

# In the footsteps of Flaubert

## Rouen & Normandy

— Historical map of Rouen • 1871 —

### On the path of Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880)

- Flaubert Museum and History of Medicine Museum, 51 Rue de Lecat**  
Gustave Flaubert's father was the surgeon in chief at the Hôtel-Dieu Hospital in Rouen. The family lived in the wing that has now become a museum of both medicine and literature. Flaubert was born here on 12 December 1821 and spent twenty-five years of his life in this house.  
"How many times in my life did I not see, through a large acacia, the green morning light appearing at my windows, in the old days in Rouen in my little room at the Hôtel-Dieu." Letter to Louise Colet of 16 May 1852.
- Lycee Corneille, originally collège royal, 4 Rue du Maulevrier**  
Flaubert was a pupil at the Collège Royal, today the Lycée Corneille, during his entire schooling, before being expelled and getting his matriculation on his own in 1840. In *Madame Bovary*, it was also here that the young Charles studied: "Charles [Bovary] was finally sent to the lycée in Rouen. His father

- brought him personally, towards the end of October, at the time of the Saint-Romain fair. [...] His local guardian was a wholesale ironmonger from Rue Ganterie, who took him out once a month, on a Sunday, after his shop closed, sent him off to the harbour to look at the boats, and then brought him back to the lycée by seven, before supper."
- 55 Avenue Gustave Flaubert**  
After the death of her husband – the hospital pavilion being occupied by her eldest son – Madame Flaubert settles in July 1846 with Gustave and her granddaughter Caroline, at 25 Rue de Crosne-hors-la-ville. It is a large two-storey building topped by attic rooms, located at the corner of rue de Buffon. This mansion still exists and now bears the number 55 above its entrance gate.
  - 8 Rue de Le Noestre**  
The address of the Flaubert family between 1848 and 1851 is located on 6 bis rue de Le Noestre (now number 8) where Flaubert lived only sporadically since he left his mother and his niece to travel to the Orient. He returned to organize the move to Croisset where the family settled permanently.
  - Le Pavillon de Croisset, 18 Quai Gustave Flaubert, Canteleu**  
The former property of the Flaubert family was located a few minutes from Rouen, in Croisset. It was acquired in 1844 and Gustave Flaubert lived there until his death. He wrote all of his works in his office on the first floor, with a view on the Seine. His friends, George Sand, the Goncourt brothers and Guy de Maupassant, came to visit "the hermit of Croisset" as he was also called. The building is now demolished, but today's Flaubert Pavillon contains many memories of the writer, such as his quills and stuffed parrot evoking Loulou of A Simple Heart. "It was a pretty white house, built in an old style on the banks of the Seine in the middle of a magnificent garden, which stretched from behind and sloped up the hill of Canteleu. From the windows of his vast workshop, one could see big ships passing by as if they were going to touch the walls with their yards. They were going upstream towards Rouen or down towards the sea." Guy de Maupassant.

- 9 A Quai du Havre**  
The home of Caroline, Flaubert's beloved niece, and her husband, Ernest Commanville, from 1864. Flaubert and his mother were chased from Croisset by the Prussians during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871 and took refuge in one of these apartments on the Quai du Havre.
- Cimetière Monumental, Rue du Mesnil Gremichon**  
The Cimetière Monumental houses the Flaubert family grave, whose location was chosen by the writer so that one could see his house in Croisset. Flaubert rests there beside his parents and not far from Louis Bouilhet.
- Place des Carmes**  
On this square stands a statue of Flaubert, a bronze made by Rudier, after the statue by Leopold Bernstamm which had been smelted during the war.
- Canteleu and Flaubert's personal library**  
Gustave Flaubert's personal library has been preserved in Canteleu since 1952. It is a rare example of a writer's library in the public domain. There are more than 1600 works of which a thousand belonged to Flaubert. The oldest date back to the middle of the sixteenth century. Some include letters sent to Flaubert by Victor Hugo, Guy de Maupassant, Ivan Turgenev etc. Others are handwritten texts, annotations or Gustave Flaubert's reading notes.
- Musée des Beaux-Arts et Bibliothèque municipale, Esplanade Marcel Duchamp**  
The relief by Chapu devoted to Flaubert was originally attached to the facade of this museum. Currently it is in the garden of the Flaubert Museum. It is here that the manuscripts of *Madame Bovary* and *Bouvard et Pécuchet* are preserved. They have recently been digitized and can be accessed online.

