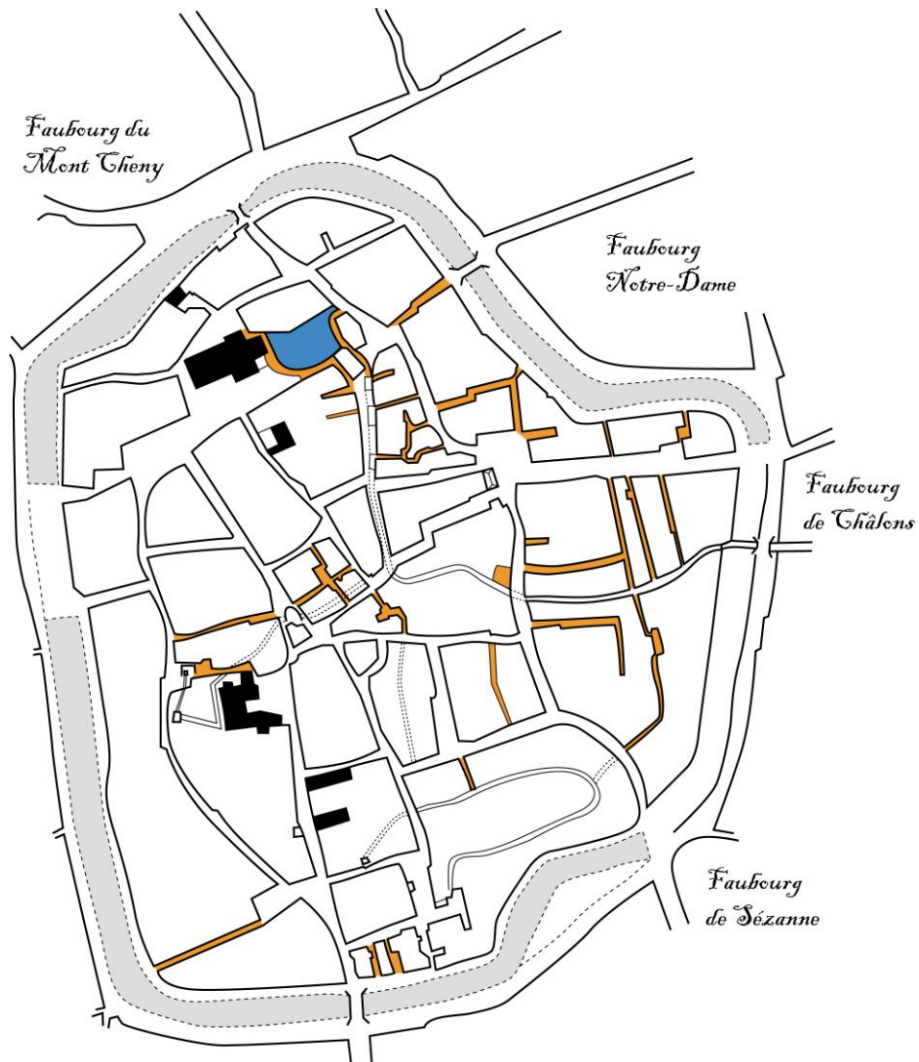


The streets of Vertus



1. THE BOULEVARDS

Site of the former medieval ramparts



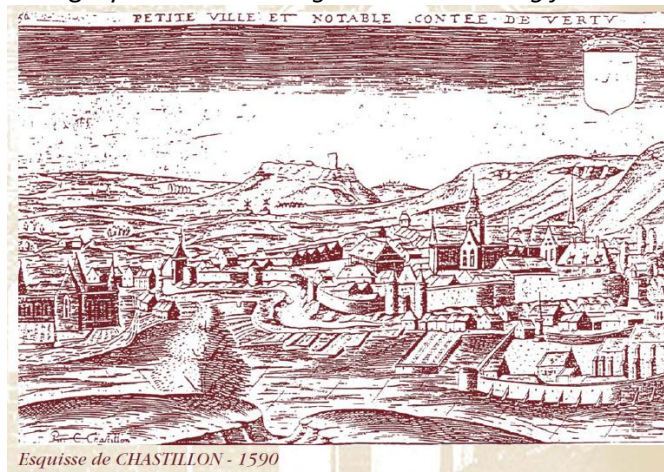
As we can see in this reproduction of the town of VERTUS in 1590 by Claude CHASTILLON, the geographer to Henri IV, the town was completely enclosed by ramparts and moats for centuries. You could access the city via three monumental gates.

