BULLETIN OF THE
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
JUNE, 1940
VOLUME XXXV, NUMBER 6
COPYRIGHT, 1940, BY
THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

Published monthly under the direction of the
Secretary of The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
Fifth Avenue and Eighty-second Street, New
York, N. Y.; Winifred E. Howe, Editor.

Sent to all Members of the Museum without
charge; to others upon receipt of the subscription
price, two dollars a year, single copies twenty
cents. Copies are for sale and subscriptions are
taken at the Information Desk. Mail orders should
be addressed to the Secretary of the Museum.

Entered as Second Class Matter June 3, 1927,
at the Post Office, New York, N. Y., under Act
of August 24, 1912.

CONTENTS

Cover Illustration: Doorway from
Moutiers-Saint-Jean at The Clois-
ters, Completed with Statues of
Kings Clovis and Clothar. French
(Burgundian), XIII Century . . . 121
A Lending Collection of Modern
American Paintings . . . . . . . 122
XIII Century Statues of Kings Clovis
and Clothar at The Cloisters . . . 122
Renaissance Bronzes: a New Installa-
tion and Recent Acquisitions . . 126
European Metalwork of the Renais-
sance and Later Periods . . . . . 129
A Gift of American Silver . . . . 131
Contemporary American Industrial
Art at the Museum . . . . . . . 132
Notes . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 134
Membership—Contemporary
American Paintings—the Seventeenth Lazarus
Scholar—Two American Paintings—List
of Accessions and Loans
Exhibitions . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 135

At the March meeting of the Executive
Committee a resolution was adopted under
which, with a very few exceptions due
mainly to technical restrictions, the Mu-
seum’s rapidly growing collection of Ameri-
can pictures painted in oil since 1900 is to
be placed on the lending list of the Exten-
sion Division of its Library, and such
pictures acquired in future are to be added
automatically to that list one year after
acquisition. This means that as soon as
suitable arrangements can be perfected
practically all the Museum’s modern Ameri-
can oil paintings not needed for immediate
use in its own galleries will be available for
loan to other museums and to colleges,
schools, libraries, and similar institutions.
Applications will be received after Septem-
ber first.

There is being prepared for early dis-
tribution a printed list of the paintings in the
Extension Division and a statement of the
rules and regulations under which they are
to be issued to borrowers. There are up-
wards of five hundred paintings on this list,
about half by modern American artists and
the rest by painters of the older European
and American schools. If we are correctly
informed, there is at the present time no
other collection of paintings in the country
available for loan that is comparable in size
and importance to the group thus listed, and
none that contains such a broadly repre-
sentative selection of contemporary work.

XIII CENTURY STATUES OF
KINGS CLOVIS AND CLOTHar
AT THE CLOISTERS

One of the most highly prized elements of
mediaeval architecture in America is the
monumental thirteenth-century Gothic
doorway from the celebrated abbey of
Moutiers-Saint-Jean in Burgundy.¹ In the
niches at either side of the entrance there
were originally two life-size limestone figures
of the Merovingian kings, Clovis and
Clothar, who founded the monastery. These

¹ Acc. no. 32.147. H. 15 ft. 5 in. J. J. Rorimer,
6-8, and The Cloisters: the Building and the
Collection of Mediaeval Art (New York, 1939),
pp. 11–14.
DOORWAY FROM MOUTIERS-SAINT-JEAN AT THE CLOISTERS COMPLETED WITH STATUES OF KINGS CLOVIS AND CLOTHAR FRENCH (BURGUNDIAN), XIII CENTURY
statues have probably not been in the niches of the doorway since the French Revolution, or perhaps even since 1567, when a group of Huguenots entered the monastery by a ruse and "broke the statues of the Saints and those of the Founder Princes, Clovis and Museum had the good fortune to obtain these handsome statues for The Cloisters through the generosity of Mr. Rockefeller. The story of these statues unfolds like a detective thriller. On November 17, 1897, at a meeting of the Commission of Antiq-

DETAIL OF STATUE OF CLOTHAR

Clotaire." Since the end of the nineteenth century it had been thought that the statues were no longer in existence, and that was our supposition when the doorway was acquired in 1932 with funds provided by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Recently, however, the

2 Dom Plancher and followers, Histoire générale et particulière de Bourgogne (Dijon, 1781), vol. iv, p. 569. The monastery was sacked in 1567, 1584, 1595, and 1629, and during the French Revolution it was almost entirely destroyed.

