

@a2 Chapter III

@a3 France

Apart from fonts of the Mosan and Tournai Schools,¹ both of which are well represented in the north of France, it has to be said that France today is not well endowed with fonts of the twelfth century. This is all the more surprising when it is considered how much original Romanesque architecture and architectural sculpture survives throughout the country. There are several reasons for this situation. As far as the south of the country is concerned, the favourable climate encouraged the continued use of baptisteries and their *piscinae*, much as happened in Italy well into the thirteenth and even the fourteenth centuries. In France baptisteries are known at Aix-en-Provence, Fréjus, Riez and Venasque which all have a *piscina* in the floors of Romanesque or earlier buildings.² Unlike Italy, they were no more than small baptismal chapels attached to the churches, though there is a larger example in Angoulême, built as late as the first half of the twelfth century, consecrated by Lambert who was bishop 1136–48.³ There is even a baptistery as far north as Poitiers,⁴ though the small attached building with a fountain at St Léonard de Noblat, so often described as a baptistery, is now believed not to have been so.⁵ Wars and the Revolution both contributed to the destruction, not least in the northern *départements* during the period 1914–18, with the loss of the Tournai fonts of Vimy and St Venant just two examples. What are less well known are the depredations caused by those who should have known better, the *curés* themselves. In successive issues of the *Bulletin monumental* in the latter part of the nineteenth century the French antiquarian scholar Camille Enlart

¹ See Chapters V and VI and see also Chapter XIII for lead fonts.

² M. Delcor, 'Les Cuves romanes et leur figuration en Roussillon, Cerdagne et Conflent', *Les Cahiers de St Michel de Cuxa*, IV, 1973, p. 97, mentions others at Bapteste and Ste. Quitterie but I have been unable to locate either.

³ R de Lasteyrie, *L'Architecture religieuse de France à l'époque romane: ses origines, son développement*, Paris 1912 ('Fonts baptismaux', pp. 697–706), p. 698, n. 1.

⁴ In the *Bulletin de la Société des antiquaires de Normandie*, XLV, 1938, pp. 350–4, the article 'Fonts baptismaux de St Vigor près de Bayeux' describes a round bowl, 1.28m in diameter (no other dimension given) which is entirely plain and was probably sunk into the floor.

can be found reporting on ‘yet another country parish where the priest has turned the medieval font out of the church and replaced it with a pink marble monstrosity’. He urged his audience to do all in their power to stem the tide of destruction but there is little doubt that it was widespread and that it continued.⁶ The appalling state of many French country churches today and the lack of care for their contents hold out little hope for the future.

Among the earliest fonts were reused Antique sarcophagi and bath-tubs, of which there are examples of the latter at Angers and Ainay-le-Chateau⁷ [124] and of the former at Arles (St Trophime). Ainay is a particularly fine specimen, with the basin fluted inside like the exterior of the bowl. Enlart refers to fonts ‘shaped like an incense boat’⁸ and Pudelko notes that between Paris and Normandy there are oval fonts, though they are thirteenth century.⁹ The French seem to have had a penchant for attenuated vessels, for another peculiarity of France is that it has numerous fonts which are rectangular in outline rather than square. There are many examples of Romanesque fonts everywhere in which so-called square bowls have sides which differ in length by one or two centimetres but this is likely to be due to inaccurate measurement by the mason, an irregularity in the rough stone block, or perhaps even damage during manufacture. In France, however, there are several fonts which were quite clearly planned as rectangular. Generally, all the main forms found elsewhere occur in France, but polygonal and multilobed bowls are rare and the latter only occur in pedestal form. The bipartite font, that is a bowl and base without the intervention of a shaft, is also rare.

@c Tub Fonts

@e Circular Tub Fonts

An ivory in the Musée des Antiquités at Amiens portrays St Rémi baptising the king, Clovis, in a round tub standing directly on the floor of the church. Such fonts are common

⁵ J. Maury, *Limousin roman*, Zodiaque, 1974, p. 123. R. Fage, *Congrès archéologique*, LXXXIV, 1921, pp. 115–16, tells that excavations at the time the church was restored revealed no trace of a baptismal piscina.

⁶ A. de Caumont (no title), *Bulletin monumental*, VIII, 1842, p. 317. R. de Lasteyrie, p. 706, also talks of ‘les réquisitions de l’époque révolutionnaire . . . destructions . . . dues aux changements du gout’ and ‘le vandalisme inconscient du clergé du dix-septième et dix-huitième siècles.’

⁷ R. de Lasteyrie, fig. 705; Angers has an oval antique marble bowl resting on two lions. The shape inherited from the reuse of Antique vessels is most convenient for the immersion of infants.

⁸ This is a type which continued from the twelfth to sixteenth centuries and is found in the Île-de-France and Champagne. Examples exist at Arthies, Bougival, Chiry, Cambronne, Gaillon, Grose, St Loup-de-Naud and Villaugoujard.

⁹ G. Pudelko, *Romanische Taufsteine*, Berlin-Lankowitz, 1932, p. 42. Boissy, Gassicourt, Neuilly, Montchauvet (now in Provins Museum) and Vetheuil. C. Enlart, p. 771, notes the existence of others in local marble in Roussillon and lists Calmeilles, Candiès-de-Conflent, Talau, Teillet, and La Vila-de-Reynès. He includes Torreilles in his list but it is round rather than oval.

to all parts of France and continued to be made in the south of the country throughout the period. In the cathedral at Perpignan is a large cylinder carved to look like a wooden barrel, with vertical staves bound together with an encircling rope-moulding; a salient head is placed on a console at the top of one of the staves, with rosettes at the top of others. On the narrow edge is the inscription: 'UNDA SACRIS FONTIS NECAT ANGUIS SIBILA SONTIS'.¹⁰ Similar pieces are in the churches at Piolenc and Buve,¹¹ the latter with diagonal grooving. Huriel has a cuff at the rim, with semicircular pendants, a bird and what may be the first four-legged dragon, and Lacelle Abbey is the same except for mouldings and a broad cuff at the rim. Verneuil (Eure) flares slightly to the top and around the bottom is a plain band on which stands a blind arcade of twelve arches, reaching to the top of the bowl; the arcade has capitals but no bases and there are three-leaf fans in the spandrels. Above the head of each arch is a bezant and the spandrels contain trefoils; the bowl stands on a tall round plinth on which four monsters' heads look out from between their paws. In the Musée Française d'Archéologie in Caen (originally from Rocquancourt) is a cylinder chamfered at both rims and encircled by two triple-stranded bands; two similar bands loop alternately over the horizontal bands in the shape of continuous slantwise figures-of-eight. In Roussillon are fonts made of the local marble, for example at Elne and another at Argelès-sur-Mer which is unusual in recording both the maker and the sponsor in an inscription: 'MAGISTER GUILIELMOS DUCE VOLONO ME FECIT'.¹² Others are at Serrabone Priory [125] Torreilles and Villefranche-de-Conflent 1, all three of vast proportions, diameters exceeding one metre and depths between 50 and 60cm, pointing to use for adult baptism in which the catechumen stood in the bowl while water

¹⁰ The water of this holy bowl stops the hissing of the serpent. M. Delcor, p. 100, quotes L de Bonnefoy, *Epigraphie roussillonnaise*, n. 11, as stating that the style of the lettering allows a date of around 1100 to be ascribed to the font. The Perpignan font came from the village church of Malloles, south of the city.

