

In the same way that crime does not appear to have been a serious threat in the countryside, so **Gendarmerie** reports suggest an overall lack of any other incident likely to excite the public mind or threaten the security of the state. This does not mean, however, that patrols were always uneventful and did not, sometimes, have violent or even tragic conclusions. A patrol could hit an unexpected event resulting in a tragedy for someone, not least to the gendarmes themselves. On 25 April 1845, as he set out on a morning patrol of Dreux, Gendarme Hamel fell off his **horse**. His foot caught in the **stirrup** and he was **dragged** 400 metres. He died in hospital later the same day, leaving a widow and two young children.³³ And if patrols could have accidents, they could also