### Living memory

- Hôtel Littéraire Gustave Flaubert, 33 Rue du Vieux Palais**  
The new 4-star address of the writer in Rouen. Our literary hotel offers a discovery tour of Gustave Flaubert through a library of rare books

- and manuscripts, works of art and rooms devoted to the characters in his novels.
- Hôtel des Sociétés Savantes, 190 Rue Beauvoisine**  
The Hotel des Sociétés Savantes is home to the Association of Friends of Flaubert and Maupassant, chaired by Yvan Leclerc, the meeting point for many researchers and readers. The association promotes the works of the two writers from Normandy and their entourage, through study days, the organization of symposiums and publications.
  - Librairie Élisabeth Brunet, 70 Rue Ganterie**  
For more than thirty years, our partner bookshop has been located at this address and offers a remarkable selection of old and modern books. Elisabeth Brunet, who is also a publisher, proposes in a portfolio edition a set of facsimile letters offered to Gustave Flaubert by his friends on the occasion of saint Polycarp.
  - 6 Rue de l'École**  
Address of Laure de Maupassant, sister of Alfred Le Poittevin, Flaubert's best friend since adolescence. Laure married Gustave de Maupassant and had a son, Guy, who followed Flaubert at the lycée [now Lycée Corneille] in 1868-1869. During this period, Laure resided at 6 Rue de l'École and often received Flaubert and Bouilhet. Guy de Maupassant will learn a lot about his profession as a writer thanks to Gustave Flaubert who affectionately nicknamed him his "disciple". The building no longer exists.
  - 43 Rue de Bihoirel**  
House inhabited by Louis Bouilhet shortly after his appointment as curator at the Municipal Library in 1867 and his final return to Rouen. Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant used to visit him until his death in 1869.
  - Louis Bouilhet fountain, Rue Jacques Villon**  
Louis Bouilhet, Flaubert's fellow student at the Collège Royal, was his dearest friend. This poet and playwright became the curator of the municipal library;

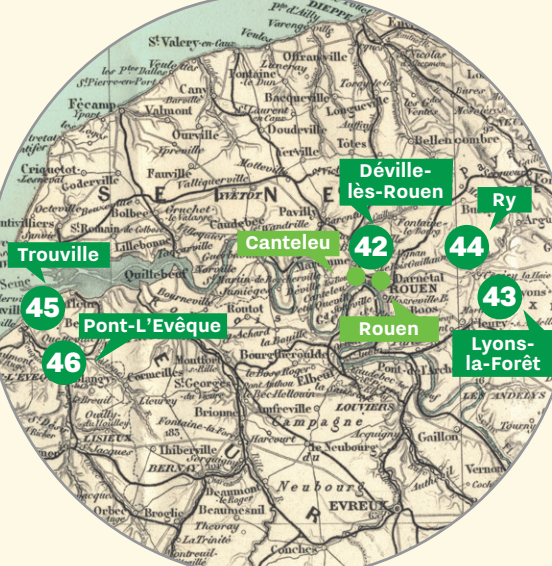
he died in Rouen in 1869. Shortly after his death, Flaubert launched a subscription to build a monument in his memory. After being refused by the Municipal Council, Flaubert replied in January 1872, by a thundering public letter of extraordinary modernity. The fountain was finally inaugurated in August 1882, two years after the death of Flaubert: it is placed on the wall of the Villon Library at the back the Museum of Fine Arts. "In losing my poor Bouilhet I lost my midwife, the person who into my thinking more clearly than I do. His death left me with a void that I am more aware of every day."