3 Acc. nos. 40.51.1, 2.

4 Mémoires de la Commission des antiquités du département de la Côte d'Or (Compte des travaux), vol. xiii (1895-1900), pp. cv, cxvi-cxviii.
were sold with his collection. Since then the statues have at various times been shown to collectors and others as rarissimi of the thirteenth century, but it still was not known that they came from the doorway at Moutiers-Saint-Jean. Recently A. Vittenet, in his monograph L'Abbaye de Moutier-Saint-Jean (1938), reconsidered the relation of the figures to the doorway and suggested that if Chabeuf had had all the evidence in hand he might have come to a different decision. The present writer appears to have been the first to establish their connection. The statues are unusually well preserved, even though during the current century they were restored and the heads reversed merely to satisfy an idle whim. Using the photographs published in 1900, and following the old breaks, we have replaced the heads as they were originally. We have also removed other restorations which had from time to time been stupidly added.

Now that the statues of Clovis and Clothar are in place in the niches, it is apparent that they were made for them. The style of the sculpture and the quality and color of the stone, as well as the actual measurements, accord with those of their setting. Like most mediaeval statues, the figures were originally enriched with polychromy; and old red paint on the mantle of Clovis is like that found elsewhere on the doorway. A square iron pintle set in the stone of the left-hand niche corresponds, in both size and location, with parts of an iron fastening in the back of the statue of King Clovis and proves conclusively the relation of this figure to the niche.

According to tradition Clovis, in the first year of his conversion to Christianity, probably 496, granted the monastery of Moutiers-Saint-Jean a charter of immunity, exempting it in perpetuity from all royal and ecclesiastical jurisdiction; in addition, he gave to the monastery as much land as

5 Sale Catalogue (Galerie Manzi, Joyant & Cie; Paris, 1919), nos. 100 and 101 (illustrated).
6 Old but not original crowns, which were still in existence a few years ago, were apparently discarded and modern crowns substituted. Parts of the necks and sections around the eyes, which were damaged by previous restorers, have now been repaired.
could be encircled by a man riding on an ass in a single day. This donation was later confirmed by his son, King Clothar. As a matter of fact, there are still in existence in the library of Semur-en-Auxois what are probably eleventh-century copies of the original foundation charters. The monastery, however, appears to have existed before the foundation of Clovis and is generally believed to have been the earliest in Burgundy.

The monastery records reveal neither the gift of our doorway nor anything about its actual construction, but they show that the period of most extensive building during Gothic times began about 1257 and continued until about 1285. This period follows the building of the portal of the north transept of the cathedral of Chartres and that of the cathedral of Reims. The so-called cathedral style appears on the doorways of a few of the smaller churches, but we do not know definitely the stylistic connections between these monuments. In fact, so little is known about the sculptors themselves that the relation of mediaeval sculptural styles is usually, at best, a matter of speculation. Figures contemporary with the recently acquired statues are to be found on doorways at Villeneuve-l'Archevêque and Notre-Dame-de-la-Couture at le Mans.

The doorway from Moutiers-Saint-Jean inspired the less accomplished, but until recently more famous, late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century doorway of the near-by church of Saint-Thibault. In the latter, as in our doorway, the scene of the Coronation of the Virgin is represented in the typanum, and various features of our figures of Clovis and Clothar served as models for its statues. Two of these statues have been thought, perhaps not incorrectly, to be contemporary Burgundian dukes, but heretofore their dependence on our figures has not been pointed out.

