



The urban wine heritage of Capestang Itinerary of discovery

Philippe BARJAUD, 23 October 2022

This animation consists of a walk in the center of the town of Capestang, for about a kilometer, allowing us to discover, from the public road, the urban and architectural characteristics of the various buildings related to the wine activity, built mainly during the 19th century, for work and housing.

This period owes nothing to chance. It is considered to be the second "Golden Age" of Capestang, the first having been in the Middle Ages the 13th and 14th centuries, which saw the city measure in importance with Agde or Pézenas, populated by 4000 inhabitants, enriched by the salt of the lake, olives, cereals and wool. A splendor that collapsed under the blows of the Black Death, the Hundred Years War, and the transformation of the salted lake into an unhealthy swamp, a source of epidemics. To the point that in the middle of the 18th century, Capestang had only 500 souls, and that between its walls, the ruins multiplied, and around the wasteland spread.

But this will change in the 19th century...

Our sources

Books available on our website: <https://www.capestang-plus-de-1000-ans-d-histoire.fr/bibliographie/>

- **Au cœur de Capestang, analyse du bâti et propositions**, Master's thesis of the heritage by Marie-Hélène GROS, 1993, rev. 2021.
- **Inventaire du patrimoine de Capestang**, by Jean-Michel SAUGET and Catherine FERRAS, carried out in 2003 for the DRAC (Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles).

As well as on <https://www.capestang-plus-de-1000-ans-d-histoire.fr/petite-histoire-de-capestang/>:

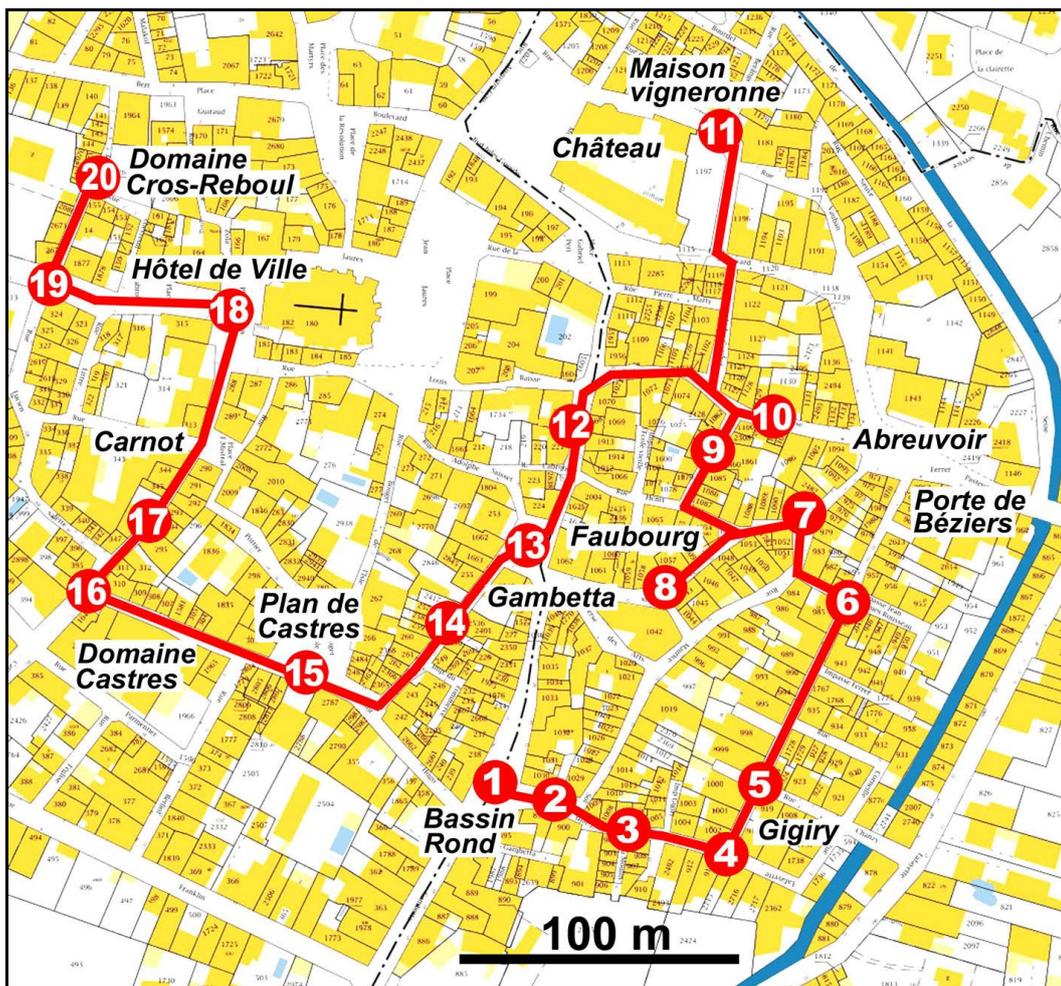
- **Petite histoire de Capestang**, by Patric BÉZIAT, 2022

Other publications:

- **Histoire et inventaire d'un village héraultais**, by Catherine FERRAS and J-Michel SAUGET, carried out in 2011 for the DRAC.

The old photos are taken from the private archives of individuals who have kindly entrusted them to us for reproduction, and whom we thank.

