

A short time later I asked about this inconsolable fellow. Imagine my surprise when I learned that six weeks later he remarried.

It was around this time that my sister Thérèse remarried in the country at a place called Saint-Prix. I went to the wedding with my son. He went chasing down the masters (but) he was always careful not to lose sight of the house.

One day I went with a friend of mine to a café kept by a fellow named Andreau and saw three white mice in a bottle. I told him that those little animals ordinarily ran around like squirrels and that if he wanted me to I would make him a glass cage and he would see the effect no sooner was the cage finished than it was sold. I found the white mice and my son and I made all kinds of cages in the style of a Chinese house. And we found a seller and sold them at good prices. My wife never slept and was careful to conceal the money and as usual for herself and her profit and I did not feel I was making progress. Though she concealed what she was up to I got wind of the scheme. I complained. I found out or Mme Bouchu discovered what she had done giving her sister and her nephews the sum of four hundred livres in income me and my children were left out. I wanted to make a stir at home. She fell ill. She claimed that it was because of the smell of the mice. I might have said that the money she had appropriated for herself alone had no bad odor since she had taken care to place it in the hands of her family.

While she was convalescing my dear sister who had come to visit her put it into her head that she would be better taken care of if she went to the convent known as La Roquette. And despite the one month paid in advance it was necessary in addition to pay her burial fee in case she needed to be interred²⁶⁵ at Béthanie the convent cemetery. As soon as my dear sister said that she would be treated better despite my observations they immediately took a carriage and left. She stayed there about two weeks. I went to see her with her sister even though I had said I would not go. She was annoyed because I said that I was selling cages and she saw that she was not receiving any funds. She asked to come back to the house. I teased her for an answer because she was complaining that they had made her pay in advance to go to Béthanie. We left her for a little while finally one Sunday with my son we went to pick her up in a carriage. She

²⁶⁵ Ménétra writes *exhumer* but clearly means *inhumer*. Some hospices and hospitals insisted that burial fees be paid in advance, so that the institution would not be held responsible for them. Béthanie was the name of the place where the cemetery serving the convent of La Roquette was located.

reclaimed what she called her rights as usual and for the sake of peace and quiet I made no objection.

So the days passed and our time elapsed eating and drinking at Mme Bouchu's and working at home and come what may I was always looking for ways to keep from getting bored. My work allowed me to make the acquaintance of many women and I tried as hard as I could to sacrifice to Cupid. Sometimes I was punished for it and always by those goddesses who behave like prudes and act so reserved. That gave me food for thought but passion won out.

Finally calculation (and) self-interest though never among my vices because I was never of an ambitious character (but) in the end the prospect that if I kept quiet I would have enough to live fairly well in my old age if the Eternal granted me a long life that gave me food for thought and I began then to lead a quieter life and to pay more attention besides which age was beginning to gray my hair. I did not give up love entirely but like the heroes of old I rested on my laurels and made sacrifices and oblations to Bacchus though I had never been one of his biggest worshippers and never sacrificed to him except in company.

The hope of an easier life in my old age had more influence on me than all the moralizing I had endured and I was enjoying myself and watching my days go by when the French Revolution came suddenly and revived all our spirits. And the word liberty so often repeated had an almost supernatural effect and invigorated us all.

People rushed to arms and supported those who called themselves the fathers of the people. This revolution was supposed to secure the happiness of the French people by confining the king to his throne and returning to all the rights that the parlements the priesthood the nobility had usurped under the leadership of ministers [who were] inept [and] outrageous liars who thought only of their pleasures and their ambition trampling the constitution of the state underfoot or making it serve their whims or to put it better still it [the constitution] was unknown [to them]. The debts of the State mounted doubled [There was] nothing to do but (make use) of the wealth of the clergy which could contribute to the State's burden. But these immoral men who constituted a second authority by means of all the chimeras invented by lies and sustained by ignorance backed up by fanaticism and superstition these creatures preferred to see the Nation fall into adversity into decrepitude rather than make the slightest sacrifice. Thus they were and will always be the cause of misfortune in those nations that they uphold with their ancient Gothic prejudices. Men of this kind know

nothing but to dominate and wish to rule by their dogmas and fabulous mysteries

The nobles with their old parchments and their ancient gallant knights from whom they claim to trace their ancestry when most of them are descended from servants lackeys [and] coachmen these men could not imagine that a man who was not of this class was made for anything but to serve their whims And (they) did not believe that the Eternal when he created man everything was in the most perfect equality and that they were just as subject as the commonest of men to all the infirmities and even to death All these men left their fatherland Those who remained did all they could to insure its defeat

Everything moved forward They flattered the ambitious and all the ills came gradually to a head Murder drowning everything was allowed Intriguers monopolized all the offices Good men could only mutter for if they spoke they were lost Hatred vengeance everything was permitted and nobody dared open his mouth or even dared to refuse the positions delegated to him in the assemblies in which he was obliged to participate It was in this state of chaos in which treachery was rampant abroad as well as at home that I began after the tenth of August to appear in the assemblies of my section²⁶⁶ And when they required the people of Paris to stand guard²⁶⁷ without distinction I saw that all the votes for the position

²⁶⁶ The function of the various administrative organizations need to be clarified. Ménétra first mentions his participation in sectional assemblies. The sections were administrative units set up in Paris in May and June of 1790 to replace the districts, which had themselves replaced the older quarters (*quarters*). Paris was divided into forty-eight sections, which were first used to organize elections in which the voters were the active citizens—those who paid the electoral tax of three days of work, excluding servants. The sections became the centerpiece of the popular movement in 1791, thanks to their general assemblies, which met freely until 1794, and their various committees. They were beleaguered by the nonactive citizens. Through speeches, petitions, street actions, and participation in demonstrations the sections influenced the policies of the Assembly and the revolutionary government, which counted on them for support until 1794. In March and April of that year the government clamped down and purged undesirable members. This was the turning point, after which discord grew between the sectional movement and the committees, paving the way for the Ninth of Thermidor and the fall of Robespierre. Ménétra's section was Section Number 16, known as the Mauconseil section until August of 1792, when it was renamed the Bonconseil section.

