



The Houchart family

André Joseph was a sergeant of the French Guards and served in the Guyenne regiment from 1769 to 1777. He made war for 7 years and then settled in Aix en Provence from 1797.

His son Ferdinand Victor André was born in 1800 and was a pageboy to Pauline Borghèse, sister of Napoleon 1st. in 1831, he became captain of the grenadiers for the French National Guard at Tholonet and deputy mayor. On May 27 1833 he was elected mayor.

His youngest son Aurélien #00 00000000000000000000000000000000 000 studied at school in Aix, where Paul Cézanne and Emile Zola were among his fellow students. He would remain friends with Cézanne his entire life and the painter often came to Palette, particularly towards the end of his life. He is mentioned in a letter from Cézanne to Zola dated July 20 1859.

Aurélien was interested in agricultural problems. He expanded the family's rural properties and at the end of the 19th century, reconstituted the Puylobrier vineyards, which had been destroyed by phylloxera. He had a wine making cellar constructed there. This estate would become "Domaine Houchart".

Hilaire was born May 7 1885. In 1914, he was called up to the French Logistics Corps at Orange, but wanting to take a more active role, he left to volunteer for the infantry April 20 1915. Wounded from a bullet in the chest on August 3 1917, he returned to the battlefield on September 16. By the end of the war he was a second lieutenant and holder of the Croix de Guerre 1914-1918, the Volunteer Combatant Cross and the Verdun Medal.

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He then dedicated his life to the upkeep of the family's estates.

Hilaire had two daughters, one of which was the mother of Geneviève who married Jérôme Quiot. They had 2 children, Jean-Baptiste and Florence.

A LITTLE ANECDOTE : Cézanne was impressed with a picture of a dog by an unknown artist which is still in the family. In his youth Cézanne travelled the countryside and the banks of the River Arc in the company of Zola and Baille #00 000000000000000000000000 000. Cézanne's dog, Black, accompanied them. Cézanne adored him and was particularly affected by his death. He painted his dog several times during his youth and most notably included him in "Les Baigneurs". This painting also shows a representation of the dog that may have been "drawn from life" by Cézanne's friends who also used to do some of the brushwork.

Aurélien's wife liked Cézanne but not his painting. She would have said to him: "Paul, you can come to the house as often as you wish but don't take us to any of your dust traps". There is a legend that Cézanne used to go fishing in the River Arc at Palette. Cézanne's carriage and a sofa he liked to rest on are still there. A marble plaque in the entrance to the Palette family house recalls his visits.

At the heart of a region which is rich in ancient history, the estate was probably the site of a Gallo-roman "Villa", a stones throw from the "Via Aurélia". Several fragments have been found in the area and some tegulae #00 00000000000000000000 000 have been recovered from ruins on the estate. Also, the Trépanouille spring which serves the estate was probably in use from this period.

Invasions in the 4th, 5th and 6th centuries saw these beautiful houses ransacked.

In the 10th century, bloody invasions forced the inhabitants to find shelter in less accessible places. During this period our estate was probably returned to nature and covered with forest, but towards the 11th century, the monks of Saint Victor's Abbey in Marseille started to clear the area. It's probably during this period that the estate was developed into its current form.

On June 7 1890, Aurélien Houchart, a wine merchant, bought the estate. "This property is divided as workable land and plantations of vines and almonds. The present sale includes the barrels in the cellar..."

In 1938, a journalist noted: "Consists of 60 hectares of which 56 are planted with vines. The vineyard is tended well and is composed of Carignan, Grand Noir, Grenache, white Ugni and Clairette grapes. Large, old cellars that have been transformed in order to adapt to modern winemaking equipment. Very good mechanical equipment, leading to high yields with the use of less manpower".

In 1984 Geneviève Quiot, Aurélien's great granddaughter, started to work the vineyard and gave the estate her great grandfather's name – from then on it was called "Domaine Houchart".

In 2002 The Verlaque estate was bought back and integrated into Domaine Quiot in Provence. This estate had been owned by the Houchart family from 1896 #00 000000000000000000000000 000 to 1941.

In 2002 the wedding of JBQ and F Vigier took place. For this occasion the buildings were greatly restored.

Today Florence and Jean-Baptiste are the fifth generation of the family to work on the estate.