The journey of discovery



The steps of the journey

Step 1 - Bassin rond Square – drinking trough

The starting point is the **Bassin Rond Square**. It is an **ancient drinking trough**, especially for horses which were the only driving force for the work of the land.

An anecdote: It seems that the heavy horses of the CASTRES estate, located a hundred meters away in the rue Victor Hugo, came alone to drink there at the end of the working day, without anyone to drive them and bring them back!



Some history...

The 19th century is a period of great upheaval in Languedoc. Until then, the agricultural activity was the ancient Mediterranean **polyculture**, based on wheat, vines and olive trees, as well as sheep farming. This system will be swept away in three stages, by the **triumph** of an increasingly imperialist and remunerative **vineyard**. Capestang is an **exemplary** place, which has always been able to make the most of events and crises.

1. In the first half of the century, viticulture was mainly used to **produce alcohol**, called "three-six", easier to transport than wine, handicapped by volume and conservation problems. This is called "boiler wine".

The "three-six": Spirit made in Normandy, meaning "three measures of alcohol and three measures of water". In Languedoc, the "three-six" was 92 to 95 degrees, and the spirit 65 to 70 degrees. As the alcoholometers did not yet exist, to check the strength of the alcohol, the buyer made the mixture 3/6. The degree of the mixture was then more than 45 ° and it had to ignite, which was not the case for the spirit, which then only titrated 32 to 35 °. Since 1804, the town has had its stills, and the prominent citizens are distillers (CASTRES, SOULÈZE, PEYRE, MIRABEL...). Navigation on the canal was then at its peak and the port of Capestang was redeveloped.

2. In 1857, the train arrived at Nissan station, not far from Capestang, which allowed the **conquest of the national market** by local wines. Fortunately, from the 1860s, the production of alcohol is increasingly neglected, supplanted by beet from northern France. The restoration work of the collegiate church (repair of the roofs, repair of the bell tower, redesign of bells and especially the beautiful stained-glass windows of the choir), financed by the large owners, testify to the **prosperity** of the city.

3. Here, the **phylloxera** crisis was not a disaster, quite the contrary! Appearing in the Rhone Valley in 1863, the disease only slowly spread from east to west, arriving here only around 1880. All the while, **profit** has been taken of the very high prices, due to the shortage. **Plantings** have been multiplied in the flood zones of the pond to obtain very high yields while asphyxiating the destructive aphid. The renewal of the vineyard by vines grafted on American plants and resistant to the scourge has therefore required **less financial sacrifice** here than elsewhere. The owners of the large estates found the opportunity to consolidate their positions and build their "pinardier" castles.

From 1850, almost the entire population cultivated the vine - small and large owners - and estate workers or day labourers. The historian Leroy-Ladurie says it well: "**This is the moment when farmers stop being peasants, living from polyculture, to become winegrowers who buy their food and work for the market**". Almost all the buildings related to viticulture date from this period. We will discover them together...

Step 2 – 4, Gigiry Street – Winegrower's house, typical house

The visit does not continue with the most beautiful of the buildings of the city. Very degraded and in a state of abandonment, it is still remarkable, and finally quite characteristic of the theme that will be looked at.

Let's look at the very special "genoise", identical from one end of the façade to the other. This is indeed a single set, composed under the same roof of two very different parts. This building has a name, the **winegrower's house** ("maison vigneronne"), typical of the Languedoc wine region. And this model stands out in the category "**block house on land**" ("maison bloc à terre").



4, Gigiry Street (K900)
8 Gigiry Street /house / Charles MAURIOL

On the left, the professional part, the **agricultural premises**, or **store**. This one is not very beautiful; we will see a more interesting one right after.

Let's just note that the portal uses two techniques, the traditional **straight feet** in cut stone (coarse shell limestone, called "Poilhes stone"), and the industrial **lintel** (IPN iron beam).

On the right, the habitable part, which is a **typical house** ("maison-type"), a model direct descendant to the medieval house. This one is very damaged by time, but worth stopping to see.

Explanation on the location of buildings:

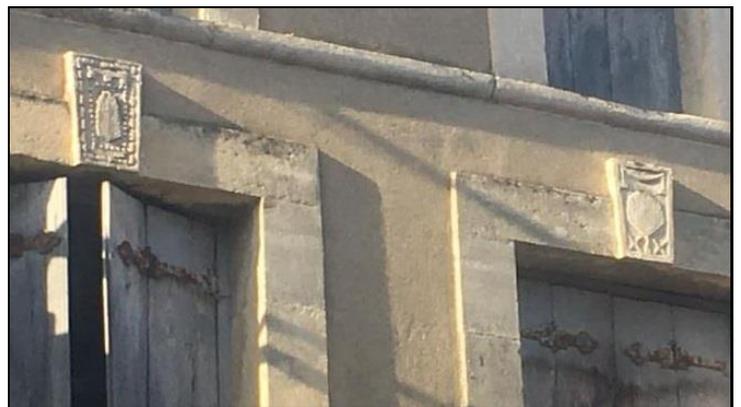
4, Gigiry Street (K900)	Current address (cadastral designation)
8 Gigiry Street /house / Charles MAURIOL	Address in 1855 / nature / owner

The typical house ("maison-type") of the 19th century is a high house ("maison en hauteur"), due to the lack of space inside the ramparts. It has three **levels** and two **bays** (« travées ») on the ground floor. Built in depth, it usually has only an openwork façade on the street, narrow and high.