²⁶⁷ Here, the National Guard, which in the summer of 1789 consisted of active citizens able to secure arms. Ménétra, in one of his miscellaneous writings, says that he took part in the Tenth of August, in patrols of the city, and in guard duty that fell to section members. From 1792 on the latter were organized into companies of 126 men, with officers and noncommissioned officers elected by the men. Each section had approximately one company for every 100

of captain were destined to go to me and I opposed this and was named lieutenant and was reappointed three more times despite the cabal mounted by an inept and unscrupulous person

And my daughter had come back from England having had only fifteen days to prepare for her departure found herself in the midst of a feast mounted by the French to celebrate the Revolution²⁶⁸ Some time after her arrival I obtained her divorce and she linked her life with that of a good man who made her forget the pain and suffering that her monster of a first husband had caused her to endure He was a chief in the war office²⁶⁹ From there he became chief of armaments at the Oratoire and was sent as inspector general of armaments to Charleville where he stayed for a short time

During this time terror hovered over France and particularly in Paris where everyone lived not only in the greatest penury but also in horror of every kind in (the midst of) murders Everything was in the greatest disorder The French breathed blood They were like cannibals and were real man-eaters Neighbor cold-bloodedly denounced neighbor Blood ties were forgotten I witnessed those days of horror and I witnessed all the attacks on the infamous revolutionary committee²⁷⁰ When I was named

active citizens; thus Bonconseil had nearly twenty companies of guardsmen, since there were 1,700 active citizens. When the National Guard, organized by district battalion, was merged with the sectional guards, military committees and disciplinary boards were set up, as Ménétra describes. The law of 12 Frimaire Year II (2 December 1794) reorganized the Parisian command. The sections were partially disarmed and placed under the control of the army following 16 Vendémiaire Year IV (8 October 1795).

²⁶⁸ Allusion to the pro-Revolutionary agitation of French citizens living in London, as a result of which they were expelled for fear that they would encourage the spread of Jacobinism in England (prior to 1792).

²⁶⁹ In the Year XI Ménétra's daughter married Herman Paul Govers of Marseilles, a wholesaler from a family of Marseilles wholesalers. See C. Carrière, *Négociants marseillais* (2 vols.; Paris, 1969), pp. 724, 923. The current state of cataloguing of the archives has made it impossible to discover the connection, if any, between Paul Govers and the person with whom Marie-Madeleine Ménétra was living, who became bureau chief in the War Ministry in 1791 and held the various posts mentioned by Ménétra. An arms factory was located in the buildings of the Oratoire de Paris, rue de l'Enfer, beyond the barrier near the Luxembourg.

²⁷⁰ The section was run by a civil committee and a revolutionary committee. Ménétra acknowledges having been a member of the first but refuses to admit that he belonged to the second. The sixteen-member civil committee was responsible for regular municipal services, supervised the commissaire de police, and enforced all administrative decrees. The chairman of the committee convoked the assembly, which elected committee members and had the right to revoke the committee's powers, a right that the assembly did not shrink from exercising. The civil committees were less political than the revolutionary committees which gradually supplanted them after the Year II. They recovered some of their prestige after Thermidor, for

to take charge of examining their accounts men that I believed to be honest denounced [?—the object of the verb is missing—trans.] in cold blood for an idle word The man was [men were?] immediately incarcerated and even in many cases guillotined

You my unfortunate friends you will always be present in my memory Respectable Saint Cristau²⁷¹ farmer general who had taken a liking to me who often sent his servant to fetch me to eat with him You were destined to perish you were rich The monsters' only grudge was against your fortune My speeches to the assembly everything I did to win people over to your side all came to nought The decent man pitied you but held his tongue

I was there unfortunate Marie²⁷² for having been naive enough to lend some money you were denounced and you perished All my efforts to save you came to nought and I saw the moment when I would rejoin you when that vindictive man spoke out against me when all I was doing was asking for (your) freedom from men who had betrayed their country Liberty was drowned out by the hue and cry of the honest men who were in the assembly And you poor Barbet²⁷³ you good and loyal man with whom we

they were put in charge of such basic issues as food supplies. They were abolished in the Year IV. The revolutionary committees, also known as committees of surveillance, were (from July of 1792 until March of 1793) composed of fourteen members elected by the assembly. Reorganized in March of 1793, they were reduced to twelve members and made responsible for keeping an eye on suspect individuals and foreigners. People had to apply to them for *certificats de civisme* and *cartes de sûreté*. They acted as political police and also played a key organizational role in the democratic sectional movement, and they were in direct contact with the Commune and the committees of the Convention. By late 1793 the Committee of Public Safety was attempting to control the revolutionary committees. It succeeded in doing so by exerting direct or indirect influence on the nomination process, especially after the purge of enragés and hébertistes. Ménétra is referring to someone who belonged to one of the latter two groups when he wrote that in March or April of 1794 "I was named to make them give an accounting." Ménétra was then a Jacobin, close to the Robespierrists. In August of 1794, these committees were placed under the supervision of the Convention's Committee of General Security. They were abolished in Brumaire of Year IV. Note that members of the committees of the Year II were generally hounded in the Years III and IV by moderates and reactionaries, who accused them of having been terrorists.

²⁷¹ Adam François Parcel de Saint-Christau, a very wealthy *fermier général* and member of a family of financiers, sentenced to death and executed on 19 Floréal Year II (8 May 1794) (AN, W. 362 (785)).

²⁷² Member of the revolutionary committee of the Bonconseil section, François Marié lived at 25, rue Mondétour. He was arrested in Thermidor of the Year II with other Jacobins and Robespierrists of the section who had been denounced by Vallois (AN, F7 4663, 4774-35).