After they were destroyed, their place was taken by huge boulevards which made up a 2km green belt around the oldest inhabited part of the

town until the start of the 20th century. In 1906, the town's population was 3146.

Here, by the Place de la République, stood the gate which led to the SEZANNE district.

The Théogène LEFEVRE fountain was erected in 1894, named after a citizen who had left part of his heritage to the Town. It is decorated with a cast iron statuette, an allegory named *"the laugh"* or *"the dancing faun"*.



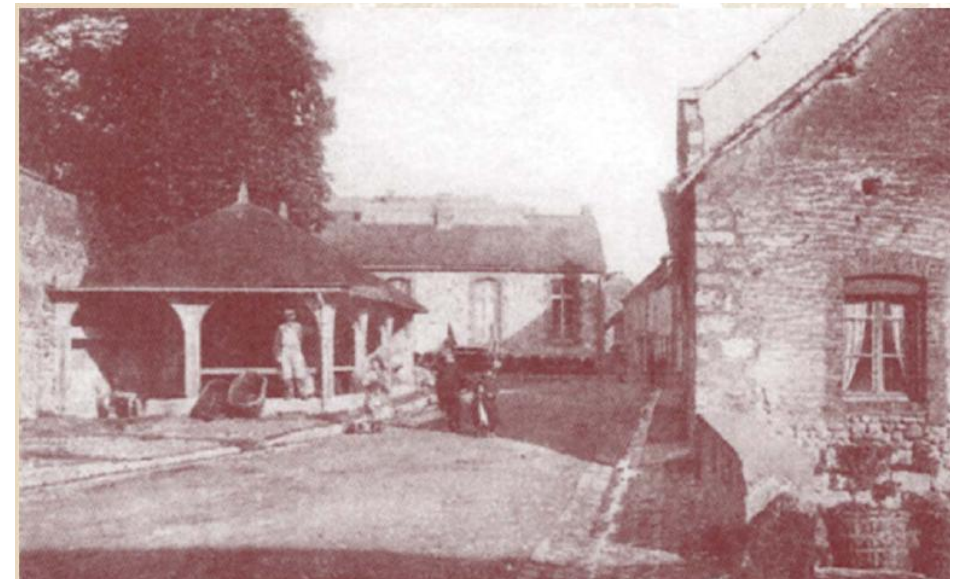
2. THE MAIRE DE ROY FOUNTAIN



Water is a permanent feature in VERTUS, thanks to the active sources fed by the wooded plateau overlooking the vineyards and the town.

The fountain, whose picturesque name hides an unglamorous historical title (originally it was named the *Merderel Fountain* in the 16th century), originated in the basement of the nearby Hôtel-Dieu.

After being rebuilt in wood and stone in the mid-19th century, in 1843 it became a place for generations of *Vertusiennes* to come and do their laundry. This continued up until the 1960's and the introduction of the washing machine.



3. THE OLD HÔTEL-DIEU

Saint Nicolas' Chapel



As with every Hôtel-Dieu built in the Kingdom, at VERTUS was created to house pilgrims, but quickly became a hospice and a hospital for the elderly, the poor, abandoned and sick children and lepers, kept under strict quarantine...

The Hôtel-Dieu was founded in 1210 by the Counts of Champagne and run by the Augustine monks. Its management- clothing and meals- was laid out in a charter written by Count Thibault IV.

Its history has been marked by a series of conflicts between lords, donations and wars. It has been supported by a number of donations and inherited wealth, but was severely destabilized by the Revolution and conflicts between Church and State. It survived as a hospital run by the Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul until 1951.

In 1975, this Civil Hospice became a retirement home for 120 residents, and was completely renovated in 1984. All that remains of the original site is the chapel dedicated to Saint Nicolas, where occasionally a special Mass is held.



4. THE TOWN HALL

Formerly the Lady Regents' Residence



In 1660, the Bishop of CHÂLONS established the congregation of the sisters of the Christian Doctrine, named the “Lady Regents”, with the aim of educating young girls and training school-mistresses to teach in the countryside.

