FACT SHEET No 112

THE MINSTER'S "FRENCH CONNECTION"

Four lower windows at East end contain glass panels brought from France by Henry Gally Knight in 1818. Found in second-hand shop in Paris and came from Temple Church. Panels made by Jean Chastellain in first half of sixteenth century, adapted to fit pointed lancets by glass-maker called Miller, who could not disguise rounded tops of originals. Temple Church situated within Temple Enclosure, developed and built by Knights Templar and controlled by them until they were driven out and their leaders executed. Hard by church was Temple Tower, a fortified prison where Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were held prior to their execution in 1793. In 1795, Temple Church sold off for demolition to Francois Carlet, a wig-maker.

The paragraph above summarises a story which has great fascination for me. This Fact Sheet outlines my investigations into the origins of "our" glass. It addresses questions such as: *where was the Temple Church and what did it look like? Does any part of it exist today? Are there details of the number, size and shape of its windows? Where were "our" windows? Can we pinpoint the site on a present-day map of Paris?*

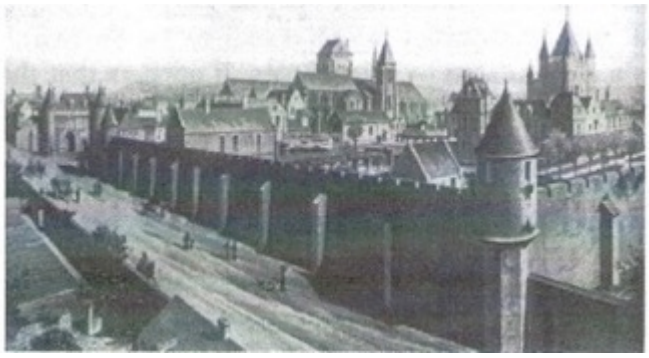
In the Marais district of Paris today, on the north bank of the Seine, between the Hotel de Ville, Place de la Bastille and Place de la Republique, there are many revealing names: Quartier du Temple, Rue du Temple, Rue Vielle du Temple, Carreau du Temple, Place du Temple, Boulevard du Temple and Rue des Fontaines du Temple. Somewhere in that jumble of streets, our windows had their first home.

The Temple Enclosure

In 1118, The Order of Knights Templar was established in the Holy Land to protect pilgrims. In 1140 the Order established a house in Paris, in the north-east suburbs of the city. Thomas Becket, first as Henry II's Royal Chancellor, and later as Archbishop of Canterbury, lodged in "the house of the Templars" whilst conducting various negotiations in France.

The Order achieved great power and in France it became independent of the crown and acquired one quarter of the land area of Paris. *L'Enclos du Temple* had become a state within a state and its boundary walls were crenellated with a parapet and a walkway for guards, strong buttresses and at least 12 towers around the perimeter. The main gate was a massive structure 3m wide and 7m high, with two flanking towers and a drawbridge. The Temple Church and the Temple Tower occupied prominent positions within the Enclosure.

The French monarchy grew increasingly worried about the power of the Templars. Eventually, King Philip the Fair challenged the Knights and in 1307 arrested all the Templars in Paris, dissolved the Order and had 55 senior figures burned at the stake. The power and wealth of the Knights had been greatly reduced, but the walled Temple Enclosure remained.

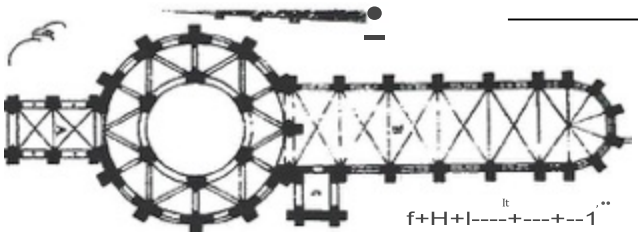


It is shown in this beautiful engraving of 1450. The view is from the south-west comer and the walls, towers and entrance gate can be seen clearly. The Temple Church can be seen in the centre and the massive Temple Tower to the right. The other tall tower, seen behind the church, was Caesar's Tower.

The Temple Church

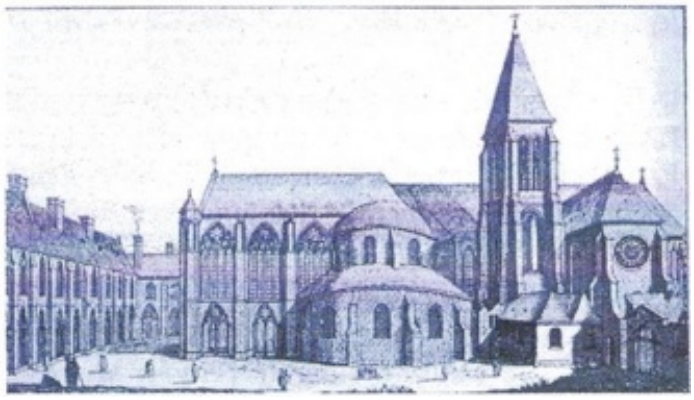
Taking this engraving and excluding as much as possible of the Temple Enclosure, whilst trying to ignore the looming presence of the Caesar Tower, we get a good view of the Church. Built initially in the form of a rotunda, the church was enlarged later by the addition of a porch and a nave. A bell-tower was built and a slim spire placed on the roof of the nave. In this picture, only the upper story of the rotunda can be seen: the larger ground floor is obscured.

