

FONTS IN HEREFORDSHIRE

By
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ILLUSTRATED WITH 200 PHOTOGRAPHS

by
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PART I

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FONT, EARDISLEY CHURCH HEREFORDSHIRE.

*Dedicated by permission to the Most Reverend Tho: Musgrave Archbishop of York
Late Bishop of Hereford*

CONTENTS

Historical foreword	...	...	...	...	...	...	Page 1
SECTION 1							
Saxon font	...	...	...	...	...	...	Number 1
SECTION 2							
Norman fonts							
Group I.	Imitation of wooden tub fonts	...	...	...	...	...	Numbers 2 to 7
„ II.	Chalice-shaped fonts with cable mouldings	...	...	...	...	„	8 to 12
„ III.	Figure sculptured fonts	...	...	...	...	„	13 to 21
„ IV.	Fonts with ornamental sculpture or incised decoration	...	...	...	...	„	22 to 40
„ V.	Five legged fonts	...	...	...	...	„	41 to 44
„ VI.	Plain fonts	...	...	...	...	„	45 to 86
SECTION 3							
Thirteenth century to Reformation fonts							
Group I.	1200 to 1299	...	...	...	...	„	87 to 106
„ II.	1300 to 1399	...	...	...	...	„	107 to 129
„ III.	1400 to 1550	...	...	...	...	„	130 to 153
SECTION 4							
Post-Reformation to the Restoration, 1560 to 1660						„	154 to 161
SECTION 5							
The Restoration to 1830						„	162 to 185
SECTION 6							
Later nineteenth century fonts, and mortars.						„	186 to 203
Portrait of George Marshall, F.S.A.						„	Page 63

FONTS IN HEREFORDSHIRE.

FOREWORD.

In reviewing the fonts in Herefordshire, it is not proposed to write a treatise on baptism in general, but only to consider what little we know of when, and how, Christianity reached the county.

Herefordshire in this respect stood in rather an anomalous position, for the part south of the Wye had been Christianized by the Celtic church before the Saxons penetrated the district now forming part of the county and found themselves held up on the north side of the river, with the Welsh fully organised as regards church matters on the opposite bank. That the Saxons on their advent to the county had already adopted the Christian religion¹ is supported, apart from other evidence, by the fact that no pagan Saxon cemeteries or single burials have been found. This race when in the pagan state interred their dead adorned with the ornaments they wore when alive, but after their conversion no jewels or trinkets accompanied them to the grave.

The Saxon invasion of Herefordshire was carried out by the Hwicce, who were located in Worcestershire and adjoining parts, probably about the middle of the seventh century. They no doubt followed the prehistoric trading trackways, such as the salt-way which led from Droitwich; and possibly sections, at least, of the Roman road from Worcester to Kenchester were available. In either case the ford at Hereford would have been a nodal point at which to reach the Wye.

This Saxon penetration of the county must have occurred in the time of Penda, King of Mercia (626-654). Though an obdurate heathen himself, he permitted his son Peada, on his marriage with the daughter of Oswy, King of Bernicia, to be baptised. When his brother Wulfhere came to the throne (657-675), the whole of Mercia adopted Christianity.² *The Liber Landavensis* (pp. 182, iii, 442) quotes a charter, which purports to be in the time of Teithfallt and Ithael Kings of Wales, therefore about 600 A.D., relating that the most treacherous Saxon nation had invaded the Welsh territory in the neighbourhood of Hereford, and depopulated the land which had also suffered from an uncommon pestilence, but that it was recovered and the rightful owners reinstated.

¹ In their case it was the Latin Church with the Pope at its head.

² *Anglo-Saxon England* by F. M. Stenton, 1943; and *A History of the Anglo-Saxons* by R. H. Hodgkin, 1939, 2 vols., 2^d. ed.

If the Saxons had reached the Wye at this early period they were undoubtedly pagans, but as the charter is in Latin it must be a later composition, and though probably based on tradition cannot be relied on for the dates. It is evidently inserted as a proof that the various churches mentioned had belonged to Hereford from very early times.

Everything points to such an invasion having taken place, but whether it was beaten back before the final occupation there is little evidence to prove beyond the above statement, but at the Norman conquest the Saxons were undoubtedly in possession of the land between the Wye and the Dore.

To return to the first Saxon occupation of Herefordshire, known during the following centuries as *Magonaetian*, that is the people of *Magon*. Just as from *Dornsaete* and *Sumersaete* were derived *Dorchester* and *Somerton*, it is not improbable the Roman *Magna* (*Kenchester*) was the root of the name of the Herefordshire district including part of Shropshire to the Severn.

The evidence is certainly in favour of the Saxons being Christians when they over-ran the county, and that being so adult baptisms would have been few, and those chiefly of the earlier races who might have been converted.

A few words are required on the rite of baptism, the first rite to be administered to all who wished to become members of the Christian church. It was the most important of the seven rites of the church, though later overshadowed by the Eucharist, a daily observance, whereas baptism occurred but once in a lifetime.

In very early times when adults were baptised it was by partial immersion in some river or spring, that is in 'living water'.¹ Later, at the time when Herefordshire comes into the picture, it would have been by affusion, standing in a sacred spring, or stream, or failing these, in a shallow tub from which the priest poured water over the head of the candidate. In such a tub lay the rudiments of the later font.

An ordinance was promulgated in 1236 that all churches were to be provided with stone fonts. From this it may be inferred that a great number of fonts were made of wood, probably in the form of tubs, or in the shape of the later upright stone fonts. Such wooden fonts after years of use would almost inevitably become liable to leak, especially as the water had to remain in the

¹ At *Morvah* in Cornwall is a small ruined chapel with parts of the walls standing and a stone altar *in situ*. It measures inside about 12 ft. by 8 ft. and in the south-west corner is a circular recess where water came in, now deflected but with provision made to bring it back through a pipe. I was told by an old farmer in 1939 that the Methodists held a service here twice in May, and the rector one in June or July when they baptise infants. It is quite possible that adults may have been baptised here in early times.

vessel for weeks together, having been blessed by the bishop or at a later period by a lesser ecclesiastic. It is more than certain that some fonts still exist of Saxon workmanship in churches where previously there was one of wood, coeval with the foundation of the church. In recent years a wooden font is said to have existed in Downton church in this county but to have been given to another church or sold as an antique. The earliest font in Herefordshire is possibly the one at Kingstone (1) which may well be pre-conquest, but see remarks under the description of this font.