This huge residence was built to house them up until the Revolution. Following this, they were evicted and the building was granted to the Hospice in 1807. It was later leased to the town to house the Town Hall, then the municipal police station and the courts of justice.

In 1847, the Town Hall was fitted with reinforced fencing to enclose the entrance court.

The building was purchased by the Town in 1837, which undertook major renovation and enlargement work in 1968.



Mary, éditeur

5-PLACE DE LA GRANDE FONTAINE



This huge square houses the imposing “Great Fountain”, of which the first recorded existence dates back to 1267, and the current structure with its grills and four outlets dates back to 1858.

It is an important location where waterways meet and mingle, and is a symbol of the huge importance of the water in this town which is channeled under several local streets.

During a fire which followed the German invasion of June 1940, the district was severely damaged and had to be completely restructured: a block of buildings was cleared to create this square, which is surrounded by more recent buildings. However, older “pan de bois” style wood-framed buildings still exist; they have undergone renovation work and are now a proud feature of the town.



6- WASH HOUSE AND THE RUE DU MOULINET



VERTUS boasts seven sources within the medieval ramparts and two more “extramuros”. The first written records of these sources, called “fountains” by the inhabitants, date back to the Middle Ages.

The Moulinet source, which used to be a watering place under the title “Herment fountain”, is supplied by the Lady Regents’ fountain located in the Town Hall gardens. This was also used as a wash house, and was one of the last

to remain functional in the area, being used up until the 1960’s. Today, the water has been channeled under the Ruelle du Moulinet, up to the Great Fountain.



7-BOULEVARD EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS



Near the church and the old castle, this boulevard runs through the upper, old part of the town. It runs directly to the hills planted with grape vines, where you can get a superb view of the town.

It bears the name of VERTUS' most famous figure: the poet Eustache DESCHAMPS, who was born here around 1340-1344. He studied, traveled widely and joined the courts of the Dukes of Orléans and the Kings Charles V and Charles VI, where he held several important positions

including Sergeant-at-Arms to the King and Bailiff of SENLIS.

Aside from these official functions, he wrote and composed a number of ballads about himself, events, the Greats of the era and about the town of VERTUS where he stayed from time to time at his country home just outside the town walls. This was burned to the ground during a raid by the English in 1380, and he died later in 1406.



*«Je fu jadis de terre vertueuse,
Nez de Vertus, le païz renommé
Ou il avoit ville tres gracieuse
Dont li bon vin sont en maint lieux nommé ;
Jusques a cy avoit mon nom nommé,
Eustache fu appelé dès enfans ;
Or sūi tous ars, s'est mon nom remué
J'aray desor a nom Brulé des Champs.»*

Extrait de la ballade n°835

8-RUE DU CHÂTEAU
Former castle well



This street undoubtedly marks the boundary between the castle, with its back to the ramparts to the north and the Abbaye Saint Jean and all of its cloisters to the south, and Saint Jean Collegiate Church.

This is only a small part of the inner court of the Counts of Champagnes' castle outbuildings, which were built at the beginning of the 11th century.

The stronghold, complete with towers and a dungeon, certainly existed in 1081, with the abbey church of Saint Martin enclosed within. It underwent a series of modifications over the course of the various wars between the regional lords, before being replaced by a “Renaissance” style castle up until the Revolution.



9-THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARTIN



The church currently standing here dates back to the end of the 11th century, undoubtedly on the site of a Gaulish place of worship and then the first church, when the Champagne region became Christian in the 3rd or 4th century.

The church housed a regular canonic abbey then was allocated to a sole parish after the fire of 1167, which raged through it and the castle in which it was built.

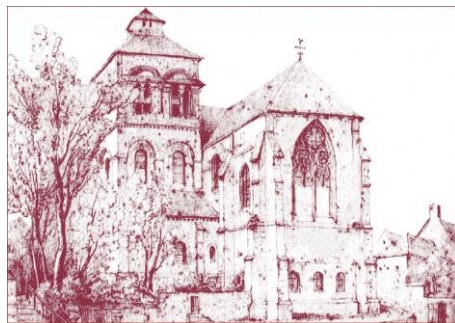
A series of conflicts and fires led to several modifications, especially in the 15th century. At this time, the

tympanum on the central doorway was sculpted in half-relief with the “Charity of Saint Martin”. Today, this is very worn, but you can still see that it depicts the saint sharing his coat with the poor.

