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The Blacksmith and Grocer's Shop

The blacksmith, a key member of the farming community.

Before farm work became mechanised, **the smithy and his forge were important assets to a village**. In the forges located in the heart of each village would be made tools, the mouldboards and shears for ploughs, and tyre wheels with metal hoops. People would also bring their horses to be shod and tended to there.

Here the blacksmith's workshop was a **brick building** attached to his home. It has the characteristic **chimney** and **large window** looking onto the street. On the front of the building, a **decorative wrought iron anchor plate** shows the date of its construction: in 1861 **Jules Leleu** became one of the village's seven blacksmiths. The business continued through the generations until Albert Leleu put away his tools for the last time in 1985-1986, after 40 years at the job.



A local man posing for a photograph in front of the forge and the workshop window (coll. Paulette Héricourt).

The corner shop when it was still a café, around 1910. At the bottom left, we can see the blacksmith posing with his tools (postcard, coll. Paulette Héricourt).

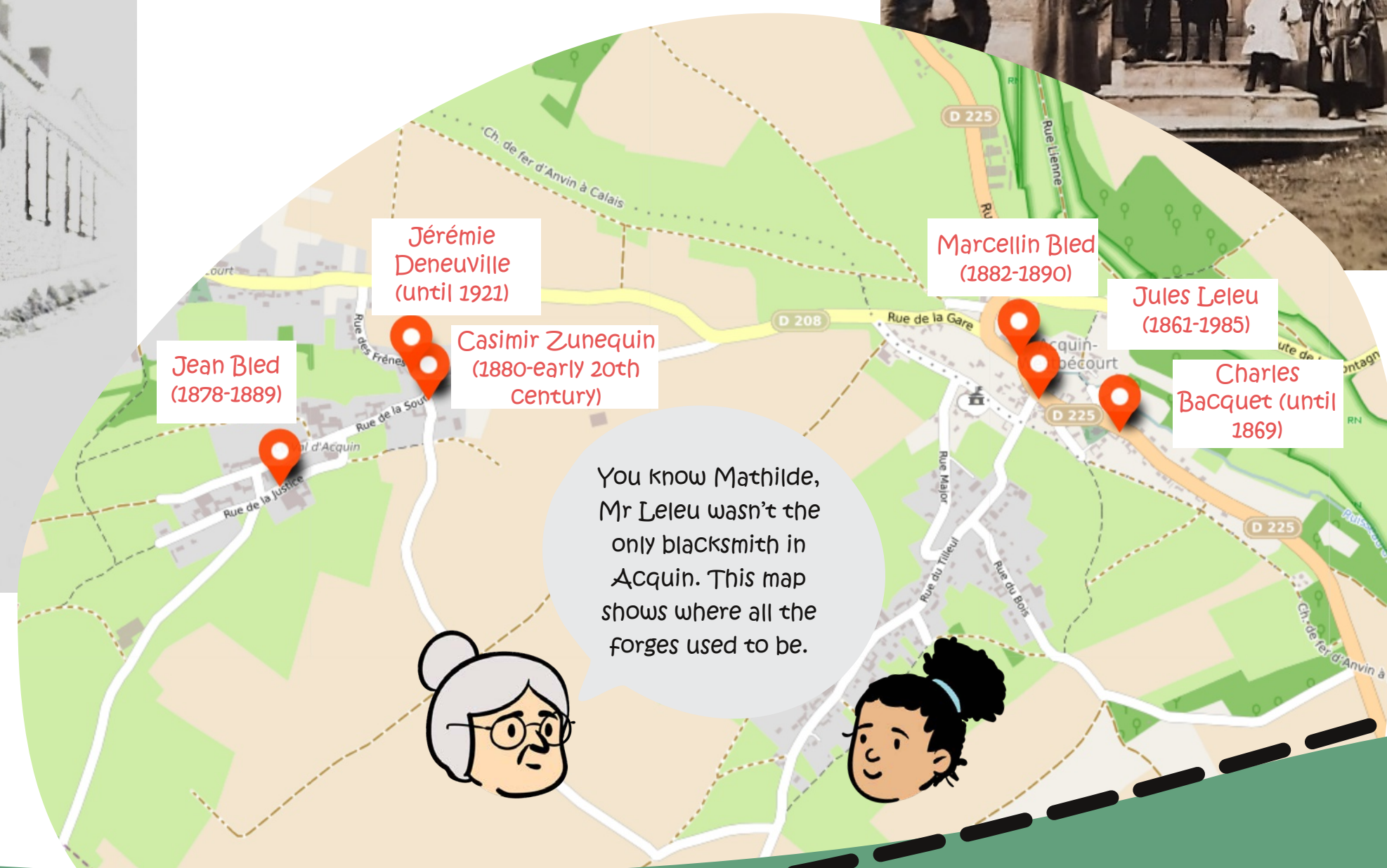


The grocer's shop was also key to village life.

The building opposite it has a corner entrance **typical of shops built in the 20th century**, to make them stand out at a crossroads. Its **Mansard roof**, a common style in the 19th century, provided a useful extra roof space. The building was used as a *café* until the 1970s when it was converted into the corner shop of the village.

It was managed by Bernadette Fichaux, the daughter of the baker and his wife who lived in the house to the left of the blacksmith's. To relieve her mother at the counter of the bakery, Bernadette opened the corner shop on the other side of the street. She used **to sell a bit of everything**: gifts, household linen, meat, fruit, as well as wine purchased from Mr Denis or biscuits and flour from Mr Mesmacque.

Everyone in the village would get their provisions there. With the development of the motor car however, people started to work and shop much further afield. It was around 1975 that the first supermarket was set up in Lumbres. These changes forced Mme Fichaux to close her **shop down in 2001**.



Map showing the forges of Acquin-Westbécourt from the 19th century onwards.