It will be well for the benefit of those not conversant with the rite of baptism as administered previous to the Reformation, to state exactly what the ceremony was, and the things needful for its performance. First and foremost was the water with which the font was filled, preferably obtained from a neighbouring spring usually dedicated to some saint, or lacking such a source of supply, from the nearest running water. During the benediction of the water, a lighted candle was carried, drops of the wax from it being allowed to fall in the water in the form of a cross, and also a cross was made as the candle was dipped in the water, both rites accompanied by the appropriate words from the liturgy.

The font, being consecrated, was ready for baptism, but in the meantime it had to be guarded from improper use of the holy water and the intrusion of dust, so various edicts were promulgated as to the covering and locking of fonts, on which point more will be said presently. The water in the font having been blessed, it was usually covered with a cloth from the night before Easter and Whitsunday until the last service on those days. This cloth was sometimes painted with a religious subject, and was intended to exclude foreign bodies polluting the water.

When a candidate for baptism arrived at the church door, he or she was met by the priest, who administered the "salt of wisdom". This done they entered the church and went to the font which was generally just west of the south door. Here the priest applied his saliva with his thumb to the ears and nostrils of the one about to be baptised. The infant's clothes were then removed and the rest of the ceremony took place with the candidate in a state of nature.

The chrismatory, a vessel necessary for this rite, contained three small pots, one with the oil of the sick, one with the oil of catechumens, and the other with the oil of chrism. These, having been previously consecrated by the Bishop, were kept carefully locked in an aumbry in the chancel or, very occasionally, in a special locker near the font. The ceremony entailed the bringing down from the chancel, in procession, the chrismatory wrapped in a white

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cloth, and a lighted candle, and the book of the baptismal liturgy.¹ It is obvious that in a small parish church where there was only one priest, he could not hold all these objects himself. In such a case there is no information to explain what the procedure was, but probably the chrismatory was placed on the edge of the font, which would account for pre-reformation fonts being almost invariably about three to five inches thick. The office book may have been held by a godparent or one of the congregation, and the candle by a boy. In the larger churches a deacon held the chrismatory, the sub-deacon the book, and an acolyte the candle.

A godparent, held the naked child after the renunciation had been made, and the candidate was anointed by the priest with the chrism of catechumens on the breast and between the shoulders. He then took the infant and dipped it in the water in the font, first on the left side, and then on the right side, and lastly face down, saying the appropriate words between each dipping. This was known as trine immersion. This done, one of the godparents held the infant while the priest anointed it on the head with the oil of chrism in the form of a cross. The child was then clothed in white garments, and the head bound with a fillet where the holy oil had been applied. These clothes were not to be removed for seven days, but should death take place within that period the child was to be buried in them. The ceremony was concluded by the godparents washing their hands in case any of the oil should be adhering to them. For this purpose an ewer and basin were provided, and the water so used had to be poured down a drain by the font, though such are rarely found, or in the nearest piscina, so that it flowed into consecrated ground.

In describing the fonts of Herefordshire it will be well to divide them under the following sections:—

1. Saxon.
2. Norman.
3. Thirteenth century to the Reformation.
4. Post-Reformation to the end of the seventeenth century.
5. Eighteenth to early nineteenth century.
6. Modern.

The above headings will be again subdivided to simplify the classification of the different periods.

It is not proposed to deal exhaustively with modern fonts but a few call for some remarks.

¹ At the Archidiaconal Visitation in 1397 (*English Historical Review*, Vol. XLIV (1929), p. 283), it was found that at Peterchurch there was no missal for use at the service for the baptism of children.

SECTION 1.

SAXON.

The earliest source of water for baptism in Saxon Herefordshire was no doubt the direct use of springs and streams, followed by a wooden tub, soon to be succeeded by a more permanent vessel of stone. There are no definite survivals of these wooden vessels in Herefordshire, but a very early example in stone is to be seen at Kingstone. That at Patricio just over the border is a late Saxon, or very early Norman, font with an inscription telling us that it was made in the time of Genillin, who is supposed to have lived in the middle of the 11th century. This font is no doubt coeval with the foundation of the church, which was consecrated by the Bishop of Llandaff in 1056.¹

1. **Kingstone.** This font is crudely fashioned out of a block of limestone, probably from the same bed in the Golden Valley as the Norman fonts of Bredwardine, Kilpeck, and others in that group; or possibly from a loose boulder found on the surface.

The reasons for attributing this font to the Saxon period are that the thickness of the rim is only $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, whereas all Norman fonts are at least three to five inches thick to accommodate the pots of holy oil or the chrismatory, as explained in the foreword; and secondly because Kingstone was in the possession of the Saxon king before the Norman conquest, and would in consequence have been provided with a church at this early period.

The font certainly has no similitude to any of its Norman successors, and is such a one as would have been likely to exist in Saxon times, the bowl standing on the ground with no other support.

SECTION 2.

NORMAN.

With the coming of the Normans many new churches sprang into being. No Saxon predecessors have survived in the county with the exception of Mathon which in recent years has been transferred from Worcestershire. There may have been a small number of churches of wood that have been replaced by stone, but probably large districts were served from centres such as Bromyard, Hereford, Madley and Bosbury.

¹ *Liber Landavensis*, p. 552; *Woolhope Transactions* 1885, page 282, *illus.*

When one of the new Norman lords provided for himself and his retainers a place of worship it would have included a font, probably of wood, but soon replaced by stone. In many cases the fonts in existence are coeval with the first Norman church. Most are of bucket shape, with upright or sloping sides, and sometimes with bands round them in imitation of the withys that bound the wooden tubs. The shape of the font was largely ruled by the stone available.

A peculiarity of late eleventh and twelfth century fonts is the double plug drain hole called hereafter a double drain hole, formed by a large sinking, generally about four or five inches across, and two inches deep with a small hole in the centre. This no doubt was devised to aid the retaining of the water in the bowl, sometimes for weeks together. One of the original plugs of stone is to be found at Kilpeck, an unique example. These double drain holes, as far as I am aware, have never been alluded to in any other work on fonts.

In the early thirteenth century covers were ordered to be provided to prevent the profanation of the water, and they were to be kept locked. Hence nearly all medieval fonts have the remains of iron staples in the rims, for the insertion of a rod across the lid with a padlock to secure it.