²⁷³ Barbet or Barbey Mathieu, a journeyman hosier, age 37, residing at 16, rue Française. He was arrested and executed on 1 Prairial Year II for counterrevolutionary and pro-royalist

passed an evening now and then Two of the section's well-known stool pigeons dogged your tracks and kept an eye on what you did I warned you you were from Lyons that was a capital sin They got you drinking and made you talk They arrested you took you to the inspector a hard man who only looked for guilty men to show the committee of general security²⁷⁴ that he was doing a good job as the revolutionary committee in the position to which he had been assigned These men had become barbarous inhuman (They) all made sacrifices ostensibly to defend the fatherland when in fact they were trying to destroy it

I was a guard the day of his arrest I arrived with my company The officer I was relieving told me that there was someone under arrest I went to see Imagine my surprise It was Barbet I had him brought out at once He calmly spent the night with me I questioned him He had no idea why he was imprisoned I was told to keep an eye on this man They took him to the Conciergerie Three days later he died on the scaffold Oh man sometimes I can still see him a single word brings him back to life and a single word that he had a hard time explaining caused him to die And so it was that thousands of wretched men ended their days while the criminal [sic] seized and battered on the fortune of their [sic] fellow citizens The chaplain²⁷⁵ of our battalion was incarcerated he had mounted the fatal tiers [i.e., had taken a seat in the assembly—trans.] and had written a letter to the assembly I presided Immediately I wrote to that cannibal Fouquier Tinville²⁷⁶ with the consent of the assembly and the seventeen he was the only one acquitted

remarks (AN, F7 4585, W369). Ménétra is of the opinion that his Lyonnaise origins influenced the sentence. Lyons was at this point suspected of grave crimes, following the federalist and royalist rebellion, which was put down on 9 October 1793. Two informers reported to the Committee of General Security some remarks that he had made, rather vague but given the circumstances sufficiently compromising to cost him his life.

²⁷⁴ Formed in October 1792 by members of the Surveillance Committee of the Legislative Assembly. An issue in the struggle between the Montagnards and the Girondins, the committee came to be dominated by Montagnards. With Amar, David, Le Bas, and Vadier, it frequently clashed with the Committee of Public Safety after September 1793. After Thermidor it assumed full police powers and with partly new membership led the anti-Jacobin reaction.

²⁷⁵ Lacking the chaplain's name I have been unable to find any trace of this affair. If the story is true, the letter must have been sent to the committees of the National Convention elected in August 1792, which assumed responsibility for governing revolutionary France under the stewardship of the Committee of Public Safety. The future of the revolutionary movement was played out in the Convention in Thermidor of the Year II. The Convention was supplanted by the directorial assemblies in the Year IV.

²⁷⁶ Antoine Quentin Fouquier-Tinville (1747-1795). Procureur at the Châtelet in Paris, a

In those days of mourning which true Frenchmen will always look back upon with horror I was sent with the delegates Satin Bayard Adam Lesimple²⁷⁷ to snatch [Duperon?] from the hands of the *septembriseurs*²⁷⁸ those cannibals who were massacring everyone in the prisons of Paris It was about time The virtuous Samson Duperon²⁷⁹ former justice of the peace was dying We arrived and asked (for him) in the name of the section and he was handed over to us I saw those men whose faces and manners proclaimed their humanity (as being) on a par with cannibals I shall draw a curtain over those days of horror that descended upon France My son was happy He was fighting for his country it was the second time that he returned to the army He risked his life it is true but never got mixed up in all the horrors that were being committed with impunity And those ogres even took pride in their crimes Finally the murders ended²⁸⁰ but people were still unhappy This Na-

lawyer by profession, he became the principal public prosecutor in the revolutionary tribunal and the key figure in the great trials of Prairial in the Year II. Because of his character, it seems implausible that Ménétra would have taken the direct personal initiative he describes. Fouquier-Tinville was himself executed in Floréal of the Year III.

²⁷⁷ Jean Mathieu Satin: a rentier, age 44, born in Paris and residing at 11, rue du Renard. An active citizen, he enlisted in the sectional movement in 1791. He was loyal to Robespierre and the commune in May 1793. (AN, carte de sûreté Bonconseil, F7 4775-13, Arch. Préf. Police, mars-octobre 1791; Bonconseil, BN, 8^o LB, 40 1958).

Pierre Casimir Bayard, feather dresser, age 33, born in Noyon and residing in the rue du Petit-Lion. He held posts in the sectional committees and was an inspector of sewers and lanterns and a *commissaire de police*. A captain in the National Guard, he was arrested in the Year III. He was a Jacobin and even a Robespierriist, but a moderate one, as his deposition for Barbet shows (AN, carte de sûreté, F7 4585, 4589-2, 4775-32, 4663, W.369, BN? 4^o LB 4^o 1733).

Jean-François Adam, lace and linen merchant, age 31 in 1792, born in Compiègne and residing in the rue de la Grande-Truanderie. He was revolutionary commissioner of Bonconseil in 1792 and probably a Jacobin. (AN, carte de sûreté, Arch. Préf. Police Bonconseil, 28 December 1792).

Jacques Nicolas Lesimple, rentier, age 36, born in Maulre-sur-Seine and residing in the rue Montorgueil. He was probably a baker and held sectional posts in 1791. (AN, carte de sûreté, Arch. Préf. Police Bonconseil, April and September 1790, October 1791).

²⁷⁸ Allusion to the massacres that took place in the Paris prisons between the second and the sixth of September, under threat of a Prussian invasion.

²⁷⁹ A justice of the peace, Jean François Samson Duperon was arrested in September 1792 and saved from the massacres by the *sectionnaires* of Bonconseil (AN, F7 4589-2).

²⁸⁰ An allusion to the change that occurred on the Ninth and Tenth of Thermidor in the Year II with the fall of Robespierre, which put an end to the Terror and shifted power to the Assembly, which was divided into several factions, with the remnants of the Jacobins, the reactionaries and royalists led by Fréron and the *jeunesse dorée*, and a large group of moderates. In the sections this was a period of turmoil, with former Jacobins and terrorists under attack.

tional Convention in which everyone had the greatest confidence was and one can say so nothing but a den of slanderers of vindictive men seeking to slaughter one party so as to replace it with another They made the people march according to their passion The tocsin and the general²⁸¹ were as people often said the order of the day All these evils had overwhelmed the sections

People watched one another Nobody dared to say what he thought We were constantly under arms sometimes to guard the Convention other times to guard the supplies of food And so it was that a person I had thought to be my best friend attacked me violently for having forced him to join a faction By his stubbornness I was forced (?) This creature insinuated to several people to avenge himself that I had signed the twenty thousand and the eight thousand²⁸² In those days this was a capital crime I was summoned before the assembly and I answered forthrightly that I had never signed anything except a debt The explanation that I gave to the assembly had a singular effect in my favor It was the day new bureau members were chosen I was renominated president by acclamation and by the vast majority of the assembly I tried to get out of it I was so to speak carried to the bureau All the citizens who had been honored with this post made a speech describing the duties they had had to fulfill

I said to the entire assembly Citizens those whom you honored with your votes before me and who served as president have all spoken to you Do not expect a speech from me I ask only that you show me great forbearance and all I ask of you citizens is silence Clapping of hands was heard throughout the hall and my presidency and all the other (posts) with which I was honored passed in the most untroubled tranquillity

To every post that fell empty I was immediately appointed I was named commissioner of general security²⁸³ a post which I held for about two

²⁸¹ *Le tocsin et la générale*: official signals using drums to assemble armed section members and bells whose repeated long, slow peals gave the alarm.

