

The stained-glass windows of the Saint-Sévère church in Bourron-Marlotte

The supplement to the very first Bulletin des Amis de Bourron-Marlotte, in 1977, offered a transcription of the notes that Father Alexandre Pougeois¹ left us in 1872 on the history of the town and parish. However, some imperfections in this transcription have obscured information relating to the stained-glass windows of our church. We will endeavor to provide a more complete history in the Bulletin des Amis de Bourron-Marlotte No. 67, which will be published soon. This short note offers a first glimpse.

Two major events provide the relevant context for the stained-glass windows currently visible in the church:

- Major alterations to the building, carried out between 1858 and 1860 (see illustration below). This involved the modification of the original stained-glass windows and the addition of new ones.



Plan of the church of Bourron before 1858 (left) and after this date (right) - After Alexandre Pougeois, 1872 - Drawings by Narcisse Pelletier, 1864

- The bombing of this part of the commune in July and August 1944, targeting the Bourron refinery and the fuel depot. The associated explosions led to the breakage of several of the church's stained-glass windows.

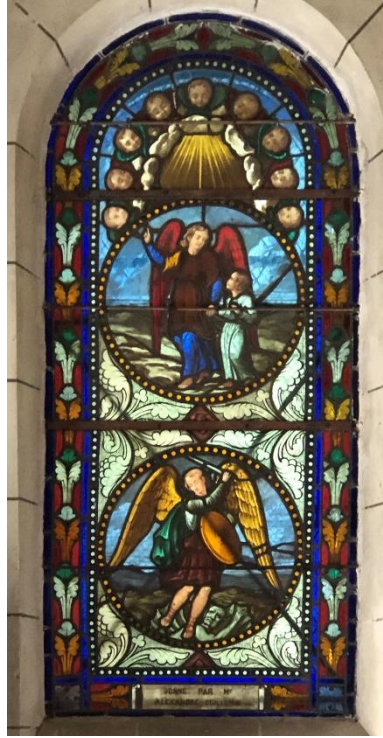
Stained-glass windows from the 1860s

To date, we count twenty-seven of the fifteen stained glass windows whose installation Abbot Pougeois mentions between 1864 and 1866. Many of these windows were donations from a single family, that of lawyers and writers Alexandre Guillemin and Pierre Lachèze, whose piety and numerous acts of charity have been documented elsewhere². It was this family that took the responsibility, among other things, for the

building of a chapel in Marlotte and for the paving of the *Chemin des Trembleaux*. Thirteen stained glass windows in this characteristic 1860s style remain visible, although we have not been able to establish a perfect match with those described in Pougeois's report. We will only provide two examples of these windows here, to visualize their characteristic style.



Visit of the Virgin to St. Elizabeth (installed in 1864)

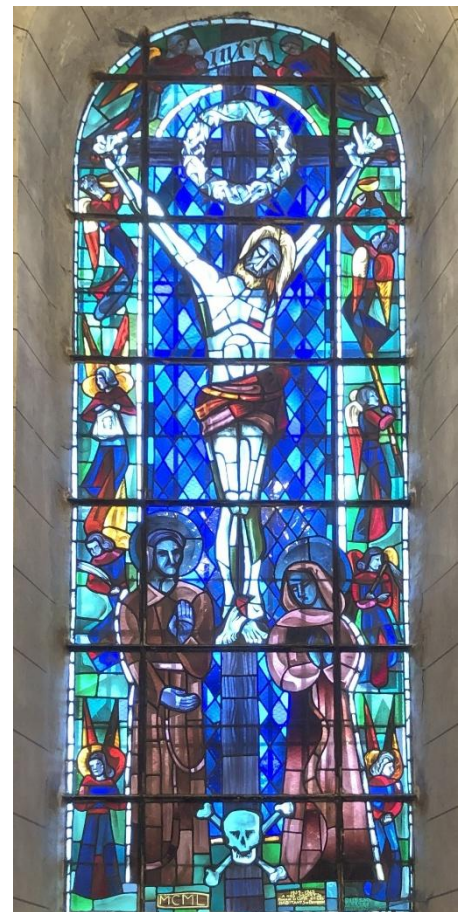


St. Michael slaying the dragon and the Guardian Angel (installed in 1865)

Abbot Pougeois tells us the names of the glass painters who created these stained-glass windows: Napoléon Cornuel (1817-1868) and Auguste-Aimé Bruin (1850-1926), about whom we were able to obtain some information, thanks to the Cité du Vitrail in Troyes, which will be detailed in the full article.

Stained-glass windows from the 1950s

The 1944 bombings damaged several of the church's stained-glass windows, leading to the decision to install three large stained-glass windows in the apse. These pay tribute to the victims of the August 1944 bombing of Bourron-Marlotte and depict the Nativity, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection of Christ. They were created by master glassmakers Pierre Villette and Dominique Monsaingeon, partners in the workshop bearing their names in the 1950s. The stained-glass window shown to the right is an example of their production and is dedicated to the town's war dead.



Crucifixion (posé en 1952)

1 – Alexandre Pougeois (1819-1897) was the parish priest of Bourron from 1848 to 1872.

2 – *Vauquer, Guillemain, Lachêze : trois générations remarquables du 19^e siècle à Marlotte* by D. Ricoult – Bulletin des Amis de Bourron-Marlotte n°65, 2023.