The drainage of the font was effected by a hole in the base of the bowl passing through the stem and into the ground below, where a small pit or sometimes a stone vessel or sump, somewhat similar to an inverted font bowl, received the water. This drainage had to be provided because the blessed water from the font had to drain on to consecrated ground. A few of the sumps have been found and are alluded to when describing the font. In some cases where a new font has been provided the old bowl has been converted into a sump by turning it upside down and thus the holy vessel was retained in the church instead of its being cast out and used for non-religious purposes.

Herefordshire has some of the largest and best sculptured Norman fonts in the country. Brédwardine, Kilpeck and Madley are outstanding in size, and Castle Frome and Eardisley are renowned for their magnificent sculpture.

GROUP I

In imitation of wooden tub fonts.

This group comprises fonts with either rounded or flat hoops in imitation of the withies which bound together the staves of the former wooden tub-like fonts, which in some instances may have survived throughout the 12th century.

2. Bromyard. A fine sculptured bucket font with hoops in imitation of those on a tub. On the upper course of sculpture is a "Tree of Life," a small portion of which can be seen on the left side of the illustration. The lower zig-zag course may be intended to represent water. The bowl has straight vertical sides with a saucer-shaped bottom.

In 1912 the font was moved from the central aisle to the south aisle behind the door, where it was found to have stood at some former time. In 1887 it is said to have been "rescued from its hiding place" and "placed in its proper position", no doubt supposed to be at the west end of the central aisle.¹

The font probably dates from the time when the present cruciform Norman church was built about 1160.

We know from documentary evidence that there was a college of priests here in Saxon times.

3. Dormington. This is a late 12th century font of rather coarse grey and reddish sandstone with slight transitional Norman-Early English features.

The thickness of the rim is $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches, but this includes the projecting roll mould, which has a quirk on the upper side, and there is another roll mould round the centre of the bowl reminiscent of the withy bands round a tub. At the bottom of the stem is a similar roll with what may be a rudimentary water-holding base.

The basin has straight sides 12 inches deep, and a straight sloping bottom. The whole depth is $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches. It has no lead lining. The places where the lock staples have been removed are patched with new stone. The whole font has been slightly scabbled over, no doubt in an attempt to remove the coating of whitewash with which it was covered. There is no cover. The base and standing steps are modern.

Inside the font, in 1932, was a pewter bowl with a foot $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches high, and $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches across inside, with an everted rim. The date of this object may be early nineteenth century.

4. Monkland. A bucket-shaped font of sandstone with one flat band $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide round the bowl, indicative of its progenitor the wooden tub with its necessary hoops.

The interior diameter of the basin is $19\frac{1}{2}$ to 20 inches and 10 inches to the flat bottom in which is a double drain hole $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches across and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. There are marks of the lock staples, there is no lead lining, and the cover is modern. Inside the basin near the top is a staple, no doubt for attaching the chain of the plug.

Dingley in his *History from Marble*, p. cclxix, gives a drawing of this font, which shows the bowl as now existing, but the stem

¹ *Woolhope Club Transactions*; 1887, p. 124.

with the part below are rather different and are modern, dating from the restoration of the church by G. E. Street in 1865. A full account of the church with photographs of the interior is to be found in the *Ecclesiologist* for 1866.

5. Much Marele. This fine bucket-shaped font made from a block of limestone has three flat bands such as one would expect to find if it were a wooden font. It probably dates from the middle of the 12th century, when a cruciform church, or at least one with a central tower was in being. The *R.C.H.M.*, vol. II, 129, says it is 13th century, and while it is just possible that it might be early in that century as the Commission says, it seems to me that from its general character and double drain-hole it must have belonged to the earlier Norman church.

The interior of the bowl is basin-shaped, 23 inches in diameter and 13 inches deep. It is lined with lead, turned over to the outside of the rim, which is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. There are indications of a double drain-hole about 4 inches across. The rim has a repair on one side about 15 inches in length and $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep, no doubt where a staple has been wrenched out (*see* illustration). Any remains of the opposite staple are obscured by the lead. There is no cover.

6. Welsh Newton. This bucket-shaped font is another of those in imitation of their wooden forerunners. Round the centre, which has a slight bulge, is a flat band 3 inches wide and another at the base 1 inch wide.

The bowl is of sandstone with traces of colourwash. The diameter of the interior of the basin is $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches and the exterior 29 inches. There is a double drain-hole about 5 inches across, now filled with lead, and a modern small hole with a brass plug. The interior is 12 inches in depth.

The staples for the cover have been roughly torn out and the damage repaired with cement.

The bowl is mounted on a low circular pillar standing on an octagonal base stone, both modern. Originally no doubt this bowl stood on the ground with no other support. It probably dates from the early part of the 12th century.

7. Little Hereford. This font is at the west end of the church, under the tower arch. The bowl is of whitish grey sandstone. The base is circular, in two parts, each made up of three pieces, apparently from a different bed of stone and is probably modern, judging from the tooling and the fact that the bowl has not been so treated.

There is a flat stone hoop two inches high just below the rim, and above this rim a wooden one about an inch thick has been

added, presumably to get a flat surface to carry the modern cover, hiding any remains of lock staples that may exist, but two pieces of iron $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches high have been inserted to keep the present cover in place.

The diameter of the basin inside is about $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the depth 11 inches, and the rim irregularly 3 inches. There is a double plug hole filled with lead and a new hole stopped with a cork.

The interior of the font is now basin-shaped, being lined with some kind of cement, evidently modern.

This font may be coeval with the earliest part of the church.

GROUP II

Chalice-shaped fonts with cable mouldings.

These probably include some of the earliest of the decorated fonts, and are the forerunners of most of the fine figured sculptured specimens in Group III. A cable moulding was a favourite early Norman ornament and continued in use during the whole of that period.

8. Humber. The date of the bowl of this font is probably about 1120, when the nave of the church may have been built. The bowl was found in a neighbouring garden sometime between 1881 and 1885 and reinstated by the incumbent, the Rev. H. V. Bacon, rector 1881 to 1887 (*Woolhope Transactions*, 1885, p. 338). It was then transmogrified into the present monstrosity.