²⁸² Two petitions initiated by the Girondins and hence moderate in tenor, protesting the location of a *fédéré* camp south of Paris and the staging of an antimodernist rally on 20 June 1792. This led to charges of moderatism by the *emragés* in June 1792. The power of the Jacobins put a brake on blind purges. Accused of moderatism in 1792, Ménétra became suspect, and his adversaries passed for extremists. Exonerated, he remained a good Jacobin, as is confirmed by the fact that he signed the petition demanding that Louis XVI be deposed, which circulated in the sections prior to 10 August 1792. Was he elected president of the General Assembly at that time? It is not out of the question; if he was, it would only add further proof that he was a sans-culotte.

²⁸³ Member of the Surveillance Committee, i.e., the revolutionary committee. See n. 270.

months with de Lenoncourt I resigned as member of the revolutionary committee despite a decree from the committee of general security I explained myself as follows in my defense (for) in fact I was in the chair "Citizens the post to which you call me requires a great deal of attention I cannot accept it given that my son is at the frontier my wife dangerously ill and my companion has left me to go fight the enemies of the fatherland"

That made an impression and I myself appointed another man Poirier²⁸⁴ who became the wickedest of all those monsters who have given mankind so much cause to moan I was appointed assessor of the peace²⁸⁵ I presided over the court in the absence of the justice of the peace I was appointed to the commune as vice president for *assignats* in the bankruptcy of Guillaume who was also commissioner (?) (I was appointed) conciliator of the Petits Pères member of the jury of accusation member of the jury of judgment with the former baron d'Ognie²⁸⁶ and citizen Poupart²⁸⁷ curate of Saint-Eustache I had them spend the night in the Palace in the case of the three individuals who were manufacturing counterfeit *assignats* (and) at my urging the wife did not lose her life but the man and his sister

²⁸⁴ Paul Marie Poirier, tinsmith, age 28, born in Créteil and residing at 6, rue du Petit-Lion. He headed the sectional secretariat in the General Assembly and was a member of the revolutionary committee. During the Terror he belonged to the clubs and was a Jacobin *émigré*, if we can believe the reasons given for his arrest in Brumaire of the Year III; he may even have been pro-Babeuf. He is the only militant Jacobin whom Ménétra attacks in these terms, possibly because of his extremist position in the Year II. (AN, carte de sûreté F.7 4774 48; Arch. Préf. Police, AA. 281, fols. 257-278.)

²⁸⁵ In other words, deputy to the justice of the peace, elected under the provisions of the law of 29 September 1790. Deputies were entitled to render final judgment in all cases up to 50 livres; their judgments were subject to appeal in cases up to 100 livres, in cases involving personal disputes and property and civil cases such as wage and labor claims, insults, brawls, etc. From 1793 until August 1795 they were appointed initially by the General Council of the Commune and then reelected to their positions. The almanac confirms that Ménétra held this post in 1793, 1794, and 1795. (AN, D.III.253-11 pluviôse an III.) De Guillaume was *assesseur* in 1792 and 1793 and probably a member of the jury in the *département* tribunal.

²⁸⁶ Claude Jean Rigoley, baron d'Ogny, arrested in the Piques section at the age of 75 on a charge of having an émigré son. A petition by the citizens of Millemont in Seine-et-Oise helped to free him. (AN, F7 4774 93) There is no trace of his role as a jury member, which must have been prior to 1792.

²⁸⁷ The curate of Saint-Eustache, Jean-Jacques Poupart, lived at 49, rue Traineée. After the Oratoire he became a parish priest and was at one time confessor to Louis XVI. He was highly esteemed in the diocese and swore allegiance to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. A member of the Provisional Commune in August 1789, he was an elector from 1790 to 1792. He was never bothered during the Terror and was allowed to reopen his church as a constitutional house of worship in 1795 (AN, W. 257).

were guillotined So they said to me because of your way of looking at things you've made us endure a bad supper and a very bad bed because to each jury member they gave a *petit pain* a cervelat and a half bottle and to sleep a cot with a mattress and a cover And the next day (we) finished our deliberations at ten o'clock

I was also named three different times commissioner of the civil committee and usually I knew how to get out of it I was charity commissioner²⁸⁸ I also had the job of verifier of defenders of the fatherland commissioner for hoarding which I got out of as soon as I could I was appointed by consent of the citizens who made up the disciplinary council to preside in the absence of the commandant I was part of the central committee for the reception of the citizens of the popular society²⁸⁹ over which I often presided I was appointed to obtain an accounting from the sectional authorities

I was one of those in charge of examining the accounts of the salt-peter commission of which I was named chairman I was involved for two days in a runoff election for the position of member of the commune For fifteen months I was president of the primary assemblies I was named one of three candidates for police inspector When I saw that all the votes were in my favor I resigned I was also appointed to take charge of examining the accounts of the infamous revolutionary committee And so I was named to preside and to many other posts with which my fellow citizens honored me also in the time of the Terror I was careful not to refuse

I had one enemy Duplessis²⁹⁰ who with his insidious accusations tried

²⁸⁸ That is, a member of the sectional committee in charge of assisting the unfortunate. In 1790 the curate of Saint-Eustache called a meeting of commissioners to try to bring some order to the distribution of relief. In 1793 the assembly of commissioners drew up plans for dealing with poverty. After July of 1793 the sections chose commissioners to deal with hoarding and food supply, responsible for enforcing the law against hoarding and speculation on foodstuffs (AD, Paris, D. 796. Sd.).