¹¹ *Congrès archéologique*, Limoges, 1921 p. 280. There is a note in *Bulletin monumental*, VIII, 1842, p. 318, referring to a cylindrical font, plain except for five horizontal roll-mouldings, a clear reference to the wooden barrel origins of baptismal vessels; unfortunately it does not identify the piece. The Perpignan font came from the village church of Malloles, south of the city.

¹² 'Master William made me for the Duke of Volono' (?).

was poured over the head. With Villefranche-de-Conflent II [126]¹³ the tub begins to adopt a bipartite form, tapering to the bottom below a broad band of crude ornament just above the centre-line.

The few large round tubs in Alsace are similar to the plain Westphalian tubs with concave grooving between mouldings at top and bottom which are considered in the chapter on Germany.¹⁴ A cylinder font in the Strasbourg Cathedral Museum, originally at Rosheim, has two broad bands of foliate ornament at the top, palmettes over vine tendril, with blind arcading below. The cathedral museum also has two figured fonts. On one, from Ittenheim or Zellwiller, the figures are statuesque, standing within tectonic arcading. It is severely damaged, especially at the top, so nothing can be said about the possible existence of a decorative band above the arches. The other figured font, originally at Eschau, is also in poor condition but enough survives to see that it is a pure cylinder and that the figures depict Biblical scenes in two tiers. The upper tier has arcading arranged so that the arches are of variable widths to fit the scenes they cover, with supporting columns used only to divide one scene from the next. The lower register is without arcading but there are narrow pilasters acting as dividers, sometimes subsumed in the architectural context, as where the fortified city gateway divides the Entry into Jerusalem from the Annunciation. The twelve scenes depicted are (lower register) Annunciation, Nativity, Annunciation to the Shepherds, Presentation in the Temple, Baptism in the Jordan, Entry into Jerusalem; (upper register) Last Supper, Arrest of Christ, Deposition, Holy Women at the Sepulchre, Harrowing of Hell, Pentecost. Despite the condition, it is possible to make out details which distinguish this font iconographically from others. In the first place it is rare, outside Sweden, to find such a complete cycle of the life and death of Christ on a single font, especially on a cylindrical tub. In the Presentation scene the infant Christ holds a candle, alluding to Candlemas, the feast of the Purification. There is no chalice upon the altar but sun and moon appear above it between Simeon and the Holy Family; the figure behind Simeon, missing above the waist, holds a censer. In the Resurrection, the angel sits on the slantwise lid of the open sarcophagus, looking away from the three women who approach from the right; an attempt at perspective has been made by placing them on sloping ground so that they increase in height as they approach the tomb. In the Nativity the Virgin places her hand on the crib and Joseph sleeps, seated on rocks, his back to Mary's bed. The unusually extensive repertoire of Biblical scenes may be due to the fact that the font was evidently made by artists from the same workshop who were responsible for the cloister capitals of Eschau Abbey, now also in the Museum; the parallels between the two Nativities are remarkable.¹⁵

¹³ This limestone bowl, formerly in Belloch (M. Delcor, p. 102), stands on the floor inside the door but is no longer in use. The church font is a huge plain beaker of local marble located in an enclosure in the north aisle.

¹⁴ The fonts from Eschau, Ittenheim, Rosheim and Zellwiller are in the museum of the cathedral at Strasbourg and that from Gildwiller in the Mulhouse Museum. The others are at Neuwiller and Wittenheim. A font of similar design is reported by Enlart at Contrières (Calvados).

¹⁵ R. Will, *Alsace romane*, Abbaye de le Pierre qui Vire, 1982, pp. 71–2 and pls. 17–21. The difference in quality suggests that the font copies the capitals. Eschau is now a parish church but in the twelfth century was a small abbey.

Wierre-Effroy [127], now in the Museum at Boulogne, is slightly barrel-shaped, with a broad band at the rim decorated with beaded chevron and trefoils, and a narrower, plain band at the bottom. The circumference is divided into four equal panels by figures which stand *en face* on the bottom band; one is a bishop with alb and pallium but the others are less clear, probably also clerics. Their heads, which are now lost, used to break into the upper band and on the panels between them are large mythical beasts, a bird with fish-tail, a dragon biting its own wing, a lion biting the wrist of one of the standing human figures and a bird-headed dragon.¹⁶ The standing figures hold the tails of the beasts beside them.

Two tub fonts of similar style and execution lie a few miles apart near the border with Spain south of Bourg-Madame. They are monoliths of local granite, roughly hemispherical and have obscure scenes carved within arched recesses.¹⁷ At Ur the scenes are very schematic and follow in no apparent logical order. Delcor identifies the Temptation, a horned animal's head, perhaps the Agnus Dei, and a hunting scene which recurs on the lead fonts of Lasserre, Lombez Cathedral and Puycasquier, showing a huntsman wearing a loin-cloth, shooting at a lion, watched by a bird with long neck.¹⁸ Palau-de-Cerdagne has its scenes framed between two decorative bands; at the top a two-strand plait with bezants in the loops and at the bottom a cable. The scenes are displayed in an arcade of fifteen arches supported for the most part on tectonic columns, except the baptism which occupies four arches without supports. A man flees a serpent, running with arms raised, and other arches contain a variety of tree-like motifs, including palm and vine. In the baptism none of the figures is nimbed and the rite is being administered in a tub very like the actual font itself, so that it is hard to say if it is Christ's baptism or that of a convert. To the right the officiating priest seems to pour water from a *coquille* and on the other side stands a cleric with a long-staff crucifix. Below the priest is another *en face*, hands joined in prayer, while behind the cleric on the left is a serpent with human head. The only pointers to a possible Baptism of Christ, are the triquetras, though they are strangely positioned in the spandrels on either side of the praying cleric. Further east, Arles-sur-Tech has a vast tub, diameter 1.12m, height 79cm, ornamented only with a shallow arcade, and many fonts in the foothills of the Pyrenees are entirely plain as at St Génie-des-Fontaines, Coustouges and Vernet-les-Bains.¹⁹

¹⁶ Enlart, *Manuel d'archéologie française depuis le temps mérovingien jusqu'à la Renaissance*, I: *Architecture religieuse*, Paris, 1902, p. 782, says that these represent the elements, and identifies them as dragon (fire), bird (air), lion (earth) and fish (water).