No doubt it was originally a chalice-shaped font like Peterchurch (9) but the part below the cable moulding has been cut off, the rim reduced by about 3 inches and the bowl trimmed into an octagon. All below the cable is of a cold smooth white stone or some kind of cement, contrasting horribly with the sandstone bowl. This effect is greatly modified in the photograph. The incised chevron ornament on the new part may have been copied from the upper part of the bowl as at Kington (11).

The material of the bowl is a micaceous dark greyish sandstone. What is left of the basin is now only $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, has straight sides and a flat bottom, with a double drain hole $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches across. The diameter of the bowl inside is 16 inches and the width outside $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The width of the rim is now $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in the narrowest part. Probably it was originally about 4 inches wide. The lock marks have disappeared in the process of cutting down. There is no lining and the cover is modern.

9. Peterchurch. The font, in addition to a cable mould round the waist, has a chevron pattern round the top of the rim (cf. similar fonts at Kington and elsewhere). It was provided no doubt when the present Norman church was built about 1120. The basin is bucket-shaped with sloping sides and a flat bottom. There is a double drain-hole 6 inches across and 2 inches deep. The octagonal base stone is of a late period, and the standing step is modern.

10. Little Birch. This font has the original bowl, including a cable mould of the Peterchurch (9) type. All below this is modern.

The bowl was discovered in a cottage or farm in the parish in 1869, the year in which the church was entirely rebuilt, during the incumbency of the Rev. Stephen Thackwell (1855-1883). In 1937 the sexton told me that he was the first child to be baptised in it after the reinstatement.

The interior of the bowl has slightly concave sides and a saucer-shaped bottom.

A large hole 6 inches down from the rim, 8 inches wide at the top and 10 inches at the bottom has been cut through the bowl, and was filled up with stone, no doubt, when replaced in the church. The bowl was probably used as a pump trough after its ejection from the church. I have no record of the font in use previous to the reinstatement of the old one.

11. Kington. This font is the same as Peterchurch, but the chevron pattern below the rim is incised, not in relief (cf. Byton and Humber (8)). The lower part of the bowl is trimmed to an octagon to fit a modern stem, and the two base stones are of the same date. This alteration probably took place at the rebuilding of the church in 1873-1874. Parry in his *History of Kington*, 1845, p. 82, describes the font as "a curious and very ancient baptismal font".

Like most Norman fonts it has a double drain-hole, 4½ inches across, now blocked and furnished with a modern hole and plug. The basin is bucket-shaped, with sloping sides and flat scabbled bottom. The rim has a slight chamfer inside and outside, with stumps of the lock staples.

The date of the font bowl is no doubt early, 1120-1130.

12. Blakemere. This font belongs to the group of chalice-shaped examples with a cable round the waist, of which Peterchurch (9) may be the prototype, but it has been mutilated in the lower part at some subsequent period.

It is of local sandstone, has the usual indications where the lock staples have been removed, and has never been lead lined.

The basin has straight sloping sides $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, the diameter on the top inside is 22 inches and 18 inches at the bottom, which is nearly flat.

There is a double drain-hole of exceptional size $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches across and 4 inches deep, whereas a usual size might be about 4 inches by 2 inches. Into this sinking is fitted a pewter basin with a flat narrow turnover at the rim to facilitate removal.

The only theory I can think of to explain the enormous size both in width and depth of the double drain-hole, and the pewter basin, is to be found in what happened in the time of the Commonwealth. A Directory for Public Worship was drawn up in 1645 in which fonts were ordered to be abolished and a basin used instead but not in the place where the font stood in pre-Reformation times. The Sacrament was to be administered from the reading desk, and any small vessel might be used to hold the water, standing on a small table or stool near the priest. When out of use it was kept on or under the altar, or elsewhere.

The Blakemere font may have had the drain-hole enlarged and the pewter basin fitted at this time, thus partially conforming to the order. That Herefordshire took little notice of such orders may be gathered from the survival of a large percentage of its ancient fonts.

The bowl below the cable mould has been cut to an octagon at an unknown period. The stem and base are modern, perhaps supplied when the church was rebuilt in 1876.

The cover is modern.

GROUP III

Figure sculptured fonts.

The fonts in this small group are some of the most remarkable in the country. They belong chiefly to the middle of the 12th century and the shape of their bowls varies.

13. Whitbourne. Here is a Norman sandstone bowl on a round stem of two pieces, the upper one modern, the lower of the same sandstone as the bowl, and with the same tooling. The standing step and stone below are modern.

The bowl is surrounded by an effective band of interlocking stars interrupted at one point by a much-damaged *Agnus Dei* facing right, emblem of St. John the Baptist, and so suitable for the baptismal font.

The bowl is small, basin-shaped, 20 inches interior diameter and 23 inches exterior, with the rim irregular $2\frac{1}{4}$ to 3 inches wide.

The depth of the basin is 11 inches and the double drain-hole about 3 inches across, now covered by the lead lining which obscures any lock marks that may exist.

There is no cover.

REFERENCE: *Woolhope Transactions*: 1924, p. LXXXIX, see illustration with the *Agnus Dei* shown.

14. How Caple. The bowl of this font is all that remains of one in the Norman tradition, in that it has sculpture and a double drain hole of that period, but an octagon bowl, the date of which otherwise one would attribute to a period not earlier than the 13th century. The sculpture is very crude and indicates a time for its execution at the end of the 12th century. On the east face is an *Agnus Dei* (Whitbourne 13, is also so adorned).

None of the other faces seem to have any symbolical meaning.

When the church was restored in 1909 this bowl was found buried under the late 17th century font¹, which stood in the centre of the tower floor, doing duty no doubt as a sump. Mr. Lennox Lee of the Court had it restored and erected at the west end by the south door on an octagon stem on which are cut L's, the initials of his name. Judging by the circular double roll moulds below the octagon bowl, most probably before burial it had a round stem.

The bowl is of limestone (?), the round basin 22 inches across the top and $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch less at the bottom. The straight side is 11 inches, and the depth to the double drain-hole 12 inches, which is now closed but was about 3 inches across. The thickness of the rim is irregular, about $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 inches, and is badly damaged where the lock staples have been wrenched out.

The font cover surmounted by carved figures of wood is modern and has an inscription to Mr. Lee's children.