²⁸⁹ When the Convention reduced the number of sectional general assemblies to two in September 1793, the *sectionnaires* organized popular societies so that they could meet freely. In reality, these were purged sections that worked to prepare for the upcoming general assembly elections. A committee of inquiry eliminated any candidate who might have signed an anti-civic petition. Candidates therefore had to account for their activities since 1789 and had to be presented. Robespierre and the Jacobins kept a close eye on these societies, and in Floréal of the Year II many of them split, including the one in Bonconseil. See E. Mellié, *Les Sections de Paris* (Paris, 1898), pp. 274-285.

²⁹⁰ Duplessis or Duplessy, a wigmaker residing in the rue Pavée and a neighbor of Ménétra's. A quarrel over a guard is given by Ménétra as the reason for their dispute. (Cf. II fols. 82-83).

to do me in after having been one of my best friends. He wormed his way in with the members of the revolutionary committees and every day delivered another denunciation of me. So people called his house the little revolutionary committee. In the ensuing reactions he cleverly allied himself with three of my declared enemies. One A Nardin²⁹¹ because I hadn't spoken in his favor and hadn't opened my mouth for good or for ill at the people's society from which he was excluded. B Isidore Langlois²⁹² the second was the famous pamphleteer because I had reprimanded him in the disciplinary council for not standing guard though he knew well how to denounce people in the section. C the third Valois²⁹³ a vociferous impostor and outrageous slanderer who in the wars of the Vendée had been a well-known spy (and) who had lent (?) twelve francs silver to two citizens of our company who had remained in the army in the Vendée (and) who frequently wrote to me to get the money back knowing that I was the person who bore all the burden of the company since the captain was absent (?).

In those stormy times it was necessary to be under arms almost all the

²⁹¹ Paul Louis Nardin, clerk, age 32, born in Naullet and residing in the rue Saint-Sauveur. After coming to Paris in 1790, he moved in 1793 to 26, rue Pavée, the same address as Ménétra. He was employed by the national estates and served as deputy justice of the peace. He was a *muscadin* who stirred up trouble in the section after Thermidor. (AN, carte de sûreté, D.III.253-254; BN, 8° Lb.4° 1728 and 4° Lb.4° 1733.)

²⁹² Isidore Langlois styled himself a teacher, student, and man of letters. In 1793 he was 24 years old and lived at 63, rue Mauconseil. He arrived in Rouen in 1786. In 1794 he lived at 17, rue du Petit-Lion. A fierce supporter of the Revolution, this one-time scholarship student at Louis-le-Grand participated in the events of 1789 with other young students. He was at that time a poor student who intended to study medicine. In 1792 it was he who carried to the other sections the decree of the Bonconseil section demanding that Louis XVI be deposed. Little is known about his doings in 1793, but he was one of those who turned moderate, probably in May, and then joined the counter-Revolution when conscripts were sought for the war in the Vendée. In August 1793 he was arrested and owed his liberation to Thermidor. He then became one of the most talented journalists of the counter-Revolution, publishing especially in *Le Messager du Soir*. He was a *muscadin* and *réacteur*. He died in the Year VIII. (AN, F7 4774-61 and 4279-21.)

²⁹³ Charles Jérôme Valois, or Vallois, fanmaker, lived first at 14 and later at 23, rue Pavée. He was a Parisian by birth, age 36. He followed roughly the same course as Langlois and after Thermidor became one of the leaders of the *muscadin* and anti-Jacobin reaction in the section. Ménétra is mistaken about his military service. He served not in Vendée but in the army of the Pyrenees, where he rose to the rank of lieutenant. Ménétra's confusion may come from the fact that Langlois and Vallois violently protested and even rioted against the conscription of troops for the Vendée. It is known that after returning from the army Vallois served as a spy for the Committee of General Security (AN, Carte de sûreté, F7 4589-2, 4775-32, 4775-38. BN, 4° Lb.40 1733).

time and because I had several times invited the enmity of that man sustained by his three associates (and) when they took him out drinking²⁹⁴ I had those four men for implacable enemies. Also I was trying in those times of Terror in which all the denunciations the slanders the calumnies (and) in which even the most honest man was incarcerated and most of the time lost his life on the scaffold in which the sensible man did not dare speak up to ask for his friends' freedom. I often risked my liberty in those times of Terror to ask for the freedom of several of my friends. Everything that I might say in the assemblies on behalf of my unfortunate fellow citizens was turned around by those contemptible creatures in such a way that I had to fear for myself.

Those three wretches tried every way they could to find something they could use to attack me because the fourth did nothing but make denunciations when he was home heading up his little revolutionary committee. And I was informed of all the plots against me. So I stayed on my guard. One of those four individuals accused me of having written him a letter in the Vendée which he shortened and distorted and had published in a newspaper edited by one of them. They thought I was done for but I kept my wits about me and went to the committee of general security to present a petition on the subject. They investigated what I was and who my enemies were. They were advised to be more circumspect in the future and not to denounce anybody. This document was conveyed to them by the justice of the peace²⁹⁵ my friend who had urged me to take this course which succeeded as (I had) hoped. That held them back a bit but they changed tactics and kept on plotting. But in everything they were able to do they found their path blocked and I continued on my way.

Finally another upheaval occurred. All the parties clashed²⁹⁶ and their

²⁹⁴ *Gobletter*: to drink, have a party in a cabaret, used by Voltaire in his letter to Thirriot dated 19 November 1760.

²⁹⁵ Pierre Dumeige or Dumeigne, who was a *commissaire de police* in 1792. He was a clerk, age 36, who lived at 41, rue Montorgeuil and later in the cloister of Saint-Jacques-de-l'Hôpital. He was civil commissioner of the section, clerk of the assembly, and from 1793 to 1797 justice of the peace. (*Almanach national*, AN, D.III.253-254, F7 4589-2, Arch. Préf. Police Bonconseil, 1792.)