¹⁷ They are both unusually large, especially the diameters compared with the heights: Palau-de-Cerdagne, 1.06m in diameter, 68cm high and 48cm deep; Ur, 1.1m in diameter and 83cm high.

¹⁸ M. Delcor, p. 102, n. 21, quotes Pottier, 'Les Cuves baptismales en plomb du diocèse de Montauban', *Bulletin de la Société archéologique du Tarn et Garonne*, 1899, without giving a page reference.

¹⁹ According to information obtained at St Michel-de-Cuxa, its font is in the Philadelphia Museum and that from Elne in The Cloisters (New York).

With the increasing tendency to infant baptism it became necessary to raise the height of the rim and a beaker is the round tub in its final extended stages before its increasing height dictated a change to bipartite form. Samer [128] flares slightly and is sculpted with three scenes separated by columns which reach to the top of the bowl. At one stage it has been partially buried in the ground in the open air and the worn state of the stone makes identification of the scenes difficult, hardly any carving being visible below the mid-height. One scene is the Baptism of Christ who stands in Jordan *en face* wearing a cruciferous nimbus, arms across His body at waist-height. He is clean-shaven and sculpted to look like a young man.²⁰ The Baptist, on the left, turns towards Him and holds Him with a hand on either side of His right shoulder. On the other side of the Saviour an angel stands *en face*, wings spread, holding a cloth draped across his hands. The angel and John are both taller than Christ, their heads breaking into the cable-moulding at the rim which acts as a canopy above Jesus' head. This scene occupies about half the circumference. To one side is a bishop *en face*, robed for the mass, holding a crosier in his left hand and blessing with the right, and then come three men also *en face*, who stand with linked arms. Of the three one is bearded, one has long hair and the other is either close-cropped or wears a tight-fitting cap.²¹ At Germigny-des-Près [129] the beaker-shape is more pronounced. The top of the bowl is encircled with a plain raised cuff finished in a saw-tooth along its lower edge, joined to the bottom by plain vertical strips with no pretence at being columns. Between them the circumference is recessed and the one decorated panel depicts the Baptism of Christ. The Saviour kneels in (actually 'on') the water, wearing a cruciferous nimbus and short loin-cloth, arms crossed over His chest and hands on His shoulders. The Baptist, also nimbed, pours water from a dish over the Saviour's head while the hand of God the Father extends from a small cloud at the top, fingers curled in blessing. It stands on a former column-base with corner leaves.

In Deux-Sèvres Bouin, Pers and Sainte Soline seem to demonstrate a stage in the evolution between a beaker and a goblet.²² They are monoliths, completely plain and of very simple form, but strong waisting makes them bipartite in appearance. The support element is a frustrum of a cone, about one third of the overall height and above this the round bowl flares upwards in a gentle curve. A vessel of the same shape is used for Christ's first bath in a panel on the façade of Notre-Dame-la-Grande, Poitiers.

@e Four-sided Tub Fonts

²⁰ A. Bertram, 'Das Taufbecken im Dom zu Hildesheim', *Zeitschrift für christliche Kunst*, XIII, 1900, p. 140, says that Christ at His baptism is shown young and clean-shaven in the tenth and eleventh centuries but bearded and mature in the twelfth.

²¹ There are very similar figures at Airaines.

²² P. Dez, 'De quelques cuves baptismales du Mellois', *Bulletin de la Société historique et scientifique des Deux-Sèvres*, III/1, 1970, pp. 25–34. The almost identical silhouette and the geographical proximity speak for each group having been made by the same hand.

The simplest form of four-sided tub consists of a block with or without decoration on the sides. Most have engaged columns at the corners, like Minzac,²³ but there are others where the articulation of the corners is achieved with figures, almost invariably to the full height of the block. At Souvigny a square tub now standing outside the museum has salient heads at the corners in the style of the round Mosan bowls and no other ornament at all. Le Heaulme has grooved corners with volutes at the top and a multiple moulding at the rim. Romagne is typical of fonts of this type in the Gironde/Dordogne area which have pairs of square niches on each side. St Germain-de-la-Rivière has round-headed niches and at Chignac they are pointed. Here a band of scallop ornament tops each side and there are tectonic engaged columns at the corners. Minzac and the similar fonts in Bellegard and Salleburnau have true arcading. Coussey flares slightly to the top and has columns at the corners. Courpiac is like Minzac but decorated with zig-zag ornament and lanceolate leaves. Le Dorat has a large but relatively shallow tub font of unique plan, a rectangle with a pronounced apse on one long side. On the opposite side two lions *passant* face outwards. Their tails do not pass between the legs but curl along the back and terminate in formalised plumes like a five-leaf fleur-de-lis. The other sides are plain.²⁴ Hollowed out of the square Concevreux bowl is a rare cruciform basin.

Ars-sur-le-Né is a monolith, almost a cube,²⁵ and a most unusual feature for a square tub is the octagonal basin. It is decorated on all sides and has full-length figures at the corners who stand on the rough integral plinth and with their heads break the broad band of repeated formal ornament around the rim and the slender cable immediately below. On the south-east corner is St Peter with two keys but the figure on the north-east corner has no recognisable attribute to aid identification. On the face between them is a strange composition in two registers. At the top is an owl between two eagles, flanked by a pair of animals' heads *en face*. In the lower register are a harpy, a chimera and a tall figure holding his severed head in his hands. The south-western figure is worn but still recognisable as a cleric, from his stole and the chasuble with beaded border. He blesses with the right hand and holds a staff in his left topped with something which is more like a *flabellum* than a cross. Filling the major, right-hand, part of the south face a large lion with exuberant tail plume stands grasping between its front paws a naked female figure caught in the coils of a serpent; one paw is placed on a human head. The remainder of the face is filled with a double-headed eagle. On the west face is a spread-eagle above two small kneeling men facing inwards who each hold

²³ It is now in the Mairie at Villefranche.

²⁴ J. Maury, pls. 74 and 75.