15. Eardisley. This is a chalice-shaped font, and by the more finished type of sculpture may be ascribed to a rather later date than that found on the font at Castle Frome and on the church at Kilpeck, perhaps sometime between 1150 and 1160.

The bowl has been damaged in the upper part, either after the Reformation or during the Commonwealth, and repaired by fitting a hoop of iron about an inch deep round the outside near the top. At the same time a lead lining was supplied which is just turned over the hoop.

There is a peculiarity which makes it in my opinion nearly certain, that there is another similar hoop round the inner side of the rim, as the lead has sunk on to the face as if the hoops were slightly above the level of the rim. The outer hoop is very rusty

¹ See footnote under section 4.

and the lead of considerable antiquity; this is cut away where the staples for securing the lid must have existed when the lining was fitted, which would rather suit the earlier date suggested above for the font repairs. The stubs of the staples may still be seen.

The height of the font and the upper steps is 31 to 32 inches. Both the steps may be coeval with the font. The interior diameter of the basin is 23 inches and the exterior 31, and the rim 3 to 4 inches wide. The basin is bucket-shaped with vertical sides, 13½ inches to the saucer-shaped bottom, the total depth being 14½ inches. There appears to be a double drain-hole about 3½ inches wide.

The elaborately carved cover is of oak, perhaps supplied at the restoration of the church in 1862.

The sculpture depicts a favourite Norman subject¹ generally known as "the Harrowing of Hell". The old word to harrow meaning to spoil or rob. The incident was taken from the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, chap. xviii, xix. It shows a man with a moustache and a pointed beard, with a plain nimbus, a roll or book in his left hand, his right rests on his hip, with a coil falling from the left side of his waist. The Holy Spirit in the form of a dove has alighted on his left shoulder. The bird is now nearly obliterated but shows very clearly on a large lithograph (*Frontispiece*) from a drawing by Miss Price, dedicated to Thomas Musgrave, Archbishop of York, late Bishop of Hereford, so it must be after 1847 and before 1860. The figure represents Adam whom Christ has just set free from hell. Christ, on Adam's left side with a cruciferous nimbus, is dragging with his left hand a small saint with a nimbus, from the toils of Satan, in the form of a mass of coils, while with his right hand he plunges a staff with a Maltese cross head, into the mouth of hell, usually represented by a dragon's mouth, but here absent.² On Adam's right hand is a man in a conical head-dress who thrusts a spear into the leg of a similarly dressed figure, who is about to strike with a wide-bladed short sword, which may be intended to illustrate the words in the Gospel of St. John, xiii, 18: "he hath lifted up his heel against me", the figures being a good and bad inmate of Hell respectively. All these figures have the folds of the garments to a little above the elbow shown vertically, below which they are horizontal. On the sculpture at Kilpeck and Shobdon they are entirely horizontal. Close to the back of the man with the sword, is a lion full face but proceeding in the opposite direction. It

¹ Good illustrations of the font are given in the *Royal Historical Commission's Report on Herefordshire*, Vol. III, plate 105; Bond's *Fonts*, p. 53, and elsewhere.

² This subject is portrayed on a tympanum at Shobdon, *vide The Ancient Church of Shobdon* by G. R. Lewis, 1852, plate 14, and *Woolhope Transactions*, 1918, p. 56, illustrated.

has erroneously been said by Bond and Wall, and repeated elsewhere, that this animal has one eye shut, the Bestiaries describe it as always sleeping with one eye open, if not both. Here, however, it undoubtedly has both open but the stone is rather worn. This lion is most likely the Lion of Judah typical of Christ triumphing over death and hell (Rev. v, 5, and *Animal Symbolism* by E. P. Evans, 1896, p. 87). The fact that the lion is not only not entwined with the coils, but has a regular laced pattern over its back, make it certain that it is a good lion representing a Christian.

16, a, b, c, d, e. Castle Frome. This font for boldness of execution and treatment of the subject is one of the finest, if not the best, of the sculptured Norman examples in the kingdom. I consider it perhaps to be only eclipsed as a work of art of the period by that at Bodmin in Cornwall, which is more refined in details and general balance and apparently of rather later date.

The church of Castle Frome is small, with lofty nave walls of neatly dressed stones with fine coursed joints. This is evidently early Norman, about the last quarter of the 11th century, of which further proof is afforded by a Saxon sundial over the south nave doorway.

The font cannot be contemporary with the church, it more likely was made about 1140 or a little before that date, and is very large in every respect, especially for such a small building. It is of local sandstone; the basin, lined with lead, measures 28 inches across the top inside, is bowl-shaped and 15 inches deep, with a double drain-hole about 3 inches across as far as can be judged through the lead. The rim is $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, making the whole width of the bowl $37\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The total height from the modern circular stone base is $39\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Of this the bowl and stem are $29\frac{1}{2}$ inches and the creatures below $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches; these are on a separate stone. One lock mark is broken away, the other has the remains of the staple and is made good with lead. There is now no cover.

The subject sculptured on the font is the Baptism of Christ. Just below the rim is a wide band of three strands of plaited basketwork. The chief subject below this is the figure of Christ as a small boy seated in a whirlpool representing the Jordan, in which swim four fish to show that water was intended, being symbolical of baptism (cf. Wormsley). The water is drawn as flowing out at the base of the pool. I am doubtful if the figure of Christ is not meant to show him as a young man as he appears to have a moustache. On his right side stands John the Baptist in an alb, a halo round his head, and a maniple, the ends of which are worked with a St. Andrew's cross, over his right arm, which vestment is almost invariably carried on the left arm. He is about to place his right hand in the act of blessing on Christ's head, while he holds up his open left with the palm

outwards. In the centre the Divine Hand touches the head of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descends on his left side, the beak just touching Christ's head.

Reading from left to right are, two doves pecking at each other, representing Christians in brotherly love, then follows a winged ox, or calf, for it has no horns, facing left for St. Luke, and immediately behind this a winged lion facing right for St. Mark, then a very fine eagle facing the lion for St. John, while the remainder of the space to the back of John the Baptist is filled with an angel holding a book in one hand, the fingers of which appear over one edge and the thumb over the opposite one. The wings of this figure are of a very large span with a robe which fits tight round the ankles, leaving the feet bare and raised in a flying sweep reaching the plaited ornament round the rim. This is the symbol of St. Matthew.

