



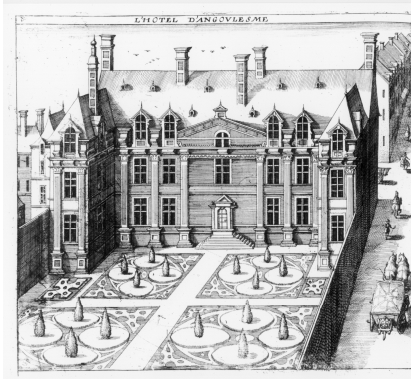
The Hôtel Lamoignon



L'hôtel d'Angoulême : Diane de France

The mansion that now houses the Historical Library of the City of Paris is one of the oldest in the Marais district. The area was developed in the sixteenth century and became a favourite location for aristocratic houses.

Abbé François de Pisseleu began building the mansion in



1559. In 1584 it was bought and later completed by Diane de France (1538-1619), duchesse d'Angoulême, a legitimated daughter of King Henri II.

The original layout and elevations have recently been attributed to the celebrated architect Philibert de L'Orme. The central building and two wings are set between a courtyard and a garden. Attributes of Diana, the goddess of hunting, can be seen on the pediments: the heads of the dog and a deer, a crescent moon, trophies and nymphs.



L'hôtel d'Angoulême : Charles de Valois

Charles de Valois (1573-1650), nephew of Diane de France, inherited the hôtel and the title of duc d'Angoulême. He was himself the legitimated son of Charles IX and Marie Touchet, and although he eventually became a comrade-in-arms of Henri IV, he was twice sent to the Bastille for conspiracy.

Between 1624 and 1640 he enlarged the hôtel with a north wing facing the Rue des Francs-Bourgeois. The purely decorative turret located at the intersection of the Rue Pavée and the Rue des Francs-Bourgeois dates from that period and is now one of the few remaining in the district.



L'hôtel Lamoignon

After the death of Charles d'Angoulême in 1650, Guillaume de Lamoignon, First President of the Parliament of Paris, rented the mansion, where he held a literary salon frequented by Boileau and Madame de Sévigné. In 1688, the hôtel was bought by the family, hence its present name. An archway at the street entrance was added in 1718, and in the lunette there are two children bearing a cartouche with the name Lamoignon. One holds a mirror, symbol of Truth, and the other a snake, symbol of Prudence. The garden facade was modified by the addition of ironwork balconies decorated with the emblem of the Lamoignon family, an ermine tail inscribed in a lozenge.



The Lamoignon family left the hôtel in 1750 and rented it to Antoine Moriau, a member of the City Council, and a great collector. Here he installed his large library dedicated to the history of Paris and bequeathed it to the city. He died in 1759, and in 1763 the library was opened to the public. It was the first public local library. During the Revolution part of the holdings were transferred to the Institut de France.



The Historical Library

The mansion was sold in 1794 and in the nineteenth century it was subdivided into apartments, shops, and workshops. The author Alphonse Daudet lived here from 1867 to 1876.



In 1928, the City of Paris acquired the dilapidated hôtel and planned its restoration. The building was eventually allocated to the Bibliothèque historique, which was then sharing cramped quarters with the neighbouring Musée Carnavalet in the Hôtel Le Peletier de Saint-Fargeau. A modern wing (upstairs from the courtyard) was created

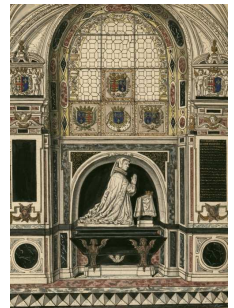


and two underground levels were built to house its collections. The renovated building opened to the public in January 1969.



The effigies of Diane, sculpted by Thomas Boudin in 1623, and Charles d'Angoulême, sculpted by Pierre Biard in 1661, were installed in a modern pavilion (upstairs on the right), which is open each year during the National Heritage Days.

Until the Revolution, they were part of the funeral chapel of the Angoulême family in the now destroyed church of the convent of Minimes, located behind the Place des Vosges.



Visit

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Hours

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10:00 - 18:00

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