The House of Saulx-Tavanes
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The House of Saulx-Tavanes: Versailles and Burgundy, 1700-1830.

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DOCUMENT VI: THE INCOME OF A TENANT

The estimation of the revenues of the barony of Bourberain was made by one of the count’s special agents in order to determine the revenues of his tenants and adjust the rents accordingly. The diversity of sources of revenue indicates the need for a single rent-collector, namely the principal tenant (fermier principal), M. Rochet, ironmaster at nearby Tilchatel. All but three arpents of wood had been detached from this lease and assigned to the forge in a separate contract. Over half of the total revenues here come from a champart on 2,160 acres of land. Only about one-sixth of the revenues came from arable domain land, which was sublet to a laboureur who worked the land, paying one-third of the harvest to Rochet. Subletting at one-third the harvest was common practice in the Dijonnais. Meadowland, by contrast, was almost always leased for a money rent, often in small pieces.

Rochet was, therefore, a grain merchant as well as an ironmaster, marketing about 100 émines (1,455 bushels) of grain annually. He was in a position to stock (note the grain magazines) his grain and wait for a favorable market in which to sell. But such careful surveys as this made the margin of profit narrow and forced men like Rochet to take risks, hold the grain off the market for long periods of time, thereby increasing the hostility of the grain consumer. Rochet’s rent in 1780 was 4,500 livres; in 1785, it was raised to 5,800 livres. It is doubtful that the sub-tenant Faille had much grain left to market after he paid the expenses of the farm, including all the seed. On the other hand, he was less exposed to increases in his produce rent, tied as it was to a customary formula—one-third for rent, one-third for farm expenses, one-third for the laboureur. In short, it was not easy for a Rochet to pass on his increasing rent burden to his subtenants.

STATE OF THE REVENUES OF BOURBERAIN, MAY, 1783

1. Four small grain magazines, tenant’s lodging (three rooms and one on the second floor which can be used to store grain).
2. Arable land: 168 journaux (134.4 acres) planted as follows:
   56 in wheat
   56 in barley or oats
   56 fallow
M. Rocher, ironmaster and principal tenant, sublets to Faille, laboureur, for one-third of the grain, taken on the spot by Rocher at the harvest. It is estimated that the journal produces 18 measures of grain in a common year. Therefore, 6 measures of wheat and 6 measures of oats belong to the said Rochet. At 31 measures to the emine [14.55 bushels] this amounts to 336 measures or 10⅔ emines of each kind of grain.

The emine of wheat sells between 55 and 65 livres, average 60 or 645 livres
The emine of oats sells at 25 livres or 266
Total 911 livres

It is true that the lands of the local inhabitants and the non-residents are leased at only 4 measures per journal, but they are charged with the twelfth sheaf, while the lands of the Seigneur's domain are exempt. Consequently, the Seigneur's land returns more per journal.

3. By a survey of 1782, 63 soitures [50.4 acres] of meadow:

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<tr>
<td>60 at 20 livres</td>
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<td>1,200 livres</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 at 22 livres</td>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,266 livres</td>
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4. Ponds—29 journaux [23.2 acres] 200 livres
5. Oven and 3 arpents [3 acres] of wood sublet to Faille 300 livres
6. Dîme on wine at the rate of 1/16 or 10 muids [602 gallons] at 20 200 livres
7. Seigneurial rents in grain (a champart) at the rate of one-twelfth on the lands of Bourberain by a survey in 1782. 2,700 journaux (2,160 acres) producing 71 emines of grain in the following manner:

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<tr>
<td>26 of winter wheat at 60 liv            1,560 livres</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 of rye at 36 liv                    324</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 of oats at 25 liv                   750</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6 of barley at 36 liv                  216</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>2,850 livres</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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8. One chicken per resident—75 at 8 sols 30 livres
9. A taille on the community 30
10. A cens on the métairie of Mendinet 40

Grand Total: 5,735 livres
Rent (1783): — 4,500
Profit (before taxes): 1,235 livres

Source: A. D., E-1818.