The empty spaces below this composition are filled with simple stringed lace work of no set pattern, to represent the toils that beset Christians after baptism.

The font is supported by three crouching figures with their hands held under their chins. Unfortunately in two of the three the head is missing, and in two others the hands, so none is perfect, but as in all three the surviving details are the same we may conclude that the missing parts were also similar. The one with a head wears a moustache and beard, and the costumes seem to be shown in the same way as figure sculptures at Kilpeck and elsewhere.

REFERENCES :

- Bond. *Fonts and font covers*, 1908, p. 52.
 Tyrell-Green. *Baptismal fonts*, 1928. Fig. No. 27.

17. Burghill. This font consists of a lead bowl standing on a sculptured Norman stone stem, which is similar to the group of Norman fonts surrounded by an arcade, in each opening of which is a figure of an apostle. Here is a complete series of the twelve apostles and a figure of our Lord. The stem is later than the Hereford group of font bowls but is possibly by the same sculptor or an imitator, and though the arches have pellet moulding the columns are apparently not decorated with similar patterns. The figures are all much defaced and only one of the emblems can now be discerned with any certainty, the fuller's club of St. James the Less. The figure facing east must represent Christ, for it is possible to see that it is seated, unlike the others. The feet rest on a cushion, the halo, too, can be made out, also the right hand is raised in blessing and there appears to be an object in the left hand which must certainly have been an orb. The apostles are standing in a variety of postures, no doubt dictated

by their emblems. Below the arcade is a band of foliage very worn and indistinct, and above a wider band divided into triangles, in each of which is a leaf ornament.

The lead bowl $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches high is a restoration, the upper part only being original. This part has two distinct lines of decoration, the top one being an undulating flat stem with branches ending in a trefoil, filling the undulations, of a simple pattern such as is found in early English iron-work. The line close below this, but bearing no relationship to it, has thirteen round arches truncated just above where their capitals should be, with a small leaf ornament at their junction. There is a rather bungled joint where the lead has been joined, for no doubt, as in other lead fonts, the lead was cast in flat strips and afterwards bent into shape and the ends soldered together.

There is a probability that the thirteen arches originally surmounted a row of lead pillars with capitals. Now here is how Judge Cooke describes the font in his *Continuation of Duncumb (Grimsworth Hundred, p. 60)* published in 1886. "The shaft stands on the uppermost of two plain octagonal steps¹ and has thirteen niches 10 inches high under a series of semi-angular arches, on each of which is a small figure in relief, evidently intended to represent our Saviour and His Apostles, with a scroll above them. The basin part is of lead of equal size about two feet in diameter. This has also thirteen Norman niches *in relief*, which appear never to have held figures *in relief*, but there is a representation of foliage over the niches."

The Rev. E. G. Benson drew my attention to the above account of the font, and said he was of the opinion that Judge Cooke must have been quoting from an earlier account, probably by Duncumb himself. With this suggestion I entirely agree, for it is evident that it is not a description of the font as it was in 1886 but quite possibly written before it was crushed by the fall of the tower in 1810. The description shows that there was an arcade in the lead *in relief*, but no figures *in relief*: this is emphasised by being printed in italics. It must be an account of the lead basin as it was at some time before its restoration in 1882.

The history of the font is interesting, but only part of the story is known. In 1810 the tower at the west end of the church fell down. At the time of this disaster the font stood at the west end of the nave, where the lead part was crushed to such an extent that it was discarded, and a very large sandstone bowl substituted, poised upon the small Norman work just described. This bowl is now lying in the centre of the floor at the base of the tower,

¹ The octagonal steps are of uncertain age and may be original, though this is unlikely. The circular stone with a large chamfer between them and the stem is modern, probably supplied at the restoration of the font in 1882.

and will be described in Section 5. In 1879 the font was removed to its present position at the west end of the south aisle.

In 1867 the Cambrian Archæological Association held its annual meeting in Hereford, when it visited Burghill and recorded finding the remains of the lead font in the vestry, and one of the party, Mr. Bury, F.S.A., offered to see it suitably restored on its original Norman base if sent to London; and there is a further note that the Norman base "is now surmounted by a huge and unsightly stone basin". The lead basin was not, however, restored in accordance with this offer, and it was not until 1882, when extensive rebuilding was carried out on the church, that repairs to the font were put in hand.

Mr. Henry Curzon of London, the architect, reported on the battered remains in these words in 1877: "The font has a modern bowl resting on the ancient sculptured base; the old bowl of cast lead is in the vestry in a battered state, it is capable of restoration and when restored to its proper position will form a most interesting example of an early font".

In 1882 he submitted a drawing and section for the proposed restoration of the lead bowl, which was carried out by a firm at Kington. It showed the decorated upper part as now. All that is left of the original lead bowl is, I think, the part from just below the thickened rim to the bottom of the arches of the thirteen openings of the arcade. The double roll at the base of the bowl is shown as laid over a timber foundation with a flat bottom, the small centre roll as overlaid on an iron ring, and the lining forming the basin as a separate thin sheet of lead.

Fryer, writing in the *Archæological Journal* (1906), vol. LXIII, pp. 100-101, says "While endeavouring to straighten the lead it was found to be so thin that the lower ornamental portion was lost. So the font was relined and strengthened on the outside by the present moulding."

Now what may one assume from these rather vague statements? The architect saw it was capable of restoration, so presumably there must have been some pattern or moulding on the lower part. Fryer, writing many years after, says "The lower ornamental portion was lost", and because it was so thin the present moulding was substituted. If the sides were so thin it is difficult to understand how the bowl stood up unless attached to a wooden foundation, but, if so, such a foundation could have been restored.

Now what can have been the purpose of supplying the lead part of the font with the duplication of the arcades at the time of or soon after the making of the stone part of the font with the arcades?

The only explanation I can offer is the following. That the present stone part is the original bowl of the font. This could be proved were the lead basin lifted off, and *if* lock marks for a cover and a basin, probably with a double drain hole, were disclosed, then I would suggest that as the basin was abnormally small, being only some 9 or 10 inches in diameter with a rim about three inches thick, it was decided to increase its size by the use of lead and so to gain several inches in height and about five inches in diameter.

The lead below the present ornamental upper lead part of the bowl with the lost arcade may have been carried down as a thin lining to the stone basin and so have retained the water to the full depth. The separate lining of the basin shown in the architect's drawing may have been suggested by the thin damaged lower part of the old lead basin.

