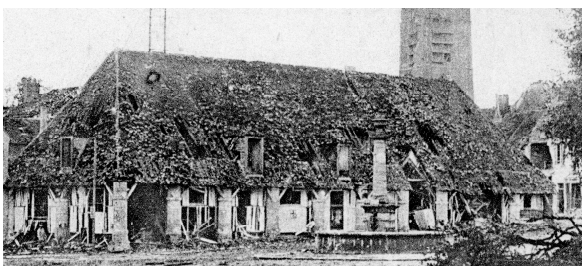


During the Great War



In 1914, during the 1st Battle of the Marne, the staff of General French who commanded the British army moved to the Maison Moreau-Nélaton in Fère on September 12.

In anticipation of the April 16, 1917 offensive, the Halle aux Grains was transformed into an ambulance, i. e. a field hospital. Messidor Bouleau, who was then 10 years old, recalls in his Memoirs entitled *Soixante ans après* (1977) : « Double-layer partitions of planks closed the exterior. The ceiling was painted in white, the beams in slate blue. A linoleum covered the entire surface of the clay floor. A pharmacy and the staff room were housed in the old pump house, near the attic staircase. The restroom. The lighting was across from the rue de l'Ange, where was a staircase at the time. The lighting was by gas and electricity »



In 1918, during the 2nd Battle of the Marne, in 1918, the bombardments did not spare it..

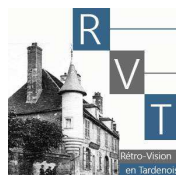
A festive place for the inhabitants of Fère

The Halle aux Grains still houses the market on Wednesday morning, and serves as a setting for various events: the July 14th ball, village festival (1st weekend of September), potato fair, flea markets, shows, cinema (1st Saturday of August) and various other events. In 1946, the first performance of Paul Claudel's *La Jeune fille Violaine*, directed by Jean Steinmann, was performed there. Many inhabitants of Fère also remember the awards ceremony.



A performance of *La Jeune fille Violaine*, le 9 July 1955

Practical information



RETRO-VISION EN TARDENOIS

18 rue Moreau-Nélaton—02130 Fère-en-Tardenois
retrovisionentardenois@gmail.com
www.retrovisionentardenois.org

City Hall

11, place Aristide Briand—02130 Fère-en-Tardenois
contact@ville-ferentardenois.com
<https://www.facebook.com/ferentardenoismairie/>

FÈRE-EN-TARDENOIS

An exceptional building of 1550

La Halle aux Grains The Grain Market

Classified as an Historic Monument on April 19, 1921



24 exterior stone pillars,
9 central chestnut pillars
and 88,674 flat tiles.

The Halle aux Grains, a building steeped in history

Construction around 1550



Madeleine de Savoie, wife of Anne de Montmorency, then lord and baron of Fère, had the Halle aux Grains built on the place called "la Bruyère", today's Place Aristide Briand. It was intended to be used as a compulsory warehouse for the grain trade, in return for a new "mining and scaling" tax paid by the Faroese to the lord. This tax was the same amount as that paid by farmers in the surrounding municipalities.

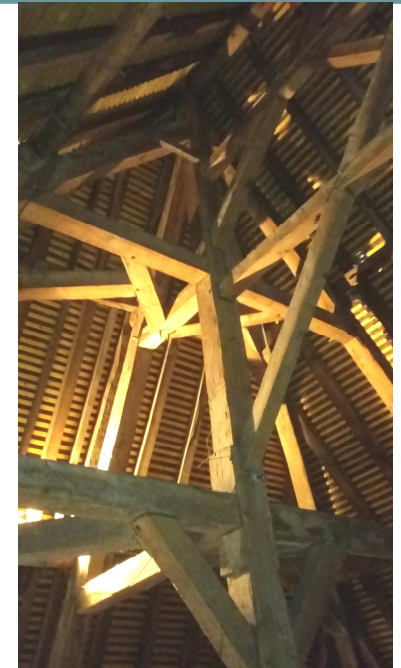


La Halle aux Grains was thus very badly accepted by the inhabitants of Fère who forced Anne de Montmorency to reduce the amount of the tax. The grain was sold under the Halle. It witnessed many conflicts between speculators and peasants, especially during famine, for example in 1586. The 1788 one preceded the French Revolution.



Impressive dimensions

Ground floor 42.36 m x 13.75 m or 582.45 m². The attic is supported by 24 external stone pillars and 9 central chestnut pillars, which come from the framework of the trees in the park of the castle. No spider webs, then! The imposing 1014 m² roof is covered with 88674 flat tiles. Its last restoration dates from September 2014.



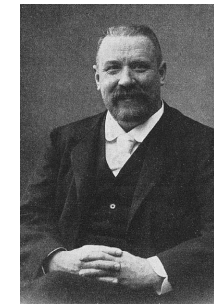
Changes in ownership

At the end of the 18th century the Duke of Orleans (Philippe-Egalité) was the lord of Fère. In 1792 his goods were sold and the Halle was part of the 2nd lot that had went to Mr. Blazwait, although the ownership was not precisely established. A curious transaction took place on November 3, 1800: the city became the owner of the ground floor and part of the attic, with Mr. Blazwait remaining the owner of the rest. From then on, the Halle aux Grains was reserved for the markets, the last Wednesday of the month, then two Wednesdays a month the free market or market for small pigs was held in front of the Halle or around the drinking fountain.

The Butcher's Hall

In 1544, a first hall was built on the current square of the Republic, where eight butchers displayed their wares. It was destroyed in 1877

Saved from destruction



In 1895, the municipality planned to demolish the Halle to build a new town hall.

Etienne Moreau-Nélaton (Paris, 1859-1927), historian, painter, art collector and patron of France and the city of Fère, member of

the municipal council (his property borders the square at number 22) bought Mr. Blazwait's share, to save the Halle aux Grains from demolition. He participated financially in its restoration before giving his share to the city.