

Ronac (latter days of Louis XV and Louis XVI) had derived his pseudonym from an anagram of his actual family name, Caron. The son of a modest watchmaker, he followed the family trade but sought his customers among the ladies of the French Court. With the help of a well-contrived marriage he became, by turns, an 'Officer of the King's Pantry', a music master to three royal princesses, and a honorary royal secretary.

Pierre Augustin Caron wore a sword and with his own hands placed the King's meat upon the table, as his rank in the Royal pantry required. It was a dignity a French commoner might aspire if he had sufficient influence or the cash to pay for it. It was on par with the post of 'Cravat-Tyer in Ordinary to His Majesty' or 'Captain of the Greyhounds of the Chamber'. The sales of these titles brought the Throne a ready revenue at no expense save the ingenuity required to invent them.

In an earlier reign Montesquieu had written: 'The King of a France has no gold mines like the King of Spain, his neighbour, but has far greater wealth in the vanity of his subjects, which is more inexhaustible than any mine. He has been known to undertake or continue a war without any resources but the titles of honor which he had to sell, and, owing to a miracle of human conceit, his troops were paid, his towns fortified and his fleet equipped.'

For the royal secretaryship, which involved no duties whatsoever, the ex-watchmaker paid 85,000 francs. Among other things the post gave him the rank of a petty noble and accordingly he could append to his name that of a fictional geographical fief. He thus became 'de Beaumarchais'. Later, with tongue in cheek, he insisted that his claim to nobility, unlike that of more prestigious families, was absolutely beyond question because he held a receipt for the purchase. A parvenue noble with an envying rousing prestige as a author of the hit comedy: *The Barber of seville*.

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Caron +
Amk
beste
Hans

Thomas Lepeltak weet het! Hij speelt in op de ijdelheid van de mens. Ik denk wel dat hij bruikbaar voor Hans als politicus was. Ik vraag mij af of de ambassadeur pedicel is met de controversie uit het verleden? Zouden deze opmerkingen de goede naam bevorderen?

"Een van de dingen", zei Don Quichot, "die de diepste naam en hoogste naam van een mens wel het meeste volharding moet schenken, is om na zijn leven een goede naam te genieten onder de mensen, vooral wanneer