²⁵ The sides are 1.16m wide and 90cm high. R. Crozet, 'Les fonts baptismaux d'Ars-sur-le-Né (Charente) et de Brive-sur-Charente', *Bulletin monumental*, CXX, 1962, pp. 41–6.

one leg and one wing of the eagle. The north face is badly worn but it is still possible to make out Christ in a mandorla held by two angels. The north-west corner figure is too worn to identify.

Rectangular fonts, with a marked difference in the lengths of opposite sides, are something of a speciality of France and are almost unknown in other countries. They occur mainly in the north, especially in the multisupport products of the Marquise quarries, but there is one outstanding example which has no siblings. Airaines [130] flares quite markedly to the top and stands on a rectangular plinth of several separate stones. Despite the flare, the vertical edges are defined by corner columns with capitals but no bases. The decoration is similar on each side, all figured. On the short sides two men crouch, hands on their knees with arms linked. On one long side three similar figures, but taller and cut off at the knees, occupy three-quarters of the face with a small dragon in the remaining space speaking into the ear of the nearest man. The opposite face has three identical figures but they fill the whole panel. Brives-sur-Charente, only a few miles from Ars-sur-le-Né, is now built into the wall of the church so that only three sides are visible; unlike Ars it is rectangular rather than square.²⁶ In the centre of the east face Christ sits in a mandorla, His hands spread out to touch its sides. Flanking Him in two tiers His apostles, three by three, seem to walk towards Him; they carry banderoles with their names. The east face displays the Harrowing of Hell but Christ is again in a mandorla, standing and holding a long-staff cross which breaks the outline of the frame. At the top the mandorla is flanked by a bird and a lion (John and Mark) while below can be made out Adam and Eve and the souls of the dead, with angels restraining devils. The north side has a most puzzling scene. On the left is an angel, one wing up the other down, the left arm twisted behind the back, the index finger extended. In his right hand he offers a disc to two nimbed figures standing before him, a man holding a staff topped by a bird and a woman, her right hand on her stomach and the left held to her face in sorrow. The western side is hidden.

Breuil-le-Vert [131] is perhaps one of the first and simplest examples of the articulation of the four-sided block, the beginning of the move, in France at least, to visible separation of the water-container and the load-bearing elements. A monolith, it stands on an integral square plinth with single massive engaged columns at the corners. They have no bases but, surprising given that the colonnettes finish well short of the rim, there are capitals. The vertical sides of the bowl are level with the edge of the plinth in the centre of each face but curve to the corners so that they appear to pass behind the colonnettes. Each face of the bowl is decorated with a large cross-paty with a quatrefoil in the centre.²⁷ Many four-sided tub fonts are rounded in the centre so that the corners are proud and give the appearance of engaged columns; at Lurcy-Lévis they have base and capital but on one example in the Bourbonnais they are left as plain rectangular blocks.²⁸ In the crypt of Chartres Cathedral is a monolithic tub font which has been substantially articulated from the basic square form. The base is square and from each corner rises to the full height of the rim a reeded column, with

²⁶ It measures 1.05m by 95cm by 84cm high.

²⁷ Breuil-le-Vert may be dated to *c.* 1145 from the consecration of the church.

²⁸ Theft of my research notebook in 1997 has prevented identification of the photograph of this font, which must lie in the area between Lurcy-Lévis and Donzy-le-Pré. The tops of the corner blocks are drilled out and may have held supports for an aedicule or canopy.

Attic base and Corinthian capital. Although all of one piece, the section between the columns has been cut back to reveal a rounded beaker-shaped bowl, leaving the bases and capitals of the corner columns engaged. Mousson has a large tub with curved sides between engaged tectonic columns set on a thick separate plinth on which are carved twelve monsters' heads below a double row of round leaves. The combined height is considerable at 1.07m, though the individual heights of bowl and plinth (72cm and 35cm) suggests that the piece was always as it is now, and not a bowl with plinth added later. The scenes on the panels show a clear link with the iconography of the brass font at St Barthélémy, Liège. First John the Baptist preaches to a group of people representing a variety of occupations. Second he baptises two naked figures in a wooden barrel. Third, he baptises Christ in the Jordan. All the Trinity are present and God the Father wears a cruciferous nimbus, while the dove is not nimbed; from the top right a demiangel flies down swinging a censer. Fourth a bishop, accompanied by a junior cleric, baptises two naked men in a wooden barrel. An angel flies down again as before but without a censer. At Chartres and Mousson the undercutting is so deep that, though the plan at the top remains a circle, the outline below has effectively become four-lobed.

@e Polygonal Tub Fonts

There is also a small number of octagonal tubs, spread across the northern half of the country, with no sense of family likeness other than their shape.²⁹ St Eugène has figures in arcading and Puymorens has a chequer-board pattern as well as arcading, in this case empty. At St Privat-des-Près the eight sides are decorated with arcading formed from branches of leaves. The font in the Auvergnat church of Saint-Saturnin [132] is an octagonal piscina decorated on each face with a shallow panel topped with a depressed arch. As is usual for tubs of this shape it has a round basin, but at St Menoux the basin follows the hexagonal shape of the exterior. In Deux-Sèvres are three octagonal bowls,³⁰ though one is so badly worn that it is hard to say whether its present rough rounded shape is original or not. Below the vertical upper part of the sides Hanc and Pioussay slope down and Pampoux reduces in size by a distinct step. Their size, all over 60cm in height, suggests that they were not pedestal fonts but probably stood on plinths. All three having been set outside their churches for many years (and Hanc later in a private garden) there is no visible evidence of their original support, if any. In the same way there is no sign of any decoration, though it seems safe to assume that there was none.

²⁹ Braize, Cognac, Corgnac, Corrobert, Foulbec, St Eugène, St Gervais de Pontpoint, St Siméon, La Ville-sous-Orbais, Puymorens and Roquencourt are names extracted from Enlart and Pudelko.

³⁰ P. Dez, pp. 25–34.

