

without this detailed picture of their home, the singular figures of the family dwelling there might have been less well understood. The frame was necessarily placed before the portraits. Every one must feel that mere things have an effect on people. There are buildings whose influence is visible on the persons who live near them. It is difficult to be irreligious under the shadow of a cathedral like that of Bourges. The soul that is constantly reminded of its destiny by imagery finds it less easy to fall short of it. So thought our ancestors, but the opinion is no longer held by a generation which has neither symbols nor distinctions, while its manners change every ten years. Do you not expect to find the Baron du Guaisnic, sword in hand—or all this picture will be false?

In 1836, when this drama opens, in the early days of August, the family consisted still of Monsieur and Madame du Guénic, of Mademoiselle du Guénic, the Baron's elder sister, and of a son aged one-and-twenty, named Gaudebert-Calyste-Louis, in obedience to an old custom in the family. His father's name was Gaudebert-Calyste-Charles. Only the last name was ever changed; Saint Gaudebert and Saint-Calixtus were always the patrons of the Guénics.

The Baron du Guénic had gone forth from Guérande as soon as la Vendée and Brittany had taken up arms, and he had fought with Charette, with Catelineau, La Rochejaquelein, d'Elbée, Bonchamps, and the Prince de Loudon. Before going, he had sold all his possessions to his elder sister, Mademoiselle Zéphirine du Guénic, a stroke of prudence unique in Revolutionary annals. After the death of all the heroes of the West, the Baron, preserved by some miracle from ending as they did, would not yield to Napoleon. He fought on till 1802, when, having narrowly escaped capture, he came back to Guérande, and from Guérande went to le Croisic, whence he sailed to Ireland—faithful to the traditional hatred of the Bretons for England.

The good people of Guérande pretended not to know that the Baron was alive; during twenty years not a word be-