I wanted to search this 1450 picture for "our" windows, but since that glass has been dated as sixteenth century, I'd got there too early!



The proportions of the porch, the rotunda and the nave, with an apse at its east end, forming a chancel, are shown in this plan view, together with the bell-tower. (Ignore the extraneous marks, which relate to adjacent buildings).

An engraving dated 1650 provides a better view, showing the two-story rotunda and the bell-tower (with a twin-gabled building at its foot), adjacent to which, strikingly, there is a large chapel with a round window, not shown in the 1450 picture.



We see from this how the Temple Church developed from the simple rotunda built by the Templars into a large medieval church, appropriately decorated and adorned, one presumes. That adornment must have included "our" stained-glass - but where was it?

If chapels were added to the original church in the sixteenth century, it seems probable that "our" glass was made for windows in one of these chapels. Henri Sauval, writing in 1733, describes La Chapelle de l'Isle-Adam de Villiers and states that *"it is lit by several coloured windows".* Pierre La Vieil, in 1774, refers to La Chapelle du Saint Norn de Jesus in the Church of the Grand-Priory of the Temple in Paris and says that the stained glass in it is *"very fine".*

Guy-Michel Leproux visited Southwell in 1994 and examined the glass. Subsequently, he presented his findings to a gathering of experts and then published a paper *(Proces-verbal de la seance du mardi 4 avril 1995, included in Ville de Paris - Supplement au "Bulletin municipal officiel de la Ville de Paris": No 52 du mardi 4 juillet 1995).* This is a most valuable document. It includes a section which discusses the Southwell glass in some detail: that part of the paper was sent to us and translated by Alan Yates. It appears that the remainder of the paper was not sent, so it was only when I requested and received a copy of the complete paper that I became aware that it also discussed the origins and original installation of the glass in question.

I could only assume that the complete paper was not shared with us because the author thought we would only be interested in the section about our own church. The other sections, however, told me so much more about the French end of the story. In particular, Leproux concludes, with authoritative evidence, that the Southwell glass was fitted originally in the Chapel of the Sacred Name of Jesus, which was built in 1529 through the generosity of Philippe de Villiers de L'Isle-Adam. (Sauval, who referred to "La Chapelle de "l'Iisle-Adam de Villiers" jumbled the name and meant that it was commissioned and paid for by the man, rather than named after him).

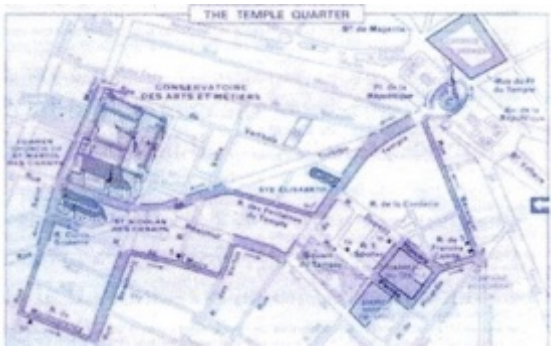
In one of his "missing" sections, Leproux reproduces two close-up views of the Temple Church as represented in a scale model of the Temple Enclosure, made in 1783 and on display in the Musee de Carnavalet, which specialises in the history of Paris. The first one (left) gives a view of the south-east area of the church and shows the bell-tower with the two small gables at its foot, together with the chapel with the round window to the east of it, as seen in the 1650 drawing. There is, however, *another chapel,* with a west-east orientation and featuring an apse at its eastern end. This is the Chapel of the Sacred Name of Jesus. It is from this place, deep within the Temple Church, that our Southwell Minster glass was rescued.

A second close-up, this time from the north-east, but with an elevated view, allows us to see much of importance in the Temple Church: the east end of the nave, with its apsidal chancel; the bell-tower to the south, with (as we must call it) a pepper-pot; the spire on the ridge of the nave; the southern chapel with the round window; the Chapel of the Sacred Name of Jesus with its apse parallel to the chancel apse.