### Flaubert's literary places

- Place du Boulvingrin**  
At a very young age, Flaubert became an assiduous spectator of the Saint-Romain fair which was held at Place du Boulvingrin. The puppet theatres and especially the exhibitions of monsters fascinate him. If some see in these shows a possible origin of *The Temptation of Saint Anthony*, it is certain that the fair nourished the imagination of young Gustave. Later, Flaubert continued to keep it a favourite promenade, taking his niece and George Sand.
- Cathédrale Notre-Dame, Place de la Cathédrale**  
The Cathedral of Rouen has inspired several scenes in Flaubert's novels: the stained glass of *The Legend of Saint Julian the Hospitaller* and the tympanum representing the dance of Salome described in *Herodias*. In *Madame Bovary*, Emma and Léon have their first appointment in the cathedral.
- Palais de Justice, 36 Rue aux Juifs**  
First published as a *feuilleton* in the Revue de Paris, *Madame Bovary* was the subject of a sensational trial in January 1857: Flaubert was attacked for "offences against religious morality and public decency". Even though the trial did not take place in Rouen, its Palais de Justice, a masterpiece of Gothic art classified as a historic monument, symbolises the relationship between art and the law. Jules Senard, a politician from Rouen and Interior Minister, supported the novelist's defence. The indictment pronounced by the public prosecutor Pinard remains famous as

- "a monument of stupidity and bad faith that seemed born of the collaboration of Tartuffe and Homais." (René Dumessi).
- Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, 198 Rue Beauvoisine**  
One should start by reading the hilarious investigation by Julian Barnes, *Flaubert's Parrot* (Jonathan Cape, 1984), to follow in Loulou's footsteps: where is the true model of the Amazonian parrot used by Flaubert to write *A Simple Heart*, the first of the *Three Tales*? What is certain is that the original parrot was lent to Gustave Flaubert by the Natural History Museum; he then returned it. You can admire Loulou at the Flaubert Museum and in Croisset, and perhaps decide which is the "real" one.
  - Rue Eau-de-Robec**  
The street which follows the historic course of the Robec river was formerly occupied by dyers. It is mentioned in *Madame Bovary*, when Charles Bovary, a young medical student, settles there: "The river which turns this part of Rouen into a squalid little Venice, flowed along down there below him, yellow, violet or blue between its bridges and railings. Workmen crouched on the banks, washing their arms in the water. On poles protruding from the attic windows, skeins of cotton were hung out to dry in the open air."
  - Opéra de Rouen, Théâtre des Arts, 7 Rue du Dr Robert Rambert**  
At the time of Flaubert, the Théâtre des Arts was located at the bottom of the Rue Grand-Port. Destroyed by bombing in the Second World War, the Théâtre des Arts was rebuilt further downstream on the Quai Pierre Corneille and was inaugurated in 1962. In *Madame Bovary*, Charles Bovary takes Emma, to distract her as she was abandoned by her lover Rodolphe, to see *Lucia de Lammermoor* by Donizetti... at the opera she meets Leon who will be her second lover. Bouvard briefly follows Emma's footsteps by going one evening to the Theater des Arts, at the time of the move to Normandy.
  - The route of Emma and Léon's horse carriage**  
Follow the route of *Madame Bovary's* heroes: in a famous scene, Emma's and Léon's horse carriage travels in daytime through Rouen with closed blinds – Emma