²⁹⁶ Probably a rather clumsy account of the Days of Germinal in the Year III, when the most radical sections marched on the Convention to protest the hard times and the reactionary policies of the Thermidorians. The Committee of General Security mobilized the moderate battalions of the sections of the west and center, including Bonconseil. Paris was placed in a state of siege, Montagnard leaders were deported, and terrorists were disarmed and often arrested. Disarmament entailed loss of civil rights and precluded access to public employment; it symbolized loss of liberty.

supporters in the sections rose up. My enemies sought to take advantage of the situation. I had been sent as a guard over my objections by order of the general staff, our commandant being a temporary commander and (he) had designated me for this job. My wife had again gone to the country to stay with a friend, finding that she could not live on the ounce and a half of bread that was allotted to each individual. Even though I was commissioner for food supplies I got no more and was careful not to betray my trust for fear of my enemies who were on the lookout.

The adjutant brought me a letter from the general staff announcing that the commandant and sixty-six men were waiting for me in front of the armory that it was for a secret mission that would not last more than six hours. I refused to go. The commandant came to get me. I told him that I would not march. He said he would force me. I told him that I had not had my supper. He said that he would take care of it and that I absolutely must leave immediately.

I closed my shop. I arrived at the armory with the commandant. On the way (they) gave me a pound-loaf and a large cervelat. They told me to take my men who were three men from each company and give them arms. I was in command. He said to me: Here are two letters. You will open one of them when you reach the Duplessis prison²⁹⁷ and the other tomorrow morning and seize the post and disarm them. The general staff leaves that to your prudence.

I told him: You've made a mistake. (He) gave me the password and just laughed. I left. When we were almost at the Petit-Pont a man came up to me and said: Sir, a cannon is waiting for you. I was not surprised. I had my men split up and pass close to the houses and upon reaching the cannon I rushed it and surprised the guard. I went in. I unsealed the letter. I presented it to the post commander. I had the cannon put away and took

²⁹⁷ This prison was located in the rue Saint-Jacques in the former collège du Plessis; the episode can be dated as having taken place in Prairial of the Year III. Following the failure of the Days of Germinal, the democratic sections were in turmoil, and the Convention feared a popular movement. According to Tönneson, the prison was the place where actions were organized, because the many sans-culottes held there were able to communicate freely with the outside. An escape plot involving the leading patriots was uncovered. Pamphlets written in the prison were distributed in Paris. As a result, Ménétra and the National Guards from his then rather "centrist" section were mobilized. He shows the same lack of precision in his account of the events of the Revolution (cf. II fols. 69-76, fols. 80-100) as in the *Journal*, but he does tell us that he was with the National Guards that supported the Convention when it was invaded by *sectionnaires* from the faubourgs and Representative Féraud was murdered on 20 May 1795.

charge of the concierge and the guards. At ten o'clock fifteen cavalry and then fifteen gendarmes arrived as reinforcements. A man came in to say that supper was waiting across the street. I saw a well-laid table. I asked two friends to keep me company. They allowed me to spend two nights and two days.

Meanwhile my enemies were furious at the assembly when the authorities were subjected to the so-called purge vote²⁹⁸. After the justice of the peace it was my turn. One of those monsters called for my arrest. He was shouted down. The other for my disarmament. He was spurned. Finally Nardin took the floor and said that my shop had been closed for three days. He was interrupted by the commandant. [Nardin said] that my wife had left and that I was not ethical enough for the posts. I held. People shouted. Down with him. The pamphleteer took the floor and asked that I be suspended from office.

That night still unaware [of what had happened] with my friend de Lenoncourt²⁹⁹ I went to find the justice of the peace who told me the news. All three of us went to the adjutant where we found Nardin who tried to make excuses. The commandant came looking for us. He said that he had given a categorical denial to those who had spoken against me and that he wanted to take me to the committee of general security. That he had said before the full assembly that if my shop was closed for three days it was because I didn't want to leave the post. I had been assigned and that people had applauded and that several citizens had spoken in my favor and that the traitor Nardin could not help praising me and also speaking well of my son whom I had sent to the frontier.

We went the next evening to the committee with the commandant who was a friend of Merlin³⁰⁰. They had us shown in. They listened to us

²⁹⁸ Following the events of 1 Prairial, there was a widespread settling of scores in the sections. Subject to scrutiny were all who had been leaders in the Year II, especially those who had been members of the civil and revolutionary committees. 1,200 Jacobins were imprisoned in Paris, and there was a drastic purge of the National Guard. This adds support to the notion that Ménétra, though a Jacobin rather hostile to the terrorist excesses, was nevertheless accused by the *muscadins*. The story also illustrates the solidarity of the National Guards and the intervention of Ménétra's company commander.

²⁹⁹ Joseph de Lénoncourt, bailiff in the Châtelet, age 42, was born in Champagne and lived at 30, rue Pavée. He is also said to have been former bailiff at the Chambre des Comptes. He held various posts in the section and in the National Guard, where his rank was captain. He was a moderate Jacobin.

³⁰⁰ Antoine Christian Merlin, known as Thionville (1762-1833), member of the Committee of Public Safety and Committee of General Security after the Ninth of Thermidor, at which time he abandoned Robespierre and became one of the political leaders of the reaction.

They gave me a document signed by the representatives to be (read) at the next assembly I presented it to the president who read it which ordered that I be recognized as a good citizen and that I be retained in the posts that my fellow citizens had entrusted to me Bravos and clapping of hands were heard My enemies were annihilated and I continued in my duties The revolutionary committees were abolished³⁰¹ The citizen breathes (easy) but their [i.e., the committees'] henchmen spread the rumor that they were going to regain power People were constantly saying things to me about them and telling me that I would be one of their first victims The fellow who told me that I had no respect for He was himself called before the disciplinary council The commandant asked me to preside When I arrived I saw that traitor Nardin who asked me if I was going to preside I answered that it was no concern of his He told me that if I wanted vengeance I had all the means to obtain it that Duplessis was summoned and that when they called him I should turn over the chair to a citizen and he would go for sure to the rue du Bouloir³⁰²

I answered that Tartuffe that I would put the matter on the day's agenda He was called He appeared He insulted his captain He did not appear for guard duty and did not sleep at the guard house which he practiced with me He began complaining that people had it in for him that they wanted to see him dead I told him it wasn't that (and) that he should answer the charges against him He had neither bridle nor bit³⁰³ didn't know what to answer

I said Citizens this being the first time that the citizen appears before you I ask that we move on to the next item of the agenda Many citizens asked for the floor saying that this fellow was a bad citizen who did not perform his service (except) in the cafés and cabarets After much debate one of the citizens said I am of the opinion of the president except that the president should enjoin him to be more diligent in performing his service I put the question to a vote I said these words "being the organ

³⁰¹ A good example of the chronological incoherence of Ménétra's writing, since these committees were replaced much earlier (7 Fructidor Year II, 24 August 1794) by twelve committees of surveillance for Paris, but the sketch brings out discord that can be traced back to committee membership in the Year II. Here again Ménétra describes himself as a centrist, an adversary of the extremists who were rumored to be making a strong comeback. As we know, however, most had been eliminated in the spring of the Year II. After Germinal and Prairial they were proscribed.