Recognizing the poor state of the church and its threat of collapse, the town started renovation work in 1852. The architect took the basement down to the level of the source, and worked hard to reconstitute a continuous style throughout the church architecture which hadn’t existed for centuries. The stained glass windows were a gift by the parishioners, and also date back to the 19th century.

In the fire of June 1940, the church lost its roofing, the ceiling of the nave, the bell-tower and three bells, its great organ, its sacristy and all of the interior furnishings. The full renovation work finished in 1955 with the final roofing installed above the nave and the recasting of the bells (two of which were made in 1595 and 1596).

In 1996, we inaugurated the German style Bernard AUBERTIN Great Organ, with 3 keyboards and 32 stops, decorated with vineyard-related sculptures.



10-THE “FAITH AND HOMAGE” GATE SITE

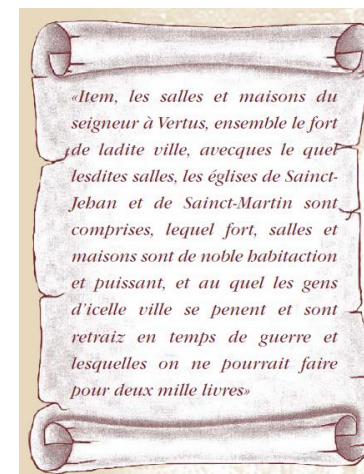


The first stronghold was built at the end of the 11th century when the Counts of Champagne conquered the region. It was a powerful fortress with towers and a dungeon which withstood the series of conflicts between regional lords up until the 15th century, when it was destroyed by successive assaults during the Hundred Years’ War.

All that’s left of the medieval castle is the side of the “Gate of Faith and Homage”, located on the north-eastern side of the fortress. It was

used by several of the Count’s vassals who would come to swear loyalty and aid to him (for the castle and his Crusades) in exchange for a fiefdom.

It was replaced by a Renaissance style castle around 1550 and abandoned after 1750. This is the castle represented in the paintings by CHASTILLON.



11- THE BAUDET GATE



Thanks to the permission granted by the Count Thibault IV, the fortifications, including ramparts and ditches were erected from 1230 to protect the city, which grew prosperous from its fairs.

These were maintained up until 1759, until a demolition project was passed by the Town Assembly in 1770. Only part of the Baudet Gate was conserved.

It was a wide, monumental double gate built from rock cut from local

underground quarries. Flanking it were two towers, and a drawbridge was installed to cross the ditch in front.

The remaining gate was fitted on its outward side with heavy wooden doors and a portcullis which slid down into a slot in the stone, and is still visible today.

It was built to defend the road from EPERNAY, and allowed access to the vines, the forest and communal pastures.

This gate was one of the last remaining town gates in the Marne region, and was classed as a historical monument in 1881.



12- SAINT MARTIN'S WELL



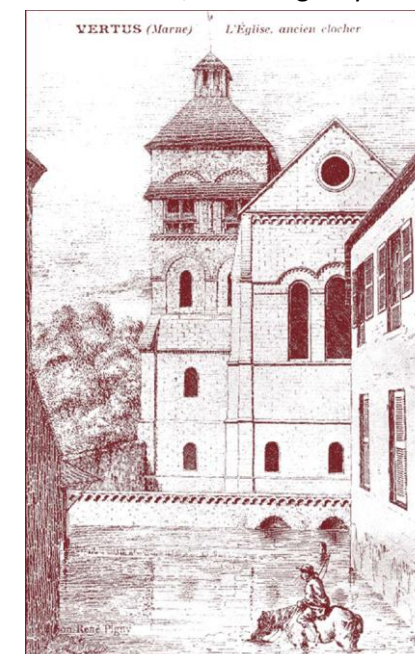
This was the town's principal water source, originating underneath the church, and was incorporated into the medieval castle from the creation of the County of Champagne.