On the ground floor, the **door** is set to one side. The **windows** on the ground floor and first floor are rectangular, and taller than they are wide. On the other hand, the windows on the second floor are small and square in shape. These are those of the **attic**, an attic in addition ("comble à surcroît»), where the foodstuffs to be preserved are stored. These windows are therefore used for the ventilation of the room.

The **walls** are made of rubble, covered with a smooth coating. Normally, **decorative elements** are rare, mainly consisting of horizontal (between the levels) and vertical (on the sides) bands, and of the génoise, usually two rows of roof tiles "canal".

Here we observe notable peculiarities: the **fascia** above the ground floor, which becomes a very pronounced cornice above the door, like a kind of cap. The **frame** of the door is very ornate. The carved **lintel keys**, evoking the pilgrimage routes: the palm on the left, for that of Jerusalem, and the scallop shell on the right, for that of Compostela.



Finally, the génoise is composed not of tiles as tradition dictates, but here **brick beds**, as well as mutules and denticles, decorative elements directly copied from the decorations of Greek and Roman temples.

Step 3 – (15) Gigiry Street – Agricultural premises

Here we are in front of an **agricultural premises** (« **local agricole** »), a little better preserved than the previous one, despite a recent attempt – aborted – to probably create a concrete gate.

It has **two levels**, unlike the houses, which have three levels. The main access to the ground floor is the **portal** (“**portail**”) or carriage door, rectangular or square in shape. In general, this is the only opening. It often includes a gate (or wicket) for the simple passage of a person.

The **lintel** here is a low arch, but it can be straight. Sometimes the stone is replaced by a metal beam, as seen at the beginning.

The frame of the gate, **protruding** from the wall, is often decorated as here with a double protruding key. A small opening occupies one side of the façade. Here square in shape, more often rectangular and vertical, it is only used for the ventilation of the room.

The hayloft window (“**fenêtre pailhère**”) on the first floor, generally the only one and superimposed on the gate, serves the hayloft. It is square in shape and of significant size. Its frame is protruding. It is surmounted by an **iron rod**, support for the pulley used to hoist both the fodder of the horse, and the grape « *comportes* », emptied in the crusher and then in the vats.

The walls are made of **rubble** mounted with lime mortar and coated or simply joined. Sometimes a **date** is painted on the fascia under the génoise of one or two rows of tiles.



(15) Gigiry Street (K1004)
19-21 Gigiry Street, built after 1855,
on gardens of GARENQ & PEYRE

Step 4 – Crossroads of Gigiry & Ferrer Streets Subdivision of Gigiry, estates and agricultural houses

We now approach a real private subdivision of the 19th century, the district of Gigiry. On the plan opposite, it is surrounded by a yellow line.

With the rise of viticulture, it is a period of intense urbanisation. Between 1851 and 1866, Capestang was a permanent construction site. In fifteen years, 150 houses (20% of the total) will be built, and with renovations, it is 40% of the real estate stock that is concerned.

During the golden age of Biterrois and Minervois, the income from the vineyard was immediately reinvested in the construction of better adapted premises and "luxury" houses.



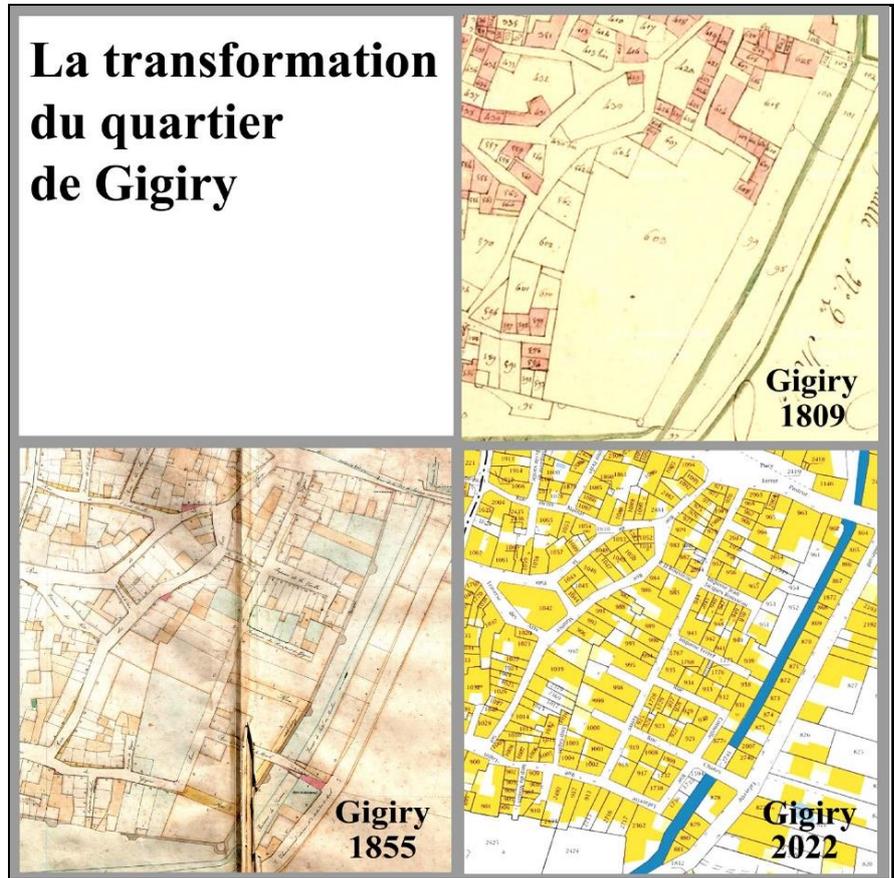
On the Napoleonic cadastre of 1809, plot K603 is a large, fenced field, part of which belongs to Baptiste HUGONÉ, a mason.