³⁰² The Committee of General Security had offices there, hence, by extension, the police.

³⁰³ An equestrian phrase meaning that the horse does not respond to the reins.

of the council I order you to appear for guard duty to be more diligent in performing your service than you have been in the past and to stop insulting your officers"

He went out went to the café at the corner of the rue Française I arrived with some friends He kept on repeating what I had said to him in a facetious and ironic tone I said to him Duplessis I am tired of your nonsense I have been putting up with it for a long time so either shut up or I'll shut you up Do it then says he All right I answered right now I went home I put on a frock coat and put my saber underneath and (I) came back to wait for him He arrived with his weapon in bandolier I went out I thought he was following me Not at all he was slandering me I opened the door I called him Baré junior³⁰⁴ came out and invited me to forget the whole thing I told him He's been insulting me long enough it's time to put an end of it Tired of waiting and (since) my friends told me he would not come out I went home I treated him as he deserved I missed my chance and still regret that I didn't give him the lead of my saber across the face but some time later Beauchand³⁰⁵ was not so forbearing he sent him to eat beans (?) that time

I tried to resign all the posts that my fellow citizens had delegated to me when I saw how badly things were going Our company was combined with the company of the Petit Lion I was named to preside I withdrew Nardin put his name in and asked that the person who got the most votes in a single election be made an officer It would go according to the votes One fellow got twenty-one two twenty one nineteen and both de Lenoncourt and I seventeen We were excluded by cabal mounted by Duplessis People wanted me for sergeant-major I objected People said that the notorious cabalist wanted me appointed corporal I said Citizens citizen Beauchand was commandant and was named corporal and so I don't want to act disdainfully toward him and all the trouble and expense he went to it did not add to his honor when he was named corporal (and) he was teased about it

³⁰⁴ Jean-Baptiste Baré or Baret, junior, caterer and innkeeper at 36, rue Saint-Denis. In Fructidor of the Year II his father was imprisoned for debt and became a *muscadin* upon his liberation (AN, F7 4586).

³⁰⁵ Claude Beauchand, upholsterer, age 58 in 1793, born in Anney and residing at 47, rue Saint-Denis; he had been a resident of Paris for 48 years. Note that he came from a region (Savoie) in which Ménétra probably had relatives (cf. i fol. 12) and that the two men were similar by age and occupation. He was a sublieutenant of the National Guard in 1789 and probably a captain and company commander in 1795-96.

On 13 Vendémiaire³⁰⁶ this monster accompanied by Baré who like him had been drinking all day came knocking on the door at midnight saying that if I didn't march they would shoot me when they came back from their expedition and all said in big words I came out without a weapon wearing a jacket my hat pulled down At one thirty in the morning (I) found the battalion commanded by Beauchand in the place des Victoires filled with people who never appeared all (being) big merchants I saw the brave Duplessis with his dear friend Langlois who had been named president by the cabal Duplessis was licking his boots I went up to commandant Beauchand I told him that the line troops could besiege them and that they could be surrounded by the five streets leading into the square and I left

The next day the thirteenth the general alarm was sounded I went to the armory (and) to the Assembly where I saw all the new faces shouting like madmen To arms We marched several friends together promising ourselves not to march against the Convention We guarded the national treasury

At five o'clock many people asked if I had left Baré junior who was full of wine repeated the same words he had said the night before My wife urged me to march for fear that something would happen to me I left with a number of citizens who had been given cartridges They loaded their weapons We left We found a part of the battalion I found de Lenoncourt I asked him where we were going he had no more idea than I did Slowly we made our way to the quai de Voltaire De Lenoncourt had not eaten He had been under arms since morning I gave him a piece of bread I climbed up on a hydrant I saw that they were lighting the fuses There were cannons aimed at all the battalions on the quays I told the captain that since the [opposing] troops did not want to fraternize we'd better do

³⁰⁶ Ménétra's account confirms that the National Guards of Bonconseil marched against the Convention in the insurrection fomented by reactionaries and royalists on 13 Vendémiaire. The western sections, seven out of forty-eight, marched on the assembly, which was defended by Barras and General Bonaparte. Ménétra describes an attack launched from the Left Bank, quai Voltaire, which was thrown back by Verdier's cannons. The National Guards were then disarmed. The "new faces" mentioned by Ménétra were those of wealthy merchants, bourgeois, who after several years' absence from the scene returned because of *muscadin* pressure. The insurrection had no unified plan and was led mainly by *réacteurs* and *feuillants* (royalists of 1790-91), without participation by royalists affiliated with the émigré networks, including those of Antraigues. See H. Zivy, *Le Treize Vendémiaire an IV* (Paris, 1898), and D. Woronoff, *La République bourgeoise, 1794-1799* (Paris, 1972), pp. 42-45. See also II fols. 97-100.

an about face I heard voices that were not unknown to me (saying) that anybody who repeated that would get a bayonet in the stomach I said My friend we've got to wait for the event At that moment we heard the shout To arms The cannon were heard across the way the sound of shells What did I see My friend alongside me on the ground the one who was on my left my clothes were full of blood I couldn't see anybody almost The pavement was littered with rifles