The font at Lurcy-Lévis [133] is shaped very much like the Fouencamps group of Marquise fonts, its rounded bowl clasped between engaged colonnettes, but it is set on a plinth of the same height as the bowl, made of several separate stones. Integral with the main font and of precisely the same form is a small satellite bowl, reminiscent of examples in England and Scandinavia.³¹ A few miles to the east at Braize is an octagonal font also with satellite bowl. Dirt and later cement overlay make it impossible to be sure if these smaller bowls are carved from the same blocks or separate, though the latter is the more likely.³²

@c Supported Fonts

@e Single-Support Pedestal Fonts

According to Pudelko, the font at Nerlandes demonstrates the transition from the square tub to the pedestal. His description is similar to the small Norwegian group of ‘footstool’ fonts (q.v.), south-west of Oslo, where the base is cut away at the bottom centre of each side to leave arches between four heavy feet.³³ Pedestal fonts in France are predominantly single-support but there is a significant geographical group in the north-west with multiple supports on the lines of the Mosan and Tournai Schools, demonstrating that they required established workshops with skilful craftsmen to carry them off. French single-support pedestal fonts are found in the same variety of forms as in all other countries, round, four-sided, polygonal (mainly octagonal, occasionally six-sided), plus a small number of oval bowls of which Saugues is outstanding for its size, with a smaller example at La Chaise-Dieu.³⁴ They are both plain and decorated, though the variety of ornament is poor, either

³¹ For example, Youlgreave, Björlanda. These small satellite bowls and the division of the main bowl (which also occurs in later years with metal inserts) are thought to be provided so that the water which has become ‘contaminated’ with the sin of the catechumen in the process of baptism should not be allowed to run back into the consecrated water. E. Swann ‘Fonts of Unusual Shape with Appendages’, *Oxford Architectural and History Society*, V, 1886–93, pp. 73–4.

³² As far as I am aware these are the only examples of tub fonts with appendages; all the others are pedestal fonts.

³³ G. Pudelko, p. 39 (and quoting J. Corblet, *Histoire du sacrement de baptême*, II, Paris, 1881, p. 125). On p. 40 he refers to a similar font at Lor (Aisne), though with an egg-shaped bowl. I have been unable to locate either to check his statement which is of considerable interest as this is a most unusual form of vessel.

³⁴ Saugues measures 1.03m by 78cm, La Chaise-Dieu 88cm by 50cm.

almost non-existent or crudely designed and executed. Many of them no longer preserve their original supports and, it must be said, where these are lost little care has been taken to see that the bowl is given an underpinning that does it justice, even if in no more than due proportions.³⁵ Most are of the type where bowl and support are visibly distinct elements, separated by a shaft, with a minority designed without the intervention of a shaft, either made in two pieces or monoliths with some form of decorative girdle around the mid-point so that the visual appearance is bipartite.

At Léhon the font consists of two massive circular plates of different diameter, stepwise one upon the other; the decoration consists of masks, with tendril emerging from the mouths. At Arthies two stepped rings form the circular plinth which has grown so tall that it has gained the appearance of a second cylinder. Periers-en-Auge³⁶ is a monolith which has been made bipartite by the effect of a strong roll-moulding around the waist. Moutiers stands on a tall plinth formed from three roll-mouldings separated by concave mouldings. Also bipartite are fonts in Brittany of the so-called caryatid type, notably at St Malo Cathedral [134] and St Saumur of Dinan [135].³⁷ This is in fact a misnomer as the bowls are not carried on the heads of the figures but in their hands or on their backs, as may be seen in Denmark at Skodborg. This form is rare everywhere, not only in France. St Malo is round and very crude, and may originally have been a tub; the square base is later and was clearly not even made for its current purpose. Three figures stand *en face* in high relief, heads at the top of the bowl and feet at the bottom, while they stretch up to grasp the rim. No clothing is shown. In place of a fourth figure is a boss which may be the head of a bearded man or of some beast. The cup-shaped bowl at Dinan has something of the appearance of a capital from the four, sadly headless, figures evenly spaced around it and stands on a separate Attic base. The figures, dressed in long robes and wearing 'belts of strength'³⁸ appear alternately to face the bowl and have their backs to it, supporting the bowl at the rim or at mid-height respectively; in fact

³⁵ Magny-Fouchard, beneath a broad octagonal cuff decorated with large raised demilunes, is a near hemisphere carved to give a convex spiral effect, interspersed with sprays of leaves. It stands on a makeshift two piece support, one of brick, the other of a different stone from the bowl itself. Bar-le-Régulier is of a hard blue-black limestone and carved with strongly convex fluting interrupted by a palmette device. This is now attached to a crude stone pillar with a rough cement of unsuitable colour.

³⁶ Pudelko, p. 60, notes others at Corseult and Baraud. See also *Bulletin monumental*, XXXVI, 1870, p. 3.

³⁷ *Bulletin monumental*, XXXVI, 1870, pp. 424 and 544.

³⁸ For these belts with prominent buckles see G. Zarnecki, 'A Romanesque Bronze Candlestick in Oslo and the Problem of the Belts of Strength', *Kunstindustrimuseet i Oslo årbok*, 1963–4, pp. 45–66.

they all face inwards, alternate figures having their hands at the rim and low down on the bowl respectively. At Bouvaincourt is a large monolith which is clearly bowl and base; the bowl is slightly *bombé* and the base has a curving top. There is no ornament.³⁹ The circular bowl is found in all parts of the country⁴⁰ and the majority are plain and on plain supports. One of the most common forms is a hemispherical bowl like an egg-cup,⁴¹ supported on a shaft standing on a base which may also be round (St Génie-des-Fontaines [136]), or square with corner spurs or leaves. At Orgibet the bowl is very flat for the diameter⁴² but the modern single shaft without base gives no idea of how it originally appeared. Its decoration is unusual, a mixture of partly obscure motifs in quite high relief, some of them now broken off, spread around the face of the bowl. A demifigure which seems to appear from water or a cloud, holds a cross in the right hand and may represent Christ's baptism, though there is no nimbus. Next a priest receives a naked infant from a bearded figure who is followed by two others in long robes, the first with a cowl on his shoulders and carrying a staff. A dog-like animal may be intended as a lion from the way the tail curls above the back and next come three disembodied heads on their sides, one above another and one singly. They are followed by a row of single motifs, bezants, masks and rosettes, and finally there is a bird drinking. Fraillicourt [137] has simple arcading with cross-pieces for capitals and no bases; the columns follow the curve of the bowl to meet the shaft. At the top Verneuil (Marne) [138] has quite widely spaced strong mouldings; below is a row of scallops alternating with large tear-drops. Incised on the scallops are shields, some with incised ornamental motifs and the wide lower part of the tear-drops are carved as human faces. The round pedestal font at Trèves⁴³ is dish-shaped, with four salient heads in the Mosan style, two male and bearded, with luxuriant moustaches like Beauvechain; the others are grotesque beasts. The face is decorated with three rows of narrow triple mouldings alternating with two of double opposed saw-tooth ornament in which the points of the teeth have been rounded off. The support is a cylinder with roll-moulding near the top and an Attic base on a square plinth with large diagonal corner-spurs which seem to clamp the shaft to the base. Venteuges is granite and the bowl is an elegant piece of work borne on a single cylindrical shaft let into the floor with no visible base. A cuff at the top is encircled with a flat moulding in the centre. Below the cuff is an arcade of pointed-arch recesses, in each of which stands a fleur-de-lis, the three leaves touching the extremities of the enclosing arch. At Saint-Paulien [139] the rim is formed from a roll-moulding above a deep groove and the face

³⁹ V. Brandicourt, 'Fonts baptismaux Picards', *Bulletin des Antiquaires de Picardie*, XXX, 1911, fig. 5.