He built two houses without municipal authorisation,

"under the pretext that the land was fenced and that he was the master of building and leaving there the streets they deemed fit."

From 1860, the district was covered with dwelling houses and wine premises, testifying to the enrichment and the growth of the population, due in particular to a strong migratory contribution.

La transformation du quartier de Gigiry



In 1902, the subdivision was completed, but with narrow streets and no free space, due to the absence of a master plan of development.

Now let's look at the constructions on the south side of Gigiry and Lafayette streets.



16-18 Gigiry Street, 2 Lafayette Street (K912, 913, 2715-16-17)

24-26 Gigiry Street, 2 of Mazagran Street / gardens & land / PETIT heir, PEYRE, HUGONÉ father

Over more than thirty meters, we observe a real **wine estate**, in one piece, visible to the treatment of the facades in false beds of stones. Juxtaposed along the street, one can recognize typical houses, winegrowers' houses and agricultural premises. The three carriage doors provide access to the courtyards at the back, where the cellars and stables must be located.

A little further, Lafayette Street, we discover another kind of winegrower's house, associating an agricultural premises and this time not a typical house, but a **bourgeois house** («**maison bourgeoise** »).

It is a variant of the typical house, always on three levels, but with **three bays**, and sometimes more, up to seven. This provides a much **larger living area**.

In addition, the horizontal **symmetry** (or vertical axis) transforms the façade into an ordered façade, which is impressive. The shape of the openings is diversifying. Here, the lintels are straight or slightly lowered. We will see later one in a round arch (in a semi-circle).

The **decoration** is very sober, a fascia and a cornice between the ground floor and the first floor, hooves and a molded frame around the door, a génoise in bricks and tiles, the ironwork of the balconies on the first floor, but this will not always be the case.



*4 Lafayette Street (K2362)
2 Mazagran Street / land / HUGONÉ*

Indeed, if the typical house has a primarily utilitarian function, "to lodge", the bourgeois house has another ambition: "to show itself", to display its social status in the eyes of the population.

Who designs and builds these bourgeois houses?

They are almost always **local masons**, like the HUGONÉ, real entrepreneurs. **Architects** are rarely or not at all solicited, because they are too expensive. To the owners, these entrepreneurs offer **catalogs of "turnkey" houses**, thanks to the industrialisation and standardisation of materials and manufactures (cement, metal beams, carpentry, ironwork ...), transported by the railway.



Depending on the taste of the contractor or the owner, the façade is adorned with various **moulding elements** («**modénature**», ornamental elements that characterize the architectural style and highlight the house), even very mixed, we then speak of **eclecticism**. The houses of Capestang thus become a real open-air museum, allowing you to read the architectural vocabulary of Egyptian, Greek or Roman temples, without having to undertake long journeys!

At the beginning of street Ferrer, we discover yet another form of winegrower's house.

This house is called "**high block house**" (« **maison bloc en hauteur**»). It is the fusion, under the same roof, of a typical house and agricultural premises. The number of levels remains equal to three, only the number of bays varies, two or three.

The layout of the rooms disorganises the façade, which **loses its symmetry**, because all the professional functions are integrated into the interior of the house, resulting in a new organisation of the space.

The proportions and shapes of the openings of the habitable part are identical to that of the typical house. Simply, there are hayloft windows on the first and second floors.

*34, Ferrer Street (K1001)
21, Gigiri Street / garden / PEYRE*



On the social level, the agricultural house must belong to a **fairly large farmer**, who has the means to build a house specially adapted to his needs, but for lack of available land, not enough to distance him from the closeness of the premises. He therefore belongs to an intermediate class, between the small owner or day labourer who occupies the typical house, and then the large owner, who occupies the bourgeois house, detached from the agricultural part.

Step 5 – 26 to 32, Ferrer Street – Subdivision of Gigiri (following)

The map below illustrates **two modes** of rationalisation of the occupation of space, and social segregation.

On the left, four private winegrowers' houses are grouped two by two, around two short cul-de-sacs. This rational organisation is absolutely identical to that of a subdivision today. This side of Ferrer Street, formerly Gigiri, is occupied by relatively rich owners.

On the other hand, on the other side of the street, the block is shaped much tighter. It hosts a much more modest housing. Undoubtedly these are the farmworkers houses, who worked for the owners, across the street.



Looking back at the layout of these winegrowers' houses, we observe that they open onto **two perpendicular façades**.

Therefore, the main façade on the eaves wall, clearly visible from the street, has the characteristics of the **bourgeois house**. On the other hand, the gable wall is dedicated to utilitarian openings, recreating there a typical façade of agricultural premises, with portal, hayloft windows, ventilation opening ..., mixed with windows of the habitable part.



Step 6 – 16 & 18 Ferrer Street –Bourgeois houses

Going up Ferrer Street, here are two even more interesting bourgeois houses.

