

Ezra Pound in Mareuil

Adam Aitken

Here if ever one should go back
he judged his descent from the turret,

walked and saw, unburdened by abstraction,

hints of life 500 years forgotten,

to note the proud thing
& the practical:
a poet's name upon a wall,

tower, drawbridge, high slate gables.

Wrote of the town
the 'centuries written upon it',

unnumbered the towers he'd seen on-route

and recalled the place
Arnaut the troubadour
'saw daylight,'

then a church transformed
by and after mutilation,

a courtyard full of straw.

Finding an approach,

saw dogs - one with a middle-aged expression -
laid low, hiding in patches of rose and violet
and long grass

the violets an 'anachronism'

in a town of winding fallen stairs,
mostly chimneys
and roses to compensate

& moats now drained
of mill-stream

filled with rabbits.