⁴⁰ Enlart records examples at Rouffiac and Vars (Charente), Mauriac (Cantal – displays St Michael fighting the dragon), Saint-Janvier (Cher), Vertheuil (Gironde) and Saint-Michel-de-Gaillac (Tarn).

⁴¹ For example, Carentan, St Georges-de-Boscherville and Vanolles-de-Bayeux.

⁴² Height 31cm, external diameter 78cm, internal 57cm and depth of basin 20cm. See J.-M. Richard, 'Cuve baptismale d' Orgibet', *Bulletin monumental*, XL, 1874, pp. 374–7.

⁴³ Described in *Limousin roman* as a stoup, its current use; from its size, it is unlikely to have been designed originally for that purpose.

below is decorated with curved gadrooning in the manner of the Gotland 'Paradise' fonts, but carved slantwise. St André-de-Sorède has a hemispherical bowl of grey marble with successive bands of formal ornament on the face, as well as a two-strand plait on the upper surface. The face decoration consists of scrolls, triple-strand plaitwork and an undulating vine unusual for having only bunches of grapes and no leaves on the side-shoots.

There are drum-shaped bowls too, cylindrical with flat undersides, with examples at Cabourg, Chalinargues and Roquancourt. Viella [140]⁴⁴ has two-tiered ornament separated by a plain narrow band, continuous tendril above interlaced arcading and there are bosses like human heads around the bottom rim. In Normandy Montebourg is similar, with a broad band of interlacing and four salient heads around the bottom rim.⁴⁵ There are also round bowls with vertical sides which round down to a short extension, often no more than a roll-moulding, set on the support which usually consists of a cylindrical shaft and an Attic base. Cormont, with its quatrefoil bowl, is one of the very few multilobed fonts in France. It is plain, apart from the various mouldings and angled protrusions which fill the tucks between the lobes, and stands on a clustered-column support like the small group in south-west Sweden and others in Norway. The basin is also a quatrefoil.

Square single-support fonts are relatively uncommon in France but the font at Nielle-lès-Ardres [141] originally had a square bowl above a rounded lower section, with leaves beneath the corners. It is borne upon a support consisting of cylindrical shaft and Attic base now set into the floor of the church. The vertical section of the bowl is deeper than normal and is framed at the top by a broad band and by a narrower band at the bottom. At some point an attempt was made at 'modernisation' by transforming the bowl into an octagon, but not in the normal manner of cutting off the whole of the corner. Here the corner has been cut at an angle so that each side remains at its original extent along the bottom edge but is reduced to only half that length at the top. This would have produced an ungainly outcome, whatever the circumstances but, with each of the original sides decorated, the effect is a disaster. Two adjacent faces have round-headed tectonic blind arcading, the third has a tendril which sprouts from the bottom centre and spreads into two rings with leaf-shoots, filling the whole space within the frame, and the last side is divided vertically by a narrow plain band. This creates two panels, each containing a lion, forelegs straight, the hind legs pulled beneath the body like a horse about to leap a fence. The tails are drawn between the hind legs and brought up above the back where they end in large plumes.

In the Musée des Antiquités at Amiens is the bowl of very high quality of a table font, originally in the church of Selincourt. The square upper section is slightly more than half the full height, below which the bowl is rounded and terminates in a thin roll-moulding as an extension. The flat sides are divided in two by tectonic columns with the same at the vertical edges; narrow plain bands frame the faces at top and bottom. Two opposing sides have single angels in each panel and the others are historiated. The subjects are as follows, left panel first: Side 1[L]. [142] The Baptism of Christ; He is *en face* in the centre, bearded, wearing a

⁴⁴ *Bulletin monumental*, LIII, 1887; Viella is in the Val d'Aran which is now part of Spain, though previously French. See also M. Durliat, *Pyénées romanes*, L'abbaye de la pierre qui vire, 1978, pp. 173–209.

⁴⁵ L. Musset, *Normandie romane*, vol. I, L'abbaye de la pierre qui vire, 1987, p. 296 and pl. 131.

cruciferous nimbus and blessing with His right hand, the left held across the body below the waist. The Baptist is at the left, turned towards Christ whom he blesses, and on the right is an angel, now headless, holding out a cloth. 1[R]. Christ is seated on a richly decorated bench, flanked by two women; He crowns Ecclesia seated on the left, and tears a blindfold from the eyes of Synagogue who stands on the other side. 3[L]. The right half of the Presentation in the Temple is sadly damaged and the figure which stands before an altar draped with cloths, holding a lighted candle in one hand, has lost its head. A male figure at the far left holds in his veiled hands the Christ-child who blesses. Normally the Child would already stand on the altar or would be depicted above the altar, being received by Simeon from the Virgin. 3[R]. The right hand panel is occupied by three women, two of whom are clearly part of the Presentation scene, in that they face in that direction, indeed the one further away is carved so that she is seen to be looking around her companion so as not to miss any of the action. Both appear to carry something in their veiled hands. The problem is with the third, at the far right, who turns away, though she holds up in the hand nearer the others a richly decorated box. If the two panels are taken together as the Presentation, the figures in the first panel may represent Simeon and the priestess, the two women in the next panel the Virgin and her maidservant carrying the sacrificial doves, but who then is the third? Not Joseph, for all three are definitely women from their dress and hair, and the now headless figure with Simeon seems to be wearing woman's dress; in normal portrayals of the Presentation this would be Mary. Sides 2 and 4 are similar to each other but not identical. **[143]** All four panels contain winged angels emerging from clouds in the top inner corners; they are inclined downwards and look outwards, holding crowns. The differences lie in the details of the pose, dress and hair.