On the original site of the town, it appears that this place was divined and dedicated to Virotus, a Celtic god, who was assimilated with Apollo under the Romans and then replaced by the Christian Church.

Later on, the pond was built to turn the "Moulin de Comte" mill, which ran until the 19th century.

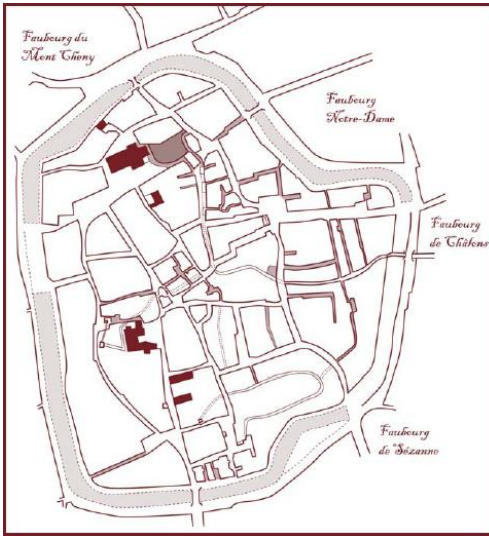
But that wasn't all: it was also a watering hole for livestock, an emergency fire-fighting water supply, a carp pond and a wash house too!

This is the heart of the old town, and still holds on to the old streets and mills. It became a classified historical site in 1958.



13- SAINT-MARTIN'S CHURCH

The chevet



This water feature, fed by the source underneath the church, gives us one of the most picturesque views of the building. The church has the unique feature of being built on stilts, with three Roman style crypts which hug the natural slope of the terrain (a difference of 7m between the door and the chevet). The chorus and the arms of the transept are built upon these crypts, using local stone known as "falloise".

The chevet wall was completely restored in 1852, and here the

architect replaced the gothic 15th century window with three "Roman" picture windows to unify the style of the building.

The tower is very elegant and harmonious, and sits under a four-sided roof. As is traditional in the region, most of the decoration was reserved for the upper stories: all four sides are identical, fitted with two windows, each of which made up of double picture windows.



14-PLACE LÉON BOURGEOIS

Formerly the Place du Marché



Five main roads branch out from this lively central square towards the old districts and gates.

It was probably in 1230 when Thibault IV, the Count of Champagne and Brie, granted the town a Communal Charter, that this square became the administrative center. The "Auditoire", a public hearings building, was located on the corner of rue Jean Le Bon. Until the start of the 19th century, the mayor occupied this building and judges and bailiffs congregated in the square.

What's more, it was located near the Halle, where the town assemblies were held, then transformed into a grain market, and finally destroyed in 1893/94.

As a meeting and event space – for more or less joyful occasions- the square held markets every Tuesday, Friday and Saturday for centuries until the 1960's. Since then, the last surviving market is held every Tuesday on the Boulevard Paul Goerg, but it is still as lively and bustling as ever.

In 1883, the "Vigneron Champenois" (the Champagne winemaker) fountain was installed in the center of the square, which was later renamed Léon Bourgeois in honor of the minister and Society of Nations delegate who lived in this region.



15-RUE JEAN LE BON

The Auditoire Mill



This street was a vital thoroughfare of the town, connecting the former Place du Marché to the ramparts and running towards the SEZANNE quarter.

Over the centuries, a number of merchants and artisans sprang up, and even an inn was built at the start of the 17th century.

It was only at the start of the 1980's that these started to disappear or move to more car-friendly locations...

In 1894 the street was christened Rue Jean Le Bon, in honor of the King who gave his armory and his motto to the town in 1361 – *“red-hearted silver, pierced by the field's iron arrow”*.

The adjacent streets – the rue des Juifs and the rue des Lombards- remind us of the existence of money-changers during the 4 or 5 fairs allotted by the Counts of Champagne in the Middle Ages.

The Auditoire, the last mill to turn in the town, finally went still in 1960.



16-RUE DE CHÂLONS



The principal thoroughfare leading to the Place du Marché, this began at the CHÂLONS gate, which was already known in 1280 under the name “Porta Cathalaunensis”, then “Porte Chalongoise” or “Chalonge” with its own Guards quarters. Considered an impediment to traffic, this was demolished in 1772.