- gives herself to her new lover, to the rhythm of the galloping horses. This route has been reconstructed by the Flaubert Centre of the University of Rouen and Danielle Girard, of the *Atelier Bovary* ([http://flaubert.univ-rouen.fr/bovary/atelier/cartes/carto\\_bovary.html](http://flaubert.univ-rouen.fr/bovary/atelier/cartes/carto_bovary.html)). "And the local folk [...] all stared wide-eyed in astonishment at this spectacle unheard of outside the capital: a cab with drawn blinds that constantly reappeared, sealed up like a tomb and tossing like a ship." Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*.
- "74 Rue de la Renelle des Maroquiniers". Esplanade Marcel Duchamp**  
Emma Bovary used the fictional number 74 of Rue de la Renelle-des-Maroquiniers to pretend that she was taking piano lessons with Félicie Lempereur, when she was actually going to join her lover. "In other words, here is the precise place where the house of a fictitious piano teacher who has never given Emma Bovary a single lesson was not found in a street that no longer exists." (Damien Dauvin, Flaubert in the city, an event organised by Sandra Glatigny).
  - Avenue du Mont-Riboudet**  
The name Mont-Riboudet is subject to a joke in *Madame Bovary*. "He's the son of Bouillet, the carpenter; his parents are comfortably off, and they let him do whatever he wants. Yet he'd learn quickly if he wanted to, he's very bright. So sometimes – well sometimes as a joke, I call him Riboudet (like the hill on the way to Maromme) and I even say 'mon Riboudet.' Ha, ha! 'Mont-Riboudet, you see. The other day I told his Grace my little joke, and he laughed at it... Yes, he was good enough to laugh at it. And so how's Monsieur Bovary?'" On 6 April 1864, Flaubert's niece Caroline married Ernest Commanville who had a small business in the avenue du Mont-Riboudet.
  - Pierre Corneille's house, 4 Rue de la Pie (1606-1684)**  
The famous poet and playwright was born in this house where he wrote *Le Cid*. You can visit his reconstructed study, and a superb library compiled by Édouard Pelay, a Rouen bibliophile.
  - Maurice Leblanc, 2 Rue Fontenelle and 4 Rue du Baillage (1864-1941)**  
Arsène Lupin's creator spent his childhood in his hometown, where he studied with distinction at the Lycée Corneille. He met Gustave Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant both of whom he very much admired. He frequently stayed in Jumièges and cycled through the Pays de Caux.
  - André Gide, 20 Rue de Crosne and 18 Rue de Lecat (1869-1951)**  
The author of *La Porte étroite* (*Strait is the Gate*) et de *Si le grain ne meurt* (*If it Die...*) evokes several times these houses from his childhood where he experienced important emotions.
  - Émile Chartier, aka Alain, 140 Rue des Bons-Enfants (1868-1951)**  
The philosopher and journalist taught at the Lycée Corneille between 1900 and 1902, where the writer André Maurois was one of his students. He published his famous *Propos* (*Comments*) in the newspaper *La Dépêche de Rouen* until 1914.
  - Théodore Géricault, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen (1791-1824)**  
This painter who, with Delacroix, embodies Romanticism was born in Rouen, and then spent most of his life in Paris. The Musée des Beaux-Arts has an interesting collection of paintings and drawings by the artist of the *Raft of the Medusa*.
  - Fontenelle, 100-102 Rue des Bons-Enfants (1657-1757)**  
Bernard Le Bouoyer de Fontenelle, philosopher and moralist, was born in Rouen. As the playwright's nephew, he wrote *Vie de Corneille* (*Life of Corneille*); in his *Entretiens sur la pluralité des mondes* (*Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds*) he popularized the physics of Descartes and Copernicus.
  - Pierre Mac Orlan, Rue des Charrettes (1882-1970)**  
The writer, whose real name is Pierre Dumarchey, lived intermittently in Rouen in his youth. He mentions the city several times in his books, notably in *Rue des Charrettes*. He lived for a time above the *Criterium*, at the corner of Rue des Charrettes and Rue de la Vicomé.
  - Le Musée des Antiquités**  
The Rouen Antiquities Museum preserves the remains of Carthage, where the action of *Salammô* takes place.
  - Abbatiale Saint-Ouen, Place du Général-de-Gaulle**  
The abbey church of this former Benedictine abbey, very prosperous between the 15th and 16th centuries, is one of the symbols of the Rayonnant Gothic style. Its large Cavallé-Coll organ is indeed famous and is used for many recordings.
  - Église Saint-Maclou, Place Barthélemy**  
A masterpiece of flamboyant Gothic art, this church has five gabled porches, with Renaissance wooden doors attributed to Jean Goujon. You can also admire the charming spiral staircase, the organ case and the recently restored lantern tower.
  - Autre Saint-Maclou, 186 Rue Martainville**  
A place of captivating charm. It was a cemetery with galleries dating back to the 16th century, built on three sides of a courtyard; the attic was used as an ossuary as can be seen by the carvings of skulls and bones on the beams.
  - Place du Vieux-Marché**  
Place of Joan of Arc's torture, where she was burnt alive in this square on May 30, 1431. A central and lively square in Rouen, with many cafés and restaurants as well as a market hall.
  - Historial Jeanne-d'Arc, 7 Rue Saint-Romain**  
In the archbishop's palace, a show tour invites you to experience the epic story of Joan of Arc through a judicial inquiry conducted by Juvénal des Ursins; a library of myths then helps you understand the scope of the symbols built around this exceptional historical figure.
  - Gros-Horloge**  
In the Gothic belfry of the 15th century are the clock mechanisms, bells, and where you can enjoy a panorama of the city. The archway that spans the street is adorned with the two Renaissance dials of this magnificent astronomical clock, equipped with a single hand.
  - Musée Le-Secq-des-Tournelles, 2 Rue Jacques Villon**  
Ironwork museum located in an old Gothic church that houses the world's largest collection of antique ironwork.
  - Maison des Quatre Fils Aymon – Musée national de l'Éducation, 15 Rue Eau-de-Robec**  
Named after one of the most famous medieval chivalry novels, this beautiful 15th century drapery residence now houses the National Museum of Education.