One sports a superb lion above the front door, a symbol of power... Also, two moustached and goateed faces, on the two consoles of the balcony. Would they be caricatures of Emperor Napoleon III?

The other façade includes in the middle of the first floor a semicircular French window, reinforcing the monumental aspect of the house. The ironwork is also of good quality. It seems that on the ground floor, the windows have been brutally transformed...



Left:
18, Ferrer Street
(K986)
33, Gigiri Street
/ courtyard &
building
/ **BOUCAJAY**

Right:
16, Ferrer Street
(K985)
31, Gigiri Street
/ garden /
Hippolyte GUIONET

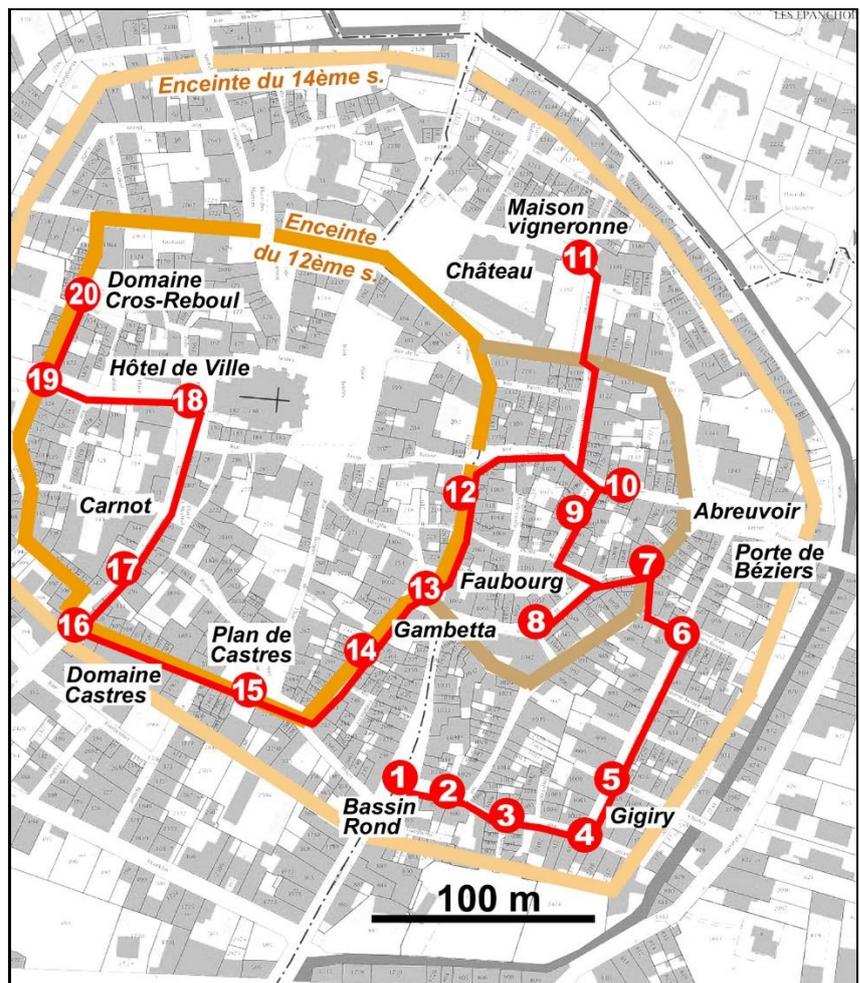


Step 7 – Crossroads of Paix et Maurice Sol Streets Bourgeois house, agricultural premises

We now leave the "subdivision" of Gigiri, to enter the **old medieval suburb**. One can easily see the change in the layout of the streets, which become very tortuous.

At the beginning of the extension of the town, this suburb had developed outside the 12th century rampart, near the Gate of Béziers or "Portail Saint-Martin".

After the formidable medieval urban development, it will be included in the great rampart of the 14th century.



At the intersection of the Maurice Sol and Paix Streets, the façade of this magnificent bourgeois house shows a Spartan sobriety! The important point here is not the decoration, but the material: it is entirely made of cut stone, even the cornice taking the place of the génoise.

The budget must have been substantial, this home belonged to an important owner!

*1, Maurice Sol Street (K879)
1, Arts Street / courtyard /
BESSIÈRE*



On the other hand, almost opposite, an agricultural premises does not look like much. Let's get closer... On the door, an embossed metal plate bears the label (a cockerel triumphing over a vine shoot with a bunch of grapes) and the name of the **General Confederation of Winegrowers**.



(6-8) Paix Street (K2482)
29, Paix street
/ courtyard / BONNET

Some history...

The « Confédération Générale des Vignerons » is the **first major French wine union**. It was created in Narbonne on September 22, 1907, to replace the « Comité de Défense Viticole » which had led the revolt of Languedoc winegrowers against the crisis of overproduction since 1904.

Its goal was to achieve a **sacred union between small and large wine producers**. Its missions were to organise propaganda and defence of wine, to fight against fraud, including sugaring and "fake wines", to be the spokesperson of the unions to the public authorities, to ensure legislative and economic measures affecting viticulture, and to inform producers and traders about the state of the harvests and the economic situation of the market.

