

WALCOURT: thousand-year-old

WALCOURT, is a charming town built on a spur in the southern part of the region called "between the Sambre and the Meuse". Every year one of the most wonderful pieces of our heritage takes place in Walcourt. As the time of the Holy Trinity arrives, all citizens live on the rhythm of fifes and drums on the occasion of the annual pilgrimage dedicated to Our Lady. As is traditional since the XVth century the Virgin and the clergy have been escorted by armed guards in their annual journey in order to protect the pilgrims from bandits and highwaymen. This is how History and culture got together with this ancestral custom passing throughout the ages. This folklore is one of today's most precious heritages from the region.

The origin of the miracle: during the XIIIth century, while a fire was devastating the church. "The statue of The Virgin could be seen leaving the flames, lifted by a supernatural force". The statue landed on the branch of a birch, at a place called "Jardinet". Unable to get Our Lady down from her refuge, local people called Thierry, Count of Rochefort and Lord of Walcourt. He put a bridle on his horse and rode to the place of the miracle. He soon saw the statue surrounded by a halo of light. His horse suddenly refused to go on and moved "a hundred steps" back. The Count tried to force the animal three times without success. Thierry eventually dismounted, knelt before the holy statue and implored her to get off the tree. He promised to bring her back on her altar, to rebuild the destroyed church and build a monastery in the valley. He had hardly finished his supplication when The Virgin started to move, rose in the air and went down to snuggle in his arms...



Contact:

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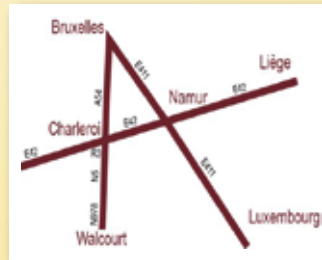
Marche Notre-Dame

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Trinité - Marche Notre-Dame de Walcourt

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Walcourt is located in the province of Namur, Wallonia, 20 kilometres south of Charleroi, next to the Lacs de l'Eau d'Heure.



WALCOURT



Military March in Honor of Our Lady, of Walcourt

Trinity Sunday

Masterpiece of the
UNESCO Oral and
Intangible Cultural
Heritage of Humanity



On the Sunday following Pentecost



Jeune Garde

Schedule of the celebrations

- 8:40 am** Departure of the companies from the train station parking lot
- 9:15 am** Flags ceremony at the Town Hall followed by the parade of the Fifes & Drums Corps
- 10:45 am** Welcome ceremony of the Company from Daussois at the "Calvaire"
- 12:00 pm** Solemn start of the procession, parade in front of Our Lady
- 13:30 pm** Historical reenactment of the "Miracle du Jardinnet"
- 17:30 pm** Infantry square at the "Calvaire"
- 18:30 pm** Solemn entering of the procession

Zouaves



Grenadiers



*Sappers
(combat engineers)*



*Lord of Walcourt
imploring The Virgin
at the Jardinnet*



Voltigeurs

A few numbers:

- More than **700** participants among 8 companies
- **4** days of popular celebrations
- A **8** kilometers procession called "Grand Tour"
- **25** kilos of gunpowder
- More than **420** cartridges
- **700** years of pilgrimage
- **20** horses and riders
- **50** fifes and drums
- **3** army marching bands



The Marche Militaire Notre-Dame de Walcourt is made up of 4 companies:

**The 9th Hussar
The Young Guard
The 2nd Zouaves Regiment
The 1st Empire Company**

Since 1814, the "Compagnie royale de Saint-Vaast" from Daussois, preceded by the Gendarmes horsemen, has had the privilege to lead the procession.

Since more than 50 years, the "Volontaires Réunis" from Ham-sur-Heure are part of the celebrations as well.



*Fifes, drums and
marching band*

*Gendarmes
d'Elite*



Hussars