If the stone base has a flat solid top, it is evident the font bowl must have been a lead one as described by Judge Cooke.

It may have come from the same source as Hereford (20) and other similar fonts in the Severn-Wye estuary, with the same pattern on the piers (cf. Bond, *illus.* Frampton 81, Tidenham 81, Sandhurst 82). The stone from which it is fashioned appears to be the same, though I have failed to detect any mica in it as at Hereford. Transport would have been easy down the Severn and up the Wye. Perhaps the use of lead may have emanated from the same district, for it is here that five lead fonts still exist.

The stone and lead parts of the Burghill font are later than that of the Hereford group, and their date might be about 1180. A more exhaustive study of these points is badly needed before a definite conclusion can be arrived at.

The Hereford font may be fifteen years or so later than suggested under that heading.

The lead basin is 20 inches in diameter across the top, and 9½ inches to the flat bottom, and the thickness of the rim is about ¾ inch. The chain of the plug is attached to a staple halfway up the inside of the basin. The cover is dated 1905 on the carved rim.

NOTE :—My thanks are due to the Rev. E. G. Benson, Vicar of Burghill, for information from his parish chest and elsewhere in regard to this font, and for making suggestions and corrections to my original draft.

18. Orleton. This bucket-shaped font is sculptured with the same subject as the one at Hereford, that is with figures of the Apostles in an arcade. It is a cruder example of the subject than most of such fonts, but the sculpture is in a wonderful state of preservation. It consists of only nine figures instead of the usual twelve or thirteen. Only one has an emblem, namely, St. Peter

with a key in his right hand (*R. C. H. M.*, vol. III, plate 153). This Apostle and the other eight hold a book in their left hands. Reading clockwise from St. Peter, Nos. 2, 4, 5, 6 and 8 hold a short sword or staff, and 3, 7 and 8 grasp their robes pressing them into something that looks like a ball between their thumb and hand. The hair on some of the figures is parted in the middle, in others it is indicated by three rolls across the head. All the figures have beards.

The limestone bowl is 24 inches across the interior of the basin, and across the exterior 32 inches, the rim being 4 inches wide. The straight sides are 12 to 13 inches deep and the bottom slightly saucer-shaped, the centre depth is 14 inches to the double drain-hole which is 4 to 5 inches across and nearly filled with cement. There is a small brass plug. The staples for locking are probably modern, as is also the cover. The height overall is 40½ inches and the bowl 31 inches. The part below this is modern. There are traces of lime wash on the bowl.

With regard to the date of this font, though the sculpture is crude, this is probably due more to the inability of the craftsman than to an early date. Knowledge in respect of the Apostles' emblems was evidently lacking, for only St. Peter is shown with his key, the other figures repeat themselves with or without a short sword or staff.

Other work by this sculptor may possibly be found in Norman figure sculpture in south Shropshire and adjacent areas.

19. Shobdon. This font is evidently coeval with the building of the Norman church which was consecrated by Bishop Robert de Bethune about 1145. This church was pulled down by William, 1st Viscount Bateman, in the year 1752, and the elaborate sculptured remains erected in the park, the present Strawberry Hill Gothic one being built on the site. The Norman font was discarded no doubt at that time and used as a garden ornament at the Court, evidence of which is visible in the rim, where six square holes about 1½ inches in diameter have been cut to carry an umbrella-like skeleton either of iron or wood on which to train creepers growing in the bowl.

The font is chalice-shaped, the bowl quite plain, but three lions¹ walk round the stem. These may represent the powers of evil balked of their prey by the laver of regeneration (*see Tyrell-Green Baptismal Fonts*, p. 62), a suggestion supported by the inscription on the font at Stafford, where there are four crouching lions and the words *Discretus non es si non fugis ecce leones*. The lions at the base of the font at Hereford (20c) and Sutton St. Michael (21) may be in the same category.

¹ *R. C. H. M.* say four lions, but I have been unable to check this.

The font is cut from a block of grey sandstone. The basin is bowl-shaped, $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, and has been redressed, the interior diameter 38 inches, and the rim 5 inches thick but considerably damaged. There is no lining. It is 30 inches high from the square base which is apparently modern.

The font now stands on the south side of the aisle in front of what was the Bateman pew. It was no doubt discarded when the church was rebuilt in 1752-3, and put to the use already stated, and another substituted more in the fashion of the period. But about 1850, it was discovered that this font had *Bacchantes* on it, which was considered most improper. Probably they were *Amorini*; however a new font was purchased by a parish subscription, which did duty until a few years ago, when the Norman font which had been standing in the churchyard for some years was brought into the church, and the 1850 font (*see* illustration under Modern Fonts) took its place in the churchyard. The *Bacchantes* font was used as a garden ornament and is believed to have been sold at the sale of the furniture and effects at Shobdon Court in 1932.

There is a modern oak cover with ornamental iron work and II 65 presumably the supposed date of the font. A $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch modern channel has been cut in the rim into which the cover fits. On the under side of the cover is cut "Made by . . . 1905".

20 a, b, c. Hereford Cathedral. This font is sculptured from a block of very light grey, almost white, slightly micaceous sandstone, which is gradually peeling off. The base stones and sejant lions are of the same stone, but covered with a coating of white-wash and yellow paint. The circular step is modern, inlaid with coloured mosaic, out of character with the old font.

Round the rim of the bowl is a key pattern (? in reference to St. Peter) and below an arcade of twelve arches with figures of the Apostles; all but one of the faces of these have been chiselled off. Probably this mutilation took place during the Civil Wars, when the font was close to the west side of the second Norman column.¹ The most perfect are illustrated here (20a, 20b). They are clothed in the usual robes, but only one retains his emblem, a book with an X on it held in both hands, possibly for St. Andrew. The figures have no haloes, and no tonsures can now be traced.

The columns of the arcades have different patterns the most perfect being a spiral with pellet moulding (20c).

Almost exact replicas of this font are to be found at Rendcombe in Gloucestershire (*Baptismal Fonts*, by E. Tyrell-Green, fig. 49; *B. and G. Arch. Trans.*, Vol. 33 (1910), pp. 293, 303 *illus.*; at Newnham-on-Severn *Ibid.*, Vol. 34 (1911), p. 199; and at

¹ See Browne Willis's plan.