This street housed several important buildings; most notably the Hotels in the 15th and 16th centuries, which later gave way to shops. Their signs tell us how strong the pull of the

capital was on the region, bearing names such as “A la Parisienne”,...

Branching off from this street were several alleys which led to the ramparts-turned-boulevards (Ruelle des Fossés, Ruelle des Remparts), or the Rue Jean Le Bon, via the Rue des Juifs.



17-SAINT CHARLES

Former town gate



On the corner of the CHÂLONS quarter, this imposing building holds an important place in our national history.

The gate reminds us that in September 1815 it welcomed the sovereign Allies against Napoleon 1st (the Tsar of Russia, the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia) for a grand luncheon on the eve of the troops' return to the Mont-Aimé.

In the 19th century, it was used as a relay for the horse-powered postal service before becoming the property of the GRIGNON family, who donated it in 1894 to a free public institution, the "Ecole Saint-Charles", which was open until 1939.

It then became a youth club for theatrical performances and other leisure activities.

Following its purchase by the Town from the diocese in 1993, it is currently awaiting renovation for a new function and a new public life.



The « Renaissance window »

Vestiges



This is the last vestige of the second castle which dominated VERTUS between 1550 and 1750. In 1756, the building is put up for sale.

« The castle, buildings, gardens, the house where gamekeepers were, the sheds, the chapel and out buildings are not in a good position.

But there is no purchaser and the castle becomes a *carrière de pierre* at the beginning of the 19th century.

This window was preserved after the demolition and was installed at this place around 1835.

Pilastre Marial

« The annunciation »

Bas relief of the end of the 16th century

The relief, very worn lets appear Marie and the Angel Gabriel. On the phylactery the prayer « AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA » appears. There are some symbolic characters such as the snake which symbolizes the knowledge, the Dove for the Holy Spirit, the Palm and the Flowers.



The Tsar in Vertus

Diner of september 11th 1815
served at the allied sovereign's
table for the Russian tsar
Alexandre 1st birthday.
300 place settings and 1200
bottles of Champagne.

Menu

M e n u	
<i>Mise en bouche</i> 600 assiettes d'huîtres - 300 citrons	<i>Les viandes</i> 28 plats de rôti 10 plats de poulets gras 10 plats de dindonneaux 10 plats de longes de veau 60 salades pour 300 personnes 20 assiettes de fromage de France
<i>Potages</i> Potage à la jardinière pour 150 convives Soupe froide à la russe pour 150 convives Crêcy aux petits croûtons pour 150 convives	<i>Les desserts</i> 50 entremets au sucre de crème française à la vanille et de génoise aux amandes pralinées 8 soufflés d'extra pour être placés à la portée de Sa Majesté Impériale 60 assiettes de pâtisserie de petits fours 30 assiettes de fruits crus 60 assiettes de fruits confits 60 assiettes de fruits à l'eau de vie
<i>Hors-d'œuvre / Entrées</i> 28 petits vol-au-vent à la purée de gibier 28 galantines de poularde à la gelée 28 grosses pièces de bœuf au vin de madère demi-espagnol 50 filets de sole à la Orly, garnis d'une escalope de saumon 12 caillies aux fines-herbes dans des bordures de raisins 24 sautés de poulets au suprême, ragoût à la Toulouse, 25 timbales de macaroni au chasseur	

APPETIZERS

600 plates of oysters – 300 lemons

SOUPS

Mixed vegetables for 150 guests

Russian cold soup for 150 guests

Crecy with little crusts for 150 guests

STARTERS

28 little vol-au-vent with purée of games

28 galantines of fattened chicken with jelly

28 beef with Madeira (wine)

50 fillet of sole and salmon escalopes

12 quails with herbs and grapes

24 sautés of chicken with a stew cooked like the Toulouse way

25 macaroni like the hunter way

MEATS

28 dishes of roasts meats

10 dishes of fat chicken

10 dishes of turkey

60 salads for 300 guests

20 plates of french cheese

DESSERTS

50 desserts of french cream with vanilla flavour and sponge cakes with sugared almonds

8 soufflés d'extra for this Imperial Majesty

60 plates of cakes - 60 plates of uncooked fruits

30 plates of crystallized fruits - 60 plates of fruits with brandy