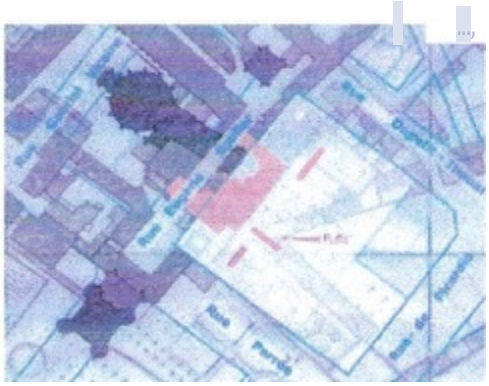
In addition, there are two interesting structures we haven't seen before. These are a transverse chapel to the north and a small chapel close to the chancel on the north side. This view completes our picture of the shape and structure of the Temple Church in 1783, as it entered the last decade of its existence.

Maps and plans of the Temple Enclosure and the Temple Church

Several maps were published in Paris in the period between the completion of the Temple Church and the Revolution. They feature elevated drawings of buildings, rather than flat ground plans and the best of them is by Turgo (1739). This (left) is the section showing the Temple Enclosure. The Church appears to have all its known parts in place, but because the view is from the west, the details in which we would be particularly interested are obscured.



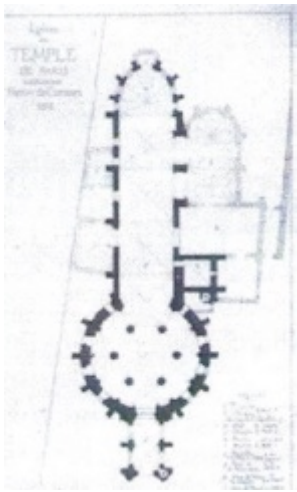
Modem maps are oriented north to south, as in the Michelin plan (right) for today's Temple Quarter. The current streets which equate to the boundaries of the Temple Enclosure are: Rue du Temple, Rue de Beranger, Rue de Picardie and Rue de Bretagne. Rue des Fontainnes du Temple intersects with Rue du Temple opposite the site of the main gate, by the kink in the wall.



My quest stalled for many months until I discovered a website describing an investigative dig by a Parisian archaeologist, Didier Busson, which he carried out in the market-hall at Carreau du Temple in July 2003. Busson used this plan (left) showing the present-day streets superimposed upon an outline shape of the Temple Church and the Temple Tower as they appeared prior to demolition. A comparison with the Michelin plan, aided by the similar orientations, pinpoints the location.

Go to Paris, take ticket to Temple Metro station, walk down rue du Temple and turn left into rue Perree. At the junction with rue Eugene Spuller, pause and look to your right and see the Temple Tower in your mind's *eye.* ***Then turn left and use your imagination to pass through "our" Chapel, the one that had "our" glass in it***

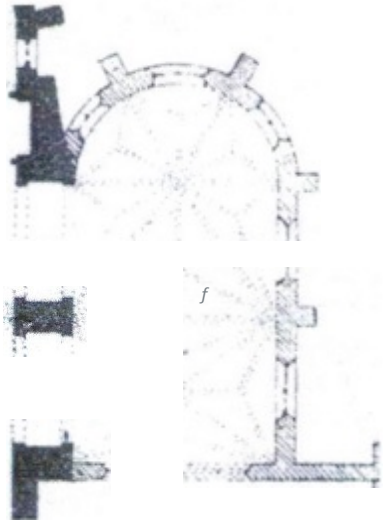
I wrote to Didier Busson, and he was kind enough to reply, enclosing a great deal of useful material. The map used for all archaeological work in Paris is by Verniquet, published in 1799. M Busson also enclosed a splendid photograph of the model of L'Enclos du Temple in the Musee de Carnavalet, which has been restored recently and is clearly in better condition now than when it was photographed by G-M Leproux.



M Busson also sent me an excellent detailed plan by Henri de Curzon showing all the sections of the Temple Church and its Chapels. The photocopy is rather faint, but everything is decipherable. The two chapels on the right are of course Chapelle du Saint Norn de Jesus and Chapelle de Notre-Dame de Lorrette, the latter being the one with the round window.

This is the ground plan of the Temple Church as it was immediately prior to its closure, the removal of all its fixtures and fittings and the finality of its demolition.

The Stained Glass Windows



Leproux tells us that the glass panels in the Minster were made originally for the windows in the Chapel of the Sacred Name of Jesus. The four scenes are clearly from the same set and are by the same hand. They were round-headed and Leproux demonstrates that the round-headed form is used in the chapel in the Carnavalet model, with eleven lancets visible. There are five window openings (see left), with four of them featuring double lancets and the central apse window having three.

It seems highly probable that scenes from the Life of Christ should be commissioned for the windows of a chapel dedicated to the Sacred Name of Jesus. Surely, however, all the windows would be used? The four that we have don't really make a coherent series, because they lack major events such as the nativity and the crucifixion.