### Near Rouen...

- Déville-lès-Rouen**  
In 1821 Dr Flaubert acquired a house in Déville-lès-Rouen, intended to accommodate the family during holidays and long weekends. In August 1843, the property was sold because it had to be crossed by the railway line linking Rouen to Le Havre. The following year, the Flauberts spent their first summer at Croisset.
- Lyons-la-Forêt**  
Lyons-la-F is a charming village about thirty kilometres from Rouen. It evokes the Yonville-l'Abbaye of *Madame Bovary* so well that it was chosen for the shooting of the film with Isabelle Huppert and also for the more recent one with Fabrice Luchini.
- Ry**  
It was at Ry that the couple Delphine and Eugène Delamare lived. Flaubert knew their story and was inspired by it to write *Madame Bovary*. Since the end of the nineteenth century, Ry claimed the status of "model" of Yonville. A museum of automats, the "Galerie Bovary", retraces the main scenes of the novel and shows a life-size reconstruction of Monsieur Homais' pharmacy. "A Walk in the Country of Emma Bovary" takes you on about sixty kilometres of discovery of Flaubert's Normandy.
- Trouville**  
Young Flaubert often spent his summer vacation at Trouville, and there, aged fifteen, he met the one who was to be his great love, beautiful Elisa Schlesinger. The scene was then transposed into *Mémoires d'un fou* (*Memoirs of a Madman*) written two years later in 1838 and then into *L'Éducation sentimentale* (*Sentimental Education*). "It was like an apparition..." A statue of the writer, a replica of the one in Rouen, can be found near the port.
- Pont-L'Évêque**  
It was there that Flaubert's mother was born, and also where the action of *Un cœur simple* (*Three cotes*) [A Simple Heart (Three Tales)] takes place.

### View of Rouen

- View of Rouen as described by Flaubert in Madame Bovary (down Rue d'Ernemont when it reaches Route de Neuchâtel):**  
"Then, suddenly, the town lay spread out before her eyes. Sloping down like an amphitheatre, drowned in mist, it sprawled untidily out on the farther side of the bridges. Beyond, the open country sloped steadily up with monotonous uniformity until it met the indeterminate line where the pale sky began. Seen like this from above, the whole landscape had the stillness of a painting: the ships at anchor huddling together in one corner, the river curving round the foot of green, wooded hills, the oblong shaped islands lying in the water like great black motionless fish. The factory chimneys were belching out immense dark plumes of smoke that kept dissolving along their apexes into the atmosphere. She could hear the rumbling of the foundries and the clear chimes from the church steeples that loomed up through the mist. The trees in the boulevards, bare of leaves, looked like violet-hued bushes scattered about among the houses, whose roofs gleamed wetly from the rain, their brilliance greater in the higher neighbourhoods. Sometimes, a gust of wind would sweep the clouds up against the Côte Sainte-Catherine, like waves of air silently breaking against a cliff."\*

Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*

\*The translations of the quotes from *Madame Bovary* are by Margaret Mauldon (Oxford World's Classics).