Everybody escaped into the houses I took the rue des Vieux Augustins saying My friend is dead I came to another little street I held on to my rifle I did not dare cross the Pont-Neuf I reached the pont Saint-Michel and arrived at the section They clapped Anger got the better of me I sprang for the platform where Langlois was presiding I said How can you applaud (when) they have just slaughtered our comrades on the quai de Voltaire and I said Miserable fellow you are responsible I'm going to plunge my bayonet into your body Saying that I went to do it to sacrifice him to the shades of the [fallen] citizens when an extremely strong master harness maker jumped on me in time saying Ménétra what are you doing All the bureau officials ran out The next day the bureau was outlawed I was in my quarter it was a wholesale disaster I found de Lenoncourt (who) although he had fallen had no wound I was summoned by my justice of the peace to go to the section to make a proclamation in favor of disarmament Since some of the grenadiers and infantry refused to go along I didn't want to do this and announce such a good piece of news again I found my friend de Lenoncourt and others and we embraced like people who had come back from the other world The brave Duplessis had himself tonsured the next day because he had received a head wound not while advancing but while retreating because the wound was in back I had somebody tell him to hide because my justice of the peace told me that there was going to be an investigation of the wounded As for Baré he was wounded in the arm by a Biscayen³⁰⁷ and went to La Charité³⁰⁸ and died at home

I said farewell to all and resigned and didn't want any more posts when they renamed the company Some people insisted that I be made captain (but) I wanted no rank not even a civilian one and didn't want any kind of

³⁰⁷ Denotes a large-caliber rifle manufactured in Biscaye, as well as the projectile fired by that weapon and shrapnel from the artillery fire.

³⁰⁸ Well-known hospital in the rue de Vaugirard, founded by Mme Necker

job whatsoever The tenth of August³⁰⁹ as I was leading a part of the section to the Castle I just missed being run through by the sword of a Swiss guard of the apartments as we had just saved a father his two daughters and his wife whom we took by the arms after they asked that their father's life be spared all three having fallen on their knees I asked where he was and put him outside them in safety I thought to do the same (for the Swiss) by telling him to take off his uniform He tried to run me through wounded me in the hand Avoiding his blows my comrades stuck him with their bayonets and the fellows with pikes soon had him undressed

The ninth of Thermidor I lost a runoff with the wretched and unfortunate Gentelle³¹⁰ for the position of member of the commune and so just missed being guillotined The day of the murder of representative Féraud³¹¹ I just missed being run through I parried the blow just in time while I was trying to have the unfortunate fellow's body brought home by a frantic cannoner who was left almost alone in the rue Saint-Nicaise where they threatened to shell us and everyone fled

The affair of Saint-Eustache in front of the portal owing to Beauchand's imprudence they shelled us heavily All the unpleasantness that I endured from certain parties stirred up by that implacable enemy and that I was clever enough to avoid all those shells gave me food for thought and I quit and didn't want to hear any more about holding any positions of any kind even though they were offered to me my only thought being to

³⁰⁹ The day when the *sectionnaires* seized the Tuileries and thus put an end to the reign of Louis XVI, who, defended by his Swiss guards, several of whom were killed, sought refuge with the Assembly, which was then meeting at the Jeu de Paume.

³¹⁰ Antoine Le Jemplet, sometimes written Jemplet (Ménétra spells it Gentelle). He was a clerk-auctioneer at the butter market, age 51, residing at 20, rue de la Grande-Truanderie. He was elected representative of the Bonconseil section to the general council of the commune of Paris, which replaced the municipal government on 10 August, at the time of the final vote that gave control of the assembly to the Robespierrists. He was civil commissioner of the section in 1792 and 1793. He was arrested and executed on 11 Thermidor along with other supporters of Robespierre. See E. Campardon, *Le Tribunal révolutionnaire de Paris* (Paris, 1886), p. 545. Arch. Préf. Police Bonconseil June-July 1790, September 1790, November 1792; BHVP 100-65 (340); BN, 89, Lc 31 (381).

³¹¹ Jean-François Féraud (1764-1795), deputy from the Hautes-Pyrénées, close to the Girondins, voted for the death of the king, sent on special mission in the Year II; he opposed Robespierre in Thermidor. He was murdered in the Convention chamber on 1 Prairial in the Year III, and his head was paraded around on the end of a pike. Ménétra confirms that he was with his company at the Convention and was threatened by the canons of the insurgent *sectionnaires*.

bewail the fate of my poor boy who was risking his life for his fatherland while it was being betrayed and pillaged by intriguers on the home front

Around this time my wife returned from the country where she had gone to live with friends in the hope of living better than she could in Paris But all France was shaken by the misfortunes associated with the Revolution The selfish man enjoyed himself and the decent man moaned and languished for want of food

Citizen Bouchu fell ill her brother-in-law and her nephew both died at the same time she offered to give me her property on conditions that I rejected and because of my scruples refused She told me that some time ago she had made a will in my favor but that she was afraid that her relatives would not honor it and that all her bequests and donations would be ignored that since I refused to accept her proposition she was going to trade her house for a life annuity in my favor until the end of my days or else she would give it to me in exchange for an annuity until her death

I communicated this offer to my wife who would not agree to it I found a citizen to whom I spoke about it who was Captain Léonard³¹² of my company (She) didn't leave me until the deal was complete She had to get divorced That was done She had the misfortune to burn her leg I took care of it She died while talking almost That morning we had had breakfast together She had wanted me to take possession of her jewels my scruples prevented me from taking them and also from accepting a contract for 750 livres assigned income

They came to tell me what had happened She suffocated at the sight of her relatives whom she had never known or met who came from Moulins in Bourgonnais and pillaged everything and then had the place put under seal The fellow who had taken the lion's share came to see me looking for the jewels and money he had not been able to find I refused His good fortune was short-lived because he died a month later from the debauch and pleasure his inheritance had brought him

Our son-in-law arrived shortly thereafter from his administrative du-

³¹² Louis Léonard, painter and carpenter, age 25 in 1792, born at Felletin and residing first at 15 and later at 12, rue Pavée. He was a captain in the National Guard in 1793. Purged by the popular society for being somewhat weak, many citizens attested to his patriotism. He was deputy justice of the peace. Unless Léonard was reelected captain in 1794, the episode probably occurred in 1793. (AN, D. III 253-254, W. 112.) See A. Soboul, *Les Sans-Culottes parisiens* (Paris, 1958), pp. 702-703.