This creation is part of the **birth of the cooperative tradition** of southern viticulture. Each member of the union has a number of votes proportional to the area of vineyard he owns. Its first president was Dr. Ernest Ferroul, Mayor of Narbonne



Step 8 – Crossroads of the Paix Street and the Métiers Shortcut Bourgeois house

A small detour to the Métiers Shortcut lets us discover two **curiosities**:

- the front door of 23 Paix Street, hollowed out in the corner of the house, for some reason...
- two niches housing protective statuettes of the Virgin Mary.

23, Paix Street (K1043)

6, Paix Street / house

/ Léonard TARBOURIECH

25, Paix Street (K1042)

4, Paix Street / house

/ Alexandre MIRABEL



Step 9 – 8, Casimir Péret Street – Bourgeois house



8, Casimir Péret Street (K1861)

12, Boulangerie Street / house / CHAMBERT father

The façade of this bourgeois house has a **beautiful decoration**: remarkable balcony, engraved lintel, entablature of classical Greek inspiration (cornice, modillions, mutules, denticles ...).

We are probably in front of the work of an architect...

Although unsigned, it is rumoured that the head carved on the lintel key would be attributed to the famous sculptor Jean-Antoine INJALBERT, author among others of the Fountain of the Titan, on the plateau of the Poets in Béziers.



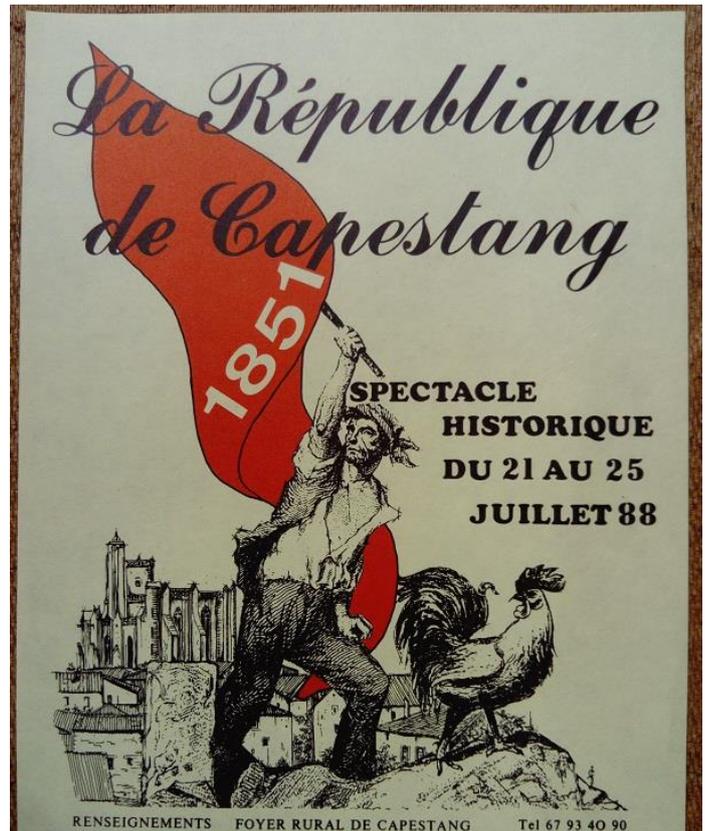
Some history...

In 1851, Casimir PÉRET was the mayor of Béziers. On December 2 of that year, the President of the Republic Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, prevented from coming up for re-election the following year, formed a constitutional coup.

In Languedoc, republican secret societies rose up, especially in Bédarieux, Pézenas and Capestang, where the insurgents gained control of the city for a whole week.

Finally, repression fell on them, and with hundreds of others, Casimir PÉRET was deported to the prison of Guyana, to Devil's Island.

He perished there, drowned while trying to escape together with Jean PECH, the most famous figure of the Capestanese insurrection, which left a lasting mark on the collective memory.

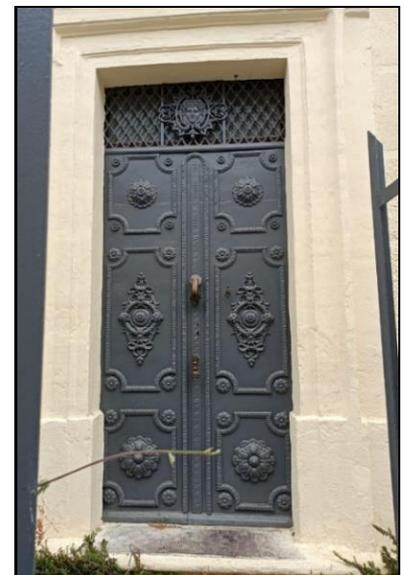


Step 10 – 37, Louis Baisse Street – Bourgeois house

This bourgeois house is also a winegrower's one, because it has four bays, including the one on the left with a gate, to directly access the courtyard and the agricultural premises at the back of the building.

The door, entirely made of metal, is characteristic of the region.

