thanks to the help of the Count of Liniers who had previously been a councillor at the embassy of the King of Sardinia. The Count's wife was Olympe de Pont-Jarno, and they lived in the Château de Plessis Cherchemont at Vausseroux. Charles-Louis de La Rochebrochard and the Treille family also participated financially in the building of the church. Thérèse de Liniers donated her part of the family inheritance to the church before taking her vows and joining the order of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul.

The church is of neo-romanesque style. There is a bell tower, three rows in the nave, a transept and a semi-circular apse. The church is dedicated to Saint-Vincent-de-Paul. There is only one other church in the diocese of Poitiers which is dedicated to Saint-Vincent-de-Paul.

## Le Retail

The inhabitants of Le Retail are the Retailons and the Retailonnes.

The Logis was mentioned for the first time at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. It was the property of the battling lords of le Retail. One of them, Jacques de Parthenay, a Huguenot, managed to take Secondigny which was Catholic. Today the Logis has been completely renovated and is a municipal gîte and village hall.

St Joseph's church dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, with its round apse and its bell tower porchway. It was built after the decision by the town council of Allonne to satisfy the wishes of the inhabitants of the hamlet. Le Retail only became a commune in its own right in 1912.

The lavoir (wash-house) has been restored by the children in the local school. La Pierre de justice (the stone of Justice) was apparently used to behead condemned prisoners. The lords of le Retail, had a feudal right authorising them to judge crimes and petty crimes committed within the area of their jurisdiction. They could set up a pilory to punish offenders.

## Rigné

Since 1973, the commune of Rigné has been attached to Mauzé-Thouarsais. The inhabitants are called the Rignéens and Rignéennes. The village of Rigny was known under the Latin form of villa Regniaco in 876.

An inventory of the furniture of Barnabé Fouschier, lieutenant and assessor at Fontenay-le-Comte, attests to the existence of Rigny in 1563. On Cassini's map, the village is identified under the name of Rigny.

### Faïencerie (Pottery)

Inspired by the pottery of Rouen and Nevers, the pottery of Rigny already existed in 1536. After a long interruption, production began again in 1770 before stopping again in 1791.

The last master potter of the commune used white clay which came from the area between Saint-Varent and Rigné. Recently the communauté de communes du Thouarsais, reopened the pottery to help women in difficulty to find a job.

### Tile and Brick works

Because of the clay soil, a tile and brick works developed in Rigné. During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were approximately ten workers. From 1866 to the time when it closed in 1938, the tile and brick works was managed by the Deboeuf family.

### Logis de Laudairie

The Logis de Laudairie (or Château Laudérie), situated in the centre of Ruault, is a manor house which had belonged (since about 1805) to Ange-Achille-Charles de Brunet, the Count of Neuilly (1777-1863), and son of the Count of Artois (future King Charles X) who had made him his chief of stables. Then the manor house passed into the hands of his son-in-law Charles-Léonce Durant de La Pastellière. Near the manor, overlooking the stream of the Grollier, was a lime kiln which also belonged to the Count of Neuilly who had built it so that the farmers could put lime on their fields.

### Saint-Hilaire Church

The parish church of Saint-Hilaire de Rigné dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. It was restored in 2005 and has modern stained glass windows.

### Famous people connected with the commune

- Ange-Achille-Charles de Brunet (1777-1863), Count of Neuilly, and Mayor of Rigné from 1826 to 1848. The son of Charles X, he lived in the Logis de Laudairie au Ruault de Rigné and is buried in the commune.
- Marie-Anne Joséphine Leblois, daughter of Michel-Joseph Leblois and the wife of Ange-Achille-Charles de Brunet, is also buried at Rigné.



Inset: The parish church of Saint-Hilaire de Rigné  
wikicommons/DG-Irao

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