Isques is very plain. The top is square and in it is a square stepped basin. The top slab rests on a shallow 'belly' and beneath each corner is a large water-leaf. The heavy cylindrical shaft stands on a small square base with diagonal corner ribs on the gently sloping upper surface. Sains is more elaborate and something of a hybrid of single and multisupport. The bowl is square at the top but transmutes into a hemisphere flattened at the bottom to match the cylindrical shaft. The base is square with corner spurs and is topped with a large roll-moulding which acts as a socket for the shaft. The hybrid nature of the font derives from the bizarre arrangement of four short colonnettes which frame the bowl. The leaf capitals sit beneath the corners of the square table and there are strange box-bases level with the top of the shaft; they float in mid-air with no 'ground' below them. The granite font at Cartigny is similar but very rough and without any decoration. To add to the complexity of Sains, a small polygonal satellite bowl with separate drain extends from one side of the base.⁴⁶ Among the polygonal bowls Issy-l'Eveque is in two pieces, both octagonal, though not of matching stones.⁴⁷ The bowl is absolutely plain except for a moulding along the bottom of each vertical face, below which it slopes steeply with a slight curvature to meet the top of the support which is moulded at the top in two steps to match the bottom of the bowl. Précý-Notre Dame is very similar, though with some decoration on the sides of the bowl. The support appears to match but the font has been so damaged and so crudely repaired that it is

⁴⁶ V. Brandicourt, p. 478, also mentions Merlimont as having such an appendage. These small extra dishes are almost certainly to catch the water as it falls from the catechumen's head, similar to the arrangement at Björlanda in Sweden and at Dattenfeld in Germany.

⁴⁷ It appears that the base is missing, not that this is a bipartite font.

difficult to be sure. The face ornament includes a whorl in a circle and a salient ram's head. The font at Champs-St Evroult is like the first two, but with a curve to the upper part. The support, of the same stone, is a mirror image, except that the bowl has a cuff at the top above a narrow groove; there is a similar piece at Béthisy-Saint-Pierre. Til-Chatel [144] is also octagonal, flat on the underside, with a shallow basin of the same shape. Around the bottom edge of the bowl is a strongly salient moulding and each face is filled with a demilune, its diameter the upper rim. There are hexagonal fonts too, with examples at Saulieu and L'Huitre, but this is a form rare in France as elsewhere.

It is not unusual to find a font set against or built into the wall of the church, for many have been moved since the introduction of seating to make more space. In the Auvergne, however, there are a few examples which seem to have been made with such positioning in mind, for it is clear from examination of part of the bowl adjacent to the wall that they were never intended to be seen in the round. At Prades is the most finished example, a rectangle with the end outermost from the wall curved, the opposite end flat; this form is repeated in the interior. The lower half of the bowl is decorated with incised vertical fluting and the only other ornament is an incised line running round the bowl below the rim. At Pebrac the bowl is nominally round but is rough-hewn on the side where it abuts the wall. and, to an extent, on either side. It has unusual incised decoration on the side opposite the wall, a pair of hearts from which grow crosses framing a schematic crown. The decoration must be a later addition as the heart is otherwise unknown at this period.

Bains [145] is polygonal, with five visible sides of unequal size, and is supported on a hexagonal shaft and base. The main decoration consists of the Baptism of Christ which takes up the broad face opposite the wall and overlaps onto the narrower face to the left. The Baptist stands on the right, pouring water onto the head of the semikneeling Christ from a large jug held in his right hand; the dove of the Holy Spirit flies down in the centre. The Saviour wears a cruciferous nimbus and John's is unusual in being fluted. At the left, and centred on the angle between the two adjacent sides, his wings up against the top of the frame, is an angel *en face* holding Christ's robe as if about to wrap it around Him as He steps out of the Jordan. The three figures form a unity but to the right, also aligned with the angle between adjacent sides, the crowned Virgin is enthroned, *en face* and quite separate.

@e Multisupport pedestal fonts

Apart from the products of the Mosan and Tournai quarries which are, in terms of modern national boundaries, Belgian rather than French, there is one major group of multisupport fonts which is very much French. They were made in the quarries at Marquise, near to Boulogne, and are to be found today in many churches in the hinterland behind that town and Calais, and around Amiens. They are of a pale golden limestone, quite unlike the hard black stones of the north-east; it is a freestone which is extracted from thick seams, allowing the production of massive pieces, many of them actually monolithic. The quarries at Croissy and Bonneleau, producing a similar type of stone, were used in the construction

of Amiens Cathedral; there were others near Caen and in the Oise basin⁴⁸ and Enlart refers to a workshop at Villers-Cantonelle which produced the Golancourt, Soyécourt and Tingry fonts.⁴⁹ Various lists of Marquise multisupport fonts have been compiled but none match completely, while fonts of the same stone but of other forms are sometimes included.⁵⁰

Unlike the single-support versions of the same stone at Isques, Nielles-lès-Ardres and Sains already described, the Marquise group are nominally five-support fonts, the bowl placed on a massive central column flanked by colonnettes, though some are in fact monolithic, with no separation of the parts. Like their Mosan and Tournai cousins, the capitals of colonnettes are carved from the underside of the bowl and the top of the square base is, in most cases, shaped to provide the locations for the supports. The earlier examples at Carly [146],⁵¹ Henneveux, Hesdres [147], Tubersent and Verlincthuin [148] are close to the Tournai model in their proportions and in some aspects of their decoration, though not all carry ornament. The bowl is square at the top and has a pronounced ‘belly’ or rounded section below and of about half the height of the vertical face. Carly has different foliate motifs carved symmetrically on three sides, a single vine stem with grapes across the fourth, very much in the Mosan style. Hesdres has single beasts on two sides, a dragon and a lion, and on the others has a row of four roundels which variously contain human busts, beasts and rosettes.⁵² At Tubersent there are, on one side, four roundels like Hesdres, and on another a double band of chevrons, point to point across the centre. In the central spaces are bunches of grapes and

⁴⁸ Stone is still being extracted for a wide range of purposes from huge quarries east of Marquise. In La Maison de Pierre is an excellent small museum telling the story of the local stone industry and enabling the variety of rocks quarried in the area to be examined together and compared.

⁴⁹ Tingry is not Romanesque.

⁵⁰ I have not been able to check them all personally but a close approximation of the list of this type of fonts is at Appx 3. It seems that Enlart’s footnotes are the basis of all the lists. V. Brandicourt says, p. 481, that there are granite fonts of this type at Saint-Christ and Wiry-au-Mont. Enlart also speaks of five examples in the Musée des Antiquités at Amiens but does not name them. In the museum at Calais is the base of a five-support font from the church at Oye, *Mémoires de la Société des antiquaires de la Morinie*, XIII, 1952. p. 28.

⁵¹ Now minus its colonnettes.

⁵² C. Enlart says, p. 778, that the roundels were probably derived from the designs on Roman shards now in the Museum at Boulogne but this is to take too narrow a view. This motif is almost universally known in art of the period.

in the triangular voids top and bottom are trefoils.⁵³ Hesdres and Tubersent differ from Carly in their bases which are massive plain blocks with no corner spurs or articulation of the upper surface, so that the colonnettes have capitals but no bases. The single beasts are like Mosan ornament, the roundels, and the trefoils in the spandrels between them, are Tournai features, though the fonts of that School have only three roundels to a side, not four.

