



Timber floating

Since the beginning of the 16th century, a rapidly expanding Paris is experiencing a shortage of firewood, and turns towards the Forests of the Morvan. But how can the wood be transported to Paris other than by horse and cart ? After several attempts and some works aimed at making timber floating on the river Yonne and its tributaries easier, the first timber raft reached Paris mid 16th century.

Thrown into the streams of the Morvan, the logs floated along the Yonne before arriving to ports in Clamecy and around. There, they were pulled out of the water, sorted out and piled up. Then the raftsmen assembled timber rafts (75 m long and 4.50 m wide) that would reach Paris after about 12 days water rafting.

This activity lasted nearly 4 centuries. An exhibition room in Clamecy museum retraces this amazing epic.

⑤ **Clamecy weir**, used for navigation, helped to keep the river at the right level, to stop the logs or to release enough water to carry them.

Bronze bust of Jean Rouvet (on the spur separating the River Yonne and the Canal). The timber floating activity developed in Clamecy thanks to Jean Rouvet. His bust by famous sculptor David d'Angers, had been first put up on Bethléem bridge from 1828 to 1945.

⑥ **Church of Notre-Dame-de-Bethléem** (1926, by Georges Théodore Renaud) : 2nd church in France after Le Raincy's to be entirely built of reinforced concrete. Its domes and rounded flying buttresses remind of Orient. And indeed ! When chased out of Holy-Land, Reynier, the 9th bishop of Bethlehem in Palestine, found refuge in Clamecy. That is how the small bishopric of Bethlehem-les-Clamecy was founded and maintained until the concordat of 1801.



► **Flood marks of the Yonne** engraved in the stone of the bridge : The Yonne flows into the Seine with an average of 93 m³ of water/s, a higher flow rate than that of the Seine at the confluence. Therefore, geographically, the Seine is flowing into the Yonne !

► **Statue of a timber floater** (1945, by Robert Pouyaud), Bethlehem bridge : with his « croc » in hand : a tool used to pick up the logs or to push them back into the current.

► **Clamecy traditional faïence** made by the Colas Company, the family of Alain Colas, a famous sailor from Clamecy, lost at sea during the « Route du Rhum » race.



⑦ A must-see : **the eco-museum of the Confrérie St-Nicolas** (1737) (on request at the tourist office). Saint Nicolas is the patron of the bargemen and floaters.

Here is the precise spot where logs arrived, after having been floated separately (log driving) on the small rivers (the Sauzay and the Beuvron), before reaching Clamecy ports. The street perpendicular to the Beuvron has replaced the canal du Nivernais.

⑧ **Avenue du Général-Leclerc**, built when the station was opened.

► **Quai des Îles (Islands Quay)** : Here, mills and tanneries succeeded each other.

⑨ On your left : back facade of **the former military school** (18th c.), now home to the media library François-Mitterrand and a cultural Association, the Scientific Society.



⑩ **Dam on the Beuvron.**

⑪ **Vauvert Park** : a multi-hectare property that has belonged to a number of prominent citizens. It is now the property of Clamecy town (since 1943).

Town's coat of arms : azure powdered with billets Or with a lion the same, armed and langued gules on top of this.



They featured for the first time on Guillaume IV's seal, Earl of Nevers and Auxerre as well as Lord of Clamecy, hence why these 3 towns have the same coat of arms.



⑫ **Stone cross on the Beuvron Bridge** (1851).

The bridge was built in 1850 to replace the previous one built in the 16th century, which had no guardrails and was the cause of many accidents.

► **Quai des Moulins-de-la-Ville (Town-Mills Quay)** : Starting at the narrow passageway « de la poterne », many watermills backed onto the city walls. Built by the earls of Nevers between the 8th and the 10th century, these mills stopped working in 1960.

⑬ **Pont de l'Abreuvoir (drinking trough bridge)** (1813). Named after the drinking trough for horses located just before the bridge.

⑭ **Place de victoire et Place des Promenades (Victory Square and Promenade Square)**. From the end of the car park (Promenade square), there is a nice view overlooking the town.

••• An audio-guided version of this tour is available with the application **GUIDIGO**.

Also available for **Varzy** (16 km away) and for the geological site of the **Basseville Rocks** (4.6 km away).

••• « **Heritage Thursdays** » : guided tours of Clamecy available every Thursday in summer at 3 pm (3 different themes). Information and registration at Clamecy Tourist Office.

••• **Child-friendly** : *Randoland* : free recreational activity booklets are available at Clamecy Tourist Office.

Tourist Office of
Clamecy Haut Nivernais

Clamecy office :
03 86 27 02 51

Varzy office
(mai à septembre) :
03 86 26 03 51

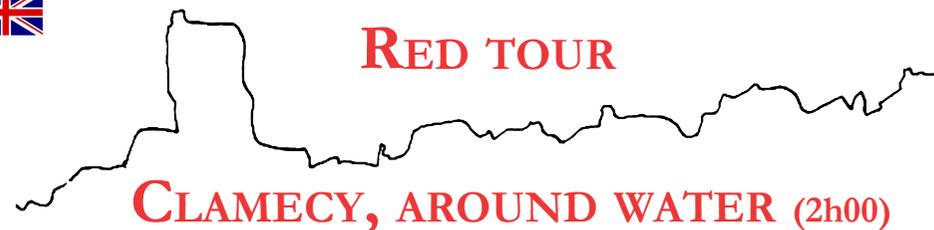


FLOTTEURS FM 91MHz

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RED TOUR



CLAMECY, AROUND WATER (2h00)

Located on the doorstep of the Morvan, Clamecy was built on a rocky spur, at the confluence of two rivers : the Yonne and the Beuvron. You are in the upper town listed as a preserved area.



① **Bust of Claude Tillier** (1905, by Emile Boisseau). Claude Tillier, a pamphleteer, writer, and also a journalist, was born in Clamecy. He is the author of *My uncle Benjamin (Mon Oncle Benjamin)* : adapted for the screen with Jacques Brel, the famous French singer, in the title role.

In the Café À Mon Oncle Benjamin, discover wall paintings (20th c., Robert Pouyaud) illustrating this novel.

② On the site of the old city walls : This passageway takes you from the upper town to the lower town.

③ On the right, a house called « **La Grand'Cour** » (1742). With its classical architecture and its majestic pediment, this house used to belong to wood merchants.

Below, the **canal du Nivernais** used to flow across the town from le port des Jeux.

④ **Le canal du Nivernais** (late 18th and 19th century) and its marina. Originally designed to help with timber floating, this waterway soon became a navigation canal linking the Loire Basin to the Seine basin. Circa 1835, the canal used to flow across Clamecy from the marina to the Avenue de la République. Difficult to navigate and insanitary, this stretch of the canal was filled between 1898 and 1902. Nowadays, the Canal du Nivernais is exclusively used for recreational boating.

Notice the lock « **écluse des jeux** » and its **swing bridge**.