37, Louis Baisse Street (K1130)
23 à 27, Abreuvoir Street /
houses / VIGOUROUX &
ROUMIGUIER, VIDAL



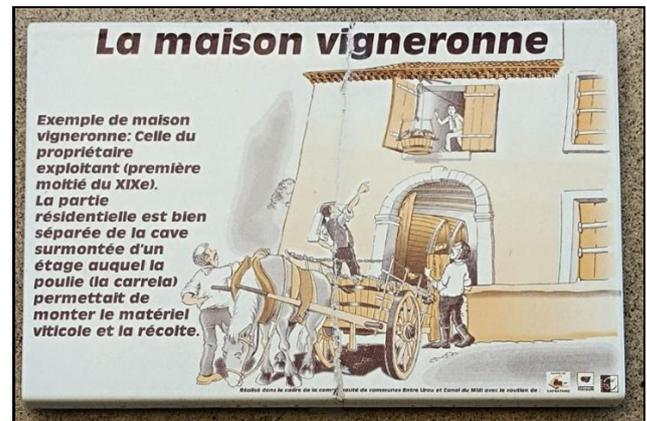
And now, we will make an "excursion" beyond the Boulevard Pasteur, to discover "the" emblematic winegrower's house of Capestang...

Step 11 – 13, Château Street – Winegrower's house

The interest of this winegrower's house is that it has not undergone any transformation that could have distorted it.

Of the "block house on land" type, the parts devoted to housing and work are well separated, under two different roofs.

The date shown (1923) must be that of a renovation of the façade, because the building is certainly much earlier, probably from the first half of the 19th century, when the Valaurié district around the castle was built.



13, Château Street

13, Fossés du Château Street

House and rural building / SAINT-MARTIN

Step 12 – Gambetta Street – Bourgeois & winegrower's houses

We now follow the limit between the suburb and the 12th century enclosure, which corresponds to the current Gambetta Street.

Two even more important bourgeois houses have an attic roof covered with **slate**, this one and the Lignon house in front of the Town Hall.

This seven-bay façade is entirely made of cut stone. The decoration is very sober: fascias, diamond-tipped keys, monogram of the owner on the lintel key.

8, Gambetta Street

8 & 10, Porte Neuve Street / 18,

Four Street / oven & house / Joseph

CABROL / 12, Porte Neuve Street /

house / Jean-Baptiste PETIT



Next, another beautiful winegrower's house, with interesting ironwork on the first floor. Also noteworthy is the framing of the portal.

We can ask ourselves the question of the connection between the hayloft, on the second floor, and the winery on the ground floor, with the first habitable floor between them?

14, Gambetta Street
14, Porte Neuve Street
house / FOURESTIER



Step 13 –Gambetta Square – Bourgeois houses

Gambetta Square was once called « Shield Square” ("Place de l'Écu"), and today it is a place where money is handled (in the Crédit Agricole, and “écu” was a medieval money!)... The name “shield” comes probably from the shape of the square.

The bourgeois houses, facing each other, give a really urban character to the square.

Left: remarkable ironwork, carved lintel keys...

Right: lintels of the floors surmounted by arches... Four spans (break in symmetry), due to the shape of the plot?



Place Gambetta (K224)
2 & 4, place de l'Écu
maisons / ABBAL & POURSINES



Place Gambetta (K2535)
10, place de l'Écu
maison / André PLANÈS

On one side of the square, a professional building, but not a winegrower's cellar. The wooden panel reads:

ENTREPÔT DE CHARBONS
 CHARLES AMIEL
 BOIS DE CHAUFFAGE, POMMES DE TERRE
 (COAL WAREHOUSE, FIREWOOD, POTATOES)

Note the frame of the gate, bevelled to facilitate the passage of carts.



8, Écu Square / rural building / SAÏSSET

Step 14 – 16 to 20 Ignace Malet Street – Worker’s houses

The workers' house (“**maison ouvrière**”) is a simplified, impoverished variant of the typical house.

Here we find the presence of two bays on the ground floor, but the first floor has only one opening. We therefore have a significant reduction in living space.

The protrusion of the frames and the lintel keys disappear. There is no longer any decorative element, apart from the colours of the coating. Sometimes the génoise is reduced to a single rank.

This architectural poverty is also financial. It is that of the lowest classes of society, the agricultural workers.

10 to 14, Ignace Malet Street (K257 à 259)
10 to 14, Marchands Street / houses
/ Simon PRADEL, Antoine GRAN, OURADOU



The contrast is striking, with the monumental entrance to the opulent estate, seen higher on the street, with its pillars surmounted by conquering lions...

6, Ignace Malet Street (K2846)
6, Marchands Street
Shed / Aristide AZAM



Step 15 – Rouget de L’Isle Square – « Castres » winegrowing estate

This square, called in 1855 “Elm Square” (“Place de l’Ormeau”), is also commonly referred to as the “Castres Square” (“**Plan de Castres**”).

The name has nothing to do with the city of Tarn, but with that of the CASTRES family, owner of the important estate that faces the square.

This set included the owner’s mansion, that of the manager, the workers' houses, the stables, the wine cellars, a distillery...





16 to 26, Victor Hugo Street

16 à 26, Ormeau Street / 16 : François TOUDON, 18 : Antoine DURAND, 20 & 22 : CASTRES, 24 : Jean TOURDES son, 26 : Pierre PAGÈS

Step 16 – Crossroads of Hugo & Carnot Street – Winegrowing estate

The CASTRES winery occupies the next block. Its imposing character reflects the wealth of the family. Note that the pediment of the monumental portal bears the date of 1907, that of the wine revolt of Languedoc ...



