



Georges Clemenceau lived in this apartment from 1895 until his death – in this very place – on November 24, 1929. He moved in shortly after the Panama Affair, which led to his name being slandered and him losing his seat in parliament. It was here, working as a journalist, that he followed the Dreyfus Affair and wrote 665 articles (nearly 3300 pages!) in defense of the accused between 1899 and 1903. He continued to live here despite being twice named president of the Constitutional Council, as well as head of the Interior Ministry between October 1906 and July 1909 and head of the armed forces between November 1917 and January 1920. Each time, he refused to live in the official palaces because, he said, “I do not want to live as a temporary tenant.” It was here that he retired and focused on completing his last works, after leaving political life in 1920.

THE CLEMENCEAU MUSEUM



The Apartment

One entire room – the largest, overlooking the garden – was devoted to work. Clemenceau had commissioned a Parisian woodworker to make a large desk in the shape of a horseshoe. Around the room, the books reflect his eclectic reading tastes while other objects reveal his artistic preferences and his friendships, and serve as reminders of his numerous voyages. A small garden satisfied his love of the open air and allowed him to exchange seeds and gardening tips with his great friend, Claude Monet. A large dining room enabled him to receive friends and family passing through.

Knowing Clemenceau’s modest resources, the building’s proprietor refused to raise the rent and instructed his heirs to do the same. But the heirs, unable to get along, put the building up for sale when he died in 1926. Georges Clemenceau thus resigned himself to the idea that he would be forced to move to the little vacation home that he rented in the Vendée, in Saint-Vincent-sur-Jard. This plan worried his friends, not only because of Clemenceau’s advancing age (85 years old), but also because of the isolated location and relative discomfort of the house.

On the day following the auction of the building, Clemenceau received a visit at Franklin Street from the building’s new owner, an American named Bacon. Bacon was the Paris-based advisor of a rich entrepreneur of Canadian descent, James Stuart Douglas, who possessed mines in Arizona and very much admired Georges Clemenceau (at the mining site, he had even created a little town called Clemenceau). After being approached by a friend of Clemenceau, Douglas had given his advisor ‘the power to bid without limit and, if need be, to override any objections from the Tiger’ (the popular nickname given to the former president of the Constitutional Council). It was thus that on May 18, 1926, after competing bids made by the Jesuit fathers of the adjoining school (Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague), who wanted to expand it, and Mr. Bacon, the building went to Bacon. After the death of Georges Clemenceau on November 24, 1929, a foundation was created for the purpose of ‘preserving the intimate memory of Clemenceau by keeping the apartment in which he lived for 34 years in the exact state in which it existed on the day of his death...’, a goal that continues to this day. The Tiger’s three children, Michel, Thérèse, and Madeleine, donated the entire contents of the apartment to the foundation.

The apartment was opened to the public as a museum in 1931. It was completed in 1933, with the opening of a document exhibit tracing the life and work of Georges Clemenceau.

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