Mitcheldean *Ibid.*, pp. 200, 205). Fryer describing these fonts says Rendcombe has twelve arcades, one empty said to be for Judas, but I think it more probable that this opening may have been against a wall or pillar. Newnham is said to have thirteen arcades and twelve apostles, with no reference to what the other arcade is filled with. The key pattern above the arcade in this font is missing, which rather suggests that the font was never finished.

The font at Mitcheldean has only the lower part of the original bowl, the top has been made up with a copy of that at Newnham. The various mouldings on the columns are reproduced on each font and deserve careful study. Another feature common to these four fonts is that the feet of the figures are below the bases of the columns. There can be no question that they emanate from the same sculptor. The columns on the font at Stoneleigh are similar, see *Transactions of the Birmingham Arch. Soc.*, Vol. xliii, p. 45, plate ix.

The date of the Hereford font may be assigned to the completion of the nave about 1140-1145 (cf. Burghill, p. 19).

It is lead lined, with the lead let in flush across half the rim, and there are indications in the lead that there was a double drain hole 4 inches across. On the south-east face of the bowl are two iron lock marks $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches apart, with slight traces of an iron staple on the opposite side. There is a small old staple on the west outside of the bowl, perhaps to hold the chain of the drain plug.

The Hereford cover is flat oak, possibly of the date when the font was moved at Wyatt's restoration of the cathedral about 1796.

21. Sutton St. Michael. The bowl of this font was recovered from the garden of a neighbouring house on the left of the road leading to Sutton St. Nicholas, in the occupation of Mr. Price, who in 1937 told me that his father, "a long time ago", gave it back to the church. On the outside below the rim are the letters R.P., presumably cut when in possession of the Price family.

The bowl, like that of the font at Sutton St. Nicholas, is made of Withington stone, and like it has no lock marks.

The depth of the basin is 12 inches, the diameter $18\frac{1}{2}$ to 19 inches, and the width of the rim $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 inches. It is bucket-shaped, with straight sloping sides and flat bottom. The plug is modern, let into a little irregular depression half an inch in depth.

In the *Woolhope Transactions*, 1917, p. 231, the Rev. R. H. Craft, then the vicar (1903-1918), tells us that the vessel "that did duty as a font for many years may now be seen in the chancel" (I failed to find this in 1937), and that "the base of the font was, I think, found in the churchyard".

This last statement no doubt is correct, for the stone with the lions is ancient but redressed, those above it are modern, and

of a different stone. These lions are similar to those at the base of the font in Hereford Cathedral (20c), and evidently made by the same man.

This font may be dated like the latter as about 1140.

ADDENDA :—

18. Orleton. On the rim of this font are the letters 'O : P' deeply and neatly cut. These may stand for 'Orleton Parish', or they may be the initials of a churchwarden.

19. Shobdon. Insert 'John Voss' before '1905' in last line.

GROUP IV

Fonts with ornamental sculpture or incised decoration.

In this group the fonts have a variety of ornament, perhaps the most exceptional to be found at Wormsley (37) which has a Maltese cross incised on the bottom of the basin. Vowchurch (29) has a fine font decorated with an adornment that undoubtedly has some hidden meaning. On the base of the font at Much Dewchurch (25) are four faces, in pairs, probably of a man and woman in each case, who may represent the donors of the font.

22. Harewood. This bowl was brought at some time between 1864 and 1890 from Chardstock church in Dorset. It is unlike any Norman font in Herefordshire, being cut from a square block of grey limestone, has a circular basin 11 inches deep with an oval shaped plug hole $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches long now filled with lead, and a small modern outlet plugged with a cork. No doubt the large centre hole in the basin is round, its shape now obscured by the lead filling. On the four sides, which are 25 to 26 inches long by $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches high sloping slightly towards the base, are arcades of four shallow round-headed arches.

This bowl is now mounted on a circular pillar $11\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter, but it is probable that originally there was a pillar at each angle. The pillar stands on a marble base and this on a stone standing step, both of which are modern.

At each of three corners of the rim are two holes now filled with lead, for staples to secure the cover. The fourth corner is broken off but no doubt had the corresponding two holes.

There is no lining or cover. The date of the font may be the third quarter of the 12th century.

A very similar font is to be seen at Pulborough in Sussex, and others of the same character in that county. See illustration, p. 63, in *An Introduction to the Study of English Fonts with details of those in Sussex*, by A. Katherine Walker, 1908.

23. Wolferlow. In the churchyard against the wall is the lower part of a bucket-shaped font of local grey sandstone, sculptured with what must have been a plain arcade. The whole of the side of the basin is broken off level with the bottom, and has disappeared. The bottom of the basin is flat and 20 inches across, the thickness of the bowl is about 3 inches.

There is a double drain-hole 7 inches across that has been cemented up. Through it is an iron plug protruding a few inches on the underside, no doubt of a recent date, possibly to keep the bowl steady on whatever stem it had. This Norman font is probably late 12th century. I saw the remains of it on 22nd February, 1936.

The present font is modern with a four-lobed basin and is *very* large for the small church. The date of it is about 1865.

24. Whitehurch. The circular bowl of this font has arcading, the twelve divisions of which were originally painted, or intended to be painted, with the figures of the apostles. They may, however, have had sculptured figures, for I noted what are apparently lines of drapery on some of the recesses. Possibly these figures were chiselled off after the Reformation, and at the same time the present octagon stem and base were made.

The basin is bucket-shaped with slightly sloping sides and saucer-shaped bottom.

There is a double drain hole $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches across and 3 inches deep.

The rim has been cut down and chamfered on the inside, no doubt doing away with the lock staples as no sign of these exist. The depth of the basin is now only $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

The date of the bowl is probably about 1170.

The modern cover of two slabs of oak screwed together may be about 1840-1850.

25. Much Dewehurch. The material of this font is a local red to grey micaceous sandstone. The modern octagonal base stone of similar but softer stone is already crumbling but the modern upright tooling is perfect in places. No doubt this stone was added to increase the height of the font when general repairs to the church were effected in 1854. At the same time the base and stem were gone lightly over with the same tool in an attempt to clear off the whitewash or paint with which it was covered.

There are two lock marks, one filled with a quantity of lead, the other cemented over. Between these the rim has been repaired with large pieces