*2 to 8, Ormeau Street
/ houses, olive oil mill, shed, courtyard / CASTRES*

Step 17 – Carnot Street – Wine premises

This cellar has a strangely curved façade. In fact, the Carnot Street, formerly “rue de la Porte de Carcassonne”, is a very old medieval road, so not very straight. The cellar is one of the oldest, given the date of 1803 engraved on the lintel key.



between 13 and 15, Carnot Street (K295)

15, Portal of Carcassonne Street / rural building / SOULÈZE



Note, the embossed metal plate, nailed to the hayloft door. This is the logo of the **Sun Insurance Company**.



Some history...

Commonly known as "**Soleil-Incendie**", it was founded in Paris by the royal ordinance of 13 December 1829.

At the same time, "sister" companies manage other areas of insurance (life, capitalisation, etc.). All of them finally merge into the Soleil-Aigle group. Nationalised in 1946, this group was the subject of a new wave of mergers and takeovers leading to the formation of the National Insurance Group – GAN.

According to its statutes, Soleil-Incendie insures at a fixed premium "against fire and fire from the sky all perishable values, such as: buildings, furniture, goods, forests, livestock, crops, wood, etc.", then "against lightning and explosions of gas and steam".

Soleil-Incendie also committed itself to helping the authorities to set up in each cantonal capital and important municipality "a fire company, a pump and all the necessary emergency services".

Step 18 – 1, Danton Cabrol Square – Bourgeois house « Lignon »

Opposite the Town Hall, a mansion looks great. It is the "**Maison Lignon**", built in 1888 in the place of a 15th century mansion, already remodelled in the 18th and demolished in the 19th, and of which there remains today only a carved coat of arms embedded in the eastern façade, as well as a drawing from 1827, which the artist Jean-Marie Amelin published in the "*Guide du voyageur dans le département de l'Hérault*".

This "**château pinardier**", in a village version, testifies to the Golden Age of mass viticulture. However, it is not the work of an architect, but of an entrepreneur. At the beginning of April 1888, the owner, Numa LIGNON, signed a contract with Louis and Auguste BERGON, father and son, entrepreneurs in Capestang. It stipulates that the work, begun on April 6, 1888, must be completed on January 1, 1889, a strict deadline for the handing over of the keys to Mr. LIGNON. This incredibly short time was not uncommon in Languedoc at that time. It was held, as evidenced by the date of 1888 inscribed on the façade.



1, Danton Cabrol Square (K315)
3, Hôtel de Ville Square / house
Louis FERRAN

The decoration sums up the power of the wine economy of the time: the NL monogram, for Numa LIGNON, the bunches of vines on the lintel keys, the lions on the consoles of the balcony, the stone balustrade, as in the castles...



Curiously, the modesty of the main door breaks the symmetry of the façade...



Step 19 – République Street– Agricultural premises

These agricultural premises are one of the oldest identified in the city, given the date of 1841 painted on the banner under the génoise.

It could even be older, as the hayloft window is topped by a segmental (or low) rounded arch characteristic of the 18th century.

République Street & Lucien Salette Street
4, Porte Roi Street & 11, Roque Street
rural building & courtyard / FOURNÈS



Another interesting element is the plaque nailed to the shutter, bearing the logo and the name of L'ABEILLE.

Some history...

*In the spring of 1856, the municipal authorities of Dijon proposed to the local prominent citizens to found the **Abeille Bourguignonne**, an agricultural insurance company against hail.*



It is such a success, that in 1858, the company, which created agencies throughout the country, took over "Bourguignonne", it became "the Bee insurances". In 1859, it even extended in Italy to Florence, in 1860 in Belgium and then in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands. In 1926, the Bee became global: Bulgaria, China, Guyana, Canada, Madagascar, Greece, Egypt, England, United States, Indochina, Syria.

*In 2021, after several acquisitions and mergers, it was bought by **MACIF**.*

Step 20 – Lucien Salette Street – Winegrower’s estate

The last step introduces us to the interior of the CROS REBOUL winery, the last functional one still existing within the walls of Capestang.



*Lucien Salette Street (K1963, 1964)
1 & 3, Roque Street
Rural building, courtyard & house / HUC*



Old photographs

An exhibition of old photos illustrates the wine-growing activity in the village at the beginning of the 20th century. We also have the current views, in order to measure developments in just over a century.



**Avenue du Canal,
les grandes maisons
bourgeoises toisent
les petites maisons
vignerones...**



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



**Chez Izard,
la batteuse en
action, pour
le grain qui
nourrira les
chevaux...**



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



Après l'effort,
le réconfort...
La terrasse
est le lieu de
rendez-vous
social idéal...



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



Sur le chemin
des vendanges,
au carrefour
des Auberges...



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



Combien de bras,
combien de sueur,
mais aussi
combien de rires...,
à la place d'une ma-
chine à vendanger ?



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



Le chemin de fer
a été le "moteur"
de "l'explosion"
du vignoble
languedocien



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



Les trois pouvoirs,
municipal,
économique
et ecclésiastique,
se font face.



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



Le port
du vin
fait désormais
du
tourisme



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



D'autres
véhicules,
aujourd'hui,
sur la place
de l'abreuvoir...



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



Il y avait des
arbres sur la
place, autour
du bassin rond...



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



Scènes de rue...

Un pressoir
ambulant, au pied d'une tour du
château, et Monsieur Gourc, bourrelier
de son état, fier de son ouvrage...



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"



Pas besoin de commentaire...



Association "Capestang, plus de 1000 ans d'Histoire"