

Lantern Documentation

By Joseph Heck

Terras, Shire of the Standing Stones, Calontir

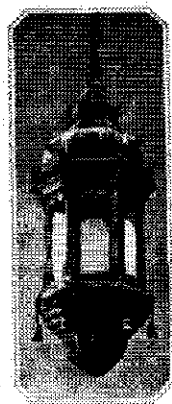
Well, as usual, I'm no expert on this, but I have found some tidbits that I'd like to share with other *Sacred Spaces* readers. While I was researching lighting in the Middle Ages, I came across quite a collection of information regarding lanterns. I've copied the line drawings down - and here are the details of those lanterns.

The details of these can be found on pages 182-185 of the London Museum Medieval Catalogue, published by HMSO (Her Majesty's Stationary Office) copyright 1940, from the 1975 printing (ISBN # 0-11-290181-6). According to the London Museum Medieval Catalogue:

- Lanterns appear in medieval manuscripts as early as the 13th century.
- The forms, according to their research, varied from enclosures of metal with only a small opening for light to basic frames with panels of horn or glass.
- Both kinds are common in the later Middle Ages, and are easily represented by the mid-13th century.

The most common form of lantern is one with cylindrical sides with a conical top, from which the lantern was hung.

The two large lanterns pictured (top) were found in Smithfield, and are dated to "probably 14th century." Both are made of copper alloys, the flat-topped one being 8 1/2-in. tall and the conical topped one being 11 1/2-in. tall.

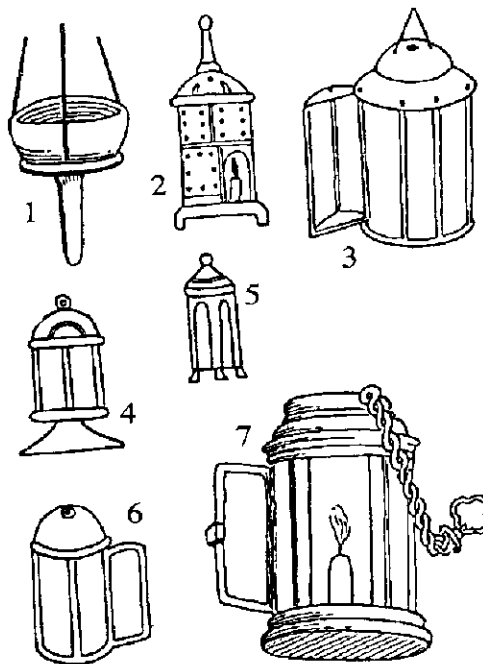
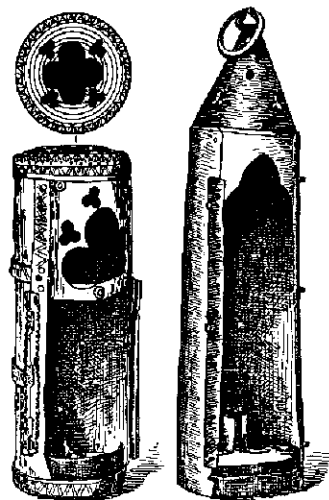


15th Century

The simpler pictures are re-drawings from various manuscripts:

- 1) c. 1200, from the Psalter of Queen Ingeborga at Chantilly (*Archeological Journal*, XCII, 1935, 259 Pl. VIII)
- 2) c. 1250, from a mid-13th century missal (M.R. James, *Catalogue of the Latin Manuscripts in the Sir John Rylands Library*, II Pl. 55)
- 3) 1364-1380, from the Maciejowski Bible, f. 13a
- 4) c. 1250, from the Luttrell Psalter, f. 91

(from the London Museum Medieval Catalogue)



5) 1335-1340, from the *Parement d'Autel* of Narbonne, now in the Louvre.

6) c. 1450, from a mid-15th century manuscript, Pierpont Morgan Library, Bennett Coll. MS., No. 78. The shutters are of glass.

7) 1503-1509, from a roof-boss in Winchester Cathedral (*Archeologia*, LXXVI, Pl. XXIX).

For further interests in medieval lighting, the section previous (as is the whole work) is a very detailed explanation of the finds in the London Museum regarding candlesticks of the Middle Ages.