A small group of variants on the 1 + 4 Marquise format is of the same overall outline but with one major difference: in place of the massive cylindrical central shaft on which the rounded 'belly' of the bowl rests, the central support has become a large rounded bowl. In effect at Fouencamps [149], Gentelles, Halloy [150], Mirvaux and Prouzel the 'belly' has been extended downwards to meet the top of the base.⁵⁴ The last two have single colonnettes but the first two have clusters of three and are rectangular, not square. Fouencamps and Mirvaux have rectangular basins made octagonal by cutting off the corners but the basin at Gentelles cannot be seen as it is now topped with a massive stone slab to convert it into the altar of the parish church. Halloy and Prouzel have hemispherical basins and their decoration is more ambitious than the others which are all plain, except for the simple leaf capitals of the corner colonnettes. The changed shape of the central support of these two fonts has resulted in the disappearance of the 'belly' with which the corner capitals are normally level. These capitals have in fact been omitted and are replaced at Prouzel by large fleur-de-lis and at Halloy with masks similar to those on the corners of the 'suspended' Bodmin group. They also form part of the square top slab with vertical face, making a structural link too with the 'suspended' fonts. The vertical sides of this top slab in both cases is decorated with a frieze of sunken stars, below which, at the corners, is a line of beading repeated at Halloy framing the colonnette bases but not at Prouzel. Fouencamps and Gentelles are lower, with an overall height of around 65cm against the 85–100cm of the others.

There are later Marquise fonts of similar general design but quite different in proportions and decoration. Condette, Henneveux [151] and St Martin-Choquel [152] are entirely plain except for the volutes on the colonnette capitals which, like the lower rounded section itself, have deepened so that they are now taller than the height of the face which is itself much higher than the first group. Audrehem, also plain, is the same but with 'belly' and capitals more like Carly, Longfossé and Wierre-au-Bois. The final stage of development is found at Bury. Paint prevents close examination but it may well be monolithic, though, like Audrehem, there is space between the shafts of the colonnettes and the central support. There

⁵³ A font of very similar form and decoration exists at Newenden, in Kent. The supports are like Carly. There are four roundels on one side, a lion and a dragon on another, and chevron with filled voids on the third but the fourth, against a pillar, is plain. Chemical analysis of the stone is required to establish whether this is an import or made by an itinerant mason from the Marquise quarries.

⁵⁴ At Halloy *mairie* I was given a photocopy of a manuscript note describing the font at Bergicourt, of the same type but with two horizontal bars decorating the 'table'; the colonnettes have water-leaf capitals and Attic bases. Bergicourt does not occur in any lists which I have seen. Fouencamps and Mirvaux are markedly rectangular, not square. V. Brandicourt, p. 475, says that Soreng is similar to Prouzel.

is no belly, just a thin table on top of the central support which has mutated to become an octagon and has large applied volutes on each side in imitation of the corner capitals. Soyécourt [153] has a decorated version of the Condette font, almost identical in proportions. The high table has different geometrical designs on each face, of rings, chevrons and semicircles and there are leaf-sprays on the four 'belly' panels. It is by far the biggest of the Marqise fonts, over one metre square at the top and 1.16m tall overall. One further example of this type of font is found at Condé-lès-Herpy, a considerable distance to the east (Ardennes) but of a very similar, if not the same stone. It appears that the supports are modern, with a cube as central support, but the colonnettes may be original. The bowl, of one piece as usual, is in two distinct sections. The top is plain like Condette, except for the chamfer which removes the top of each corner in the same way as the bowl at Nielles-lès-Ardres was modified.⁵⁵

Le Monastier, south-east of Le Puy [fig. 11], has a very unusual form of multisupport font.⁵⁶ It consists of a very large (1.28m x 94cm and 34cm deep) oval bowl, fluted within, gadrooned without, and was originally supported on iron brackets set into the backs of two crouching lions, prey between their paws. Sadly it is now in several pieces. The bowl lies discarded on the floor, the fragments of one lion behind it beneath the stairs to the organ gallery and the other exposed to the weather outside the main door.⁵⁷

@e Capital Fonts

The capital font is a standard type which occurs in small numbers in every country, in tub or pedestal form. Angicourt [154] is typical of many, an architectural column in miniature, with Attic base and cylindrical shaft. The bowl is a square-topped capital with volutes below a square abacus decorated with a band of fleurs-de-lis. In place of volutes Magneville⁵⁸ has four heads occupying the corners, not unlike Bernières-sur-Mer which again springs from a round moulding. Bouillancourt is square at the top with a head at each corner; between the heads two sides have arches and two have leaves. Below, the stone is cut away to produce a round profile to match the top of the cylindrical shaft and this section is decorated with eight large leaves.

⁵⁵ V. Brandicourt says, p. 476, that the font at Vers is closer to the Selincourt type of thinner bowl but is on a central support and four colonnettes. He dates it to the thirteenth century.

⁵⁶ See note 7.

⁵⁷ The author drew the circumstances to the notice of the curator of the municipal museum (summer 2000) and is hoped that some action may be taken to improve the situation.

⁵⁸ A. de Caumont, *Abécédaire*, p. 310. See also G. Pudelko, p. 41 who says that ten further examples are known: Bosmont, Clamerey, Corribert, Danneraucourt, Lixy, Neuville, Roy-Boisny, St Sardos, Tanis and La Ville-sous-Orbais. Enlart adds Bohain, Presle and Rieux.

At Plaignes-Saint-Lange each corner of the square table at the top is supported on an unusual form of volute, formed of feathery leaves in plain frames extending the full height of the block; similar leaves fill the central space between the volutes but do not reach the top. Bouillancourt, also with salient corner heads, has eight large leaves on the round lower section and the square upper part has leaf motifs on two faces, arcading on the others. Angicourt was fashioned as a font to look like a capital but there are also former capitals in which basins have been hollowed out for reuse as fonts. One example is at Menat [155] in the northern part of the Auvergne. The decoration is historiated, with four figures the full height of the block assisting the transition from the cylindrical bottom to the square top, their heads acting as volutes at the corners like the Corinthian capitals on which the type is modelled.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ The narrative sculpture relates to a legend of a virgin saint who resisted inducements to marry a man not of her faith, clear confirmation that it is a reused capital, not a font fashioned in that shape, as there is no connection between the story of the saint and the rite of baptism.