In costume, pose, and features The Cloisters statue of King Clovis resembles the statue of the Merovingian king Childebert which was made for the abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés in Paris about the middle of the thirteenth century (this statue is now one of the masterpieces of the Louvre) and the similar crowned king at Villeneuve-l'Archevêque. The iconographic type of our statue of King Clovis is the same as that of another thirteenth-century effigy of King Clovis, made for the abbey of Sainte-Geneviève in Paris and now in the church at Saint-Denis. In both sculptures the bearded
king fingers the strap of his mantle, and an almost identical purse hangs from his belt. But the Clovis from Sainte-Geneviève holds a scepter, whereas our Clovis and Clothar both hold scrolls probably denoting the charters they gave to the abbey. The interest in portraying royal personages in the thirteenth century in France is well exemplified by the series of recumbent tomb effigies of kings of France which Saint Louis had placed in the abbey of Saint-Denis in 1263 and 1264. These sculptures, while less handsome, are not unlike our statues, and they were made at about the same time.

In the present installation visitors to The Cloisters will have an opportunity to see, as is rarely possible, a monumental doorway of the Middle Ages reassembled with its component parts. This thirteenth-century doorway, produced for the great abbey of Moutiers-Saint-Jean, is in the best traditions of the Gothic cathedral builders.

JAMES J. RORIMER.

RENAISSANCE BRONZES
A NEW INSTALLATION AND RECENT ACQUISITIONS

For some time now it has been all too apparent that the Museum’s collection of renaissance bronzes has needed more space than that allotted to it in Gallery C 18. Among the sculptures added to the collection in the past few years, and thus contributing to the overcrowding of the gallery, are the life-size statues of Saints Bernardino and Catherine of Siena, probably by Fulvio Signorini, a Sienese master of the late sixteenth century. Readers of the Bulletin may also recall the acquisition at various times of a number of smaller bronzes, such as a Satyr Riding a Goat by Andrea Riccio; a unique Crucifixion group, apparently after a design by Michelangelo; and a Baptism of Christ by Melchiorre Caffà, whose suave style epitomizes the sculpture of baroque Rome. The collection of medals, too, has been increased by several fine examples from the Henry Oppenheimer collection, including an Alfonso of Aragon by Pisanello; and the group of plaques and plaquettes has been strengthened by Danese Cattaneo’s composition, believed to represent the Apotheosis of Sebastiano Venier, the Venetian hero of the battle of Lepanto.

The vacating of a series of rooms on the second floor of Wing K by the Department of Prints has made it possible to exhibit these bronzes in Galleries K 37 and K 38, which not only are more spacious, but have far better light than Gallery C 18. In the rearrangement of the collection, some of the less good examples have been retired from exhibition for the time being. The fifteenth-, sixteenth-, and some of the seventeenth-century bronzes are shown in K 38; one case of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century bronzes has been placed in K 37. The latter gallery, however, is chiefly devoted to nineteenth-century examples, including notable statuettes by Barye and Degas. It is hoped that the new installation, which thus offers a continuous succession of bronzes from the Renaissance to modern times, will give the public a fresh and stimulating approach to the collection.

Several recently acquired statuettes and plaques are being shown for the first time in this new setting. Particularly handsome is a Saint Sebastian (fig. 1) by the sixteenth-century Venetian sculptor Alessandro Vittoria (1525–1608). The signature Alessandro Vittoria of Trent, Trent being the sculptor’s birthplace. The Saint Sebastian is one of the few bronze statuettes to bear Vittoria’s signature and, so far as is known, is the only bronze signed by him in America. Since numerous bronzes have been attributed to this master—some on good authority, some merely optimistically—how fortunate we are to have a signed Vittoria in our collection!

According to his personal accounts (Ricordi), Vittoria paid for the casting of a Saint Sebastian in 1566, and for a second casting in 1575. The sculptor still owned one of these at the time of his death; in his

1 Acc. no. 40.24. Lee Fund, 1940. H. 21 3/4 in. Ex coll.: Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Bayer; Clendenin J. Ryan. The bronze possesses a dark, well-worn, old patina, which in comparatively recent times has been partially glazed over to make less noticeable a few places where the original patina was worn away.