So how did "ours" get separated and find their way into a second-hand shop? When Carlet bought the church, did he dispose of the fixtures and fittings before he sold the building on for demolition, or had the building been stripped before he purchased it? We don't know and we never shall.

Alexandre Lenoir (1761 to 1839) was a keen revolutionary, but, recognising that the revolution and its aftermath were destroying many artistic treasures, because of their associations with the aristocracy, he persuaded the National Assembly that such art belonged to the people. He was given permission to acquire items for the nation and he established the Musee des Monuments Fran<;ais, becoming, in effect, France's National Art Curator. He did a great service for France (and most probably for the Minster).

In 1802, Lenoir published a Museum catalogue and in it he states: *"The stained glass windows from the Temple Church have been re-united in this museum. They adorned 20 windows. They were designed and painted by Albrecht Durer (sic) and they are of the greatest beauty. They depict the most striking scenes from the life of Jesus Christ, starting with his birth and continuing to his death. The conception is noble, the composition is well thought out and the arrangement of the draperies is rich".*

The Restoration of the House of Bourbon in 1814 saw the break-up of Lenoir's collection and many items were reclaimed by private collectors. Fittings taken from the Temple Church, however, had no home to

which they could return, so they may have been dispersed. Somehow, the "Southwell Four" were separated and found their way into that junk shop, ready for Henry Gally Knight to pick up his celebrated bargain.

The quotation points to a larger series (from birth to death) than the eleven lancets suggested for La Chapelle du Saint Norn de Jesus. The series may have extended into the adjoining Chapelle de Notre-Dame de Lorrette and perhaps into the main Church itself. Imagine being able to view a set containing no fewer than 20 of these fabulous works of art!

Jean Chastellain

Who then created these beautiful windows? Peter Latham states categorically in his Plain Guide that they are by Jean Chastellain and that they were made in Belgium. Lenoir, however, stated that they were by Albrecht Durer, even though there was no record of that celebrated engraver ever having worked on glass. According to G-M Leproux, there can be no doubt that the artist is Jean Chastellain. He produced many works in the same style during the relevant period and the same cartoon used for the figure of Christ in our window was used in the church of Saint-Etienne du Mont (known to be by Chastellain) and at Nemours.

Interestingly, however, it seems that Lenoir's attribution had a grain of truth, because Leproux demonstrates that Chastellain drew inspiration for several scenes or parts of scenes from the engravings of Albrecht Durer. (Durer produced no fewer than 64 engravings of scenes from the life of Christ, grouped in three different series: the Large Passion, the Petite Passion and the Engraved Passion).

Searches of the internet have thrown up little more about Jean Chastellain, but it does appear that he worked in Paris from about 1500 to about 1535. On that basis, it seems unlikely that our glass was made in Belgium. Belgium has only existed as an independent country since 1830 and its present borders date from 1919. It is possible that Chastellain may have been born and worked initially in what is now Belgium, but I have been unable to discover anything about that.

A further publication by Leproux shows examples of his work to be found in various other churches, including: *La Sagesse de Salomon, Saint-Gervais-Saint-Protais; Marie-Cleophas, Saint-Martin de Montmorency; Le Crucifixion, Church of Saint-Martin, Triel; L'Incredulite de Saint Thomas, Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois; L'Arrestation des ap6tres, Paris, eglise Saint-Merry; La Bapteme des nouveaux croyants, Paris, eglise Saint-Merry.* The fact that this collection of superb work by a master-craftsman remains in place in France today gives "our" windows an additional cachet of distinction.

CONCLUSIONS (AND FURTHER WORK)

I think it appropriate, on the balance of probability, for us to tell our visitors that the stained glass in the Minster's Lower East Windows is by a master glass-painter, Jean Chastellain, and that the panels were made in the period 1528 to 1530 for the Chapel of the Sacred Name of Jesus, which was located on the south-east side of the Temple Church, Paris. They formed part of a series on the Life of Our Lord, but the four scenes we have in safe-keeping do not constitute a consecutive narrative and appear to have been plucked randomly from the full set. How wonderful if a listing of these pieces could be found, or an engraving of the interior of the Chapel came to light! The search must go on!

Having learned something of the French end of the story, I want to discover more about the adaptation and installation of the glass on this side of the channel. What sort of glass was in the four lancets prior to 1818? Were Gally Knight's trophies made to fit into existing windows, or did the stonework have to be altered as well? How long did the work take? Who was Miller, what other work did he do and how was he chosen for the job? Did the conservation work, carried out by Keith Barley in 1991, reveal anything?

Comments, corrections and (especially) additional research by fellow Stewards will be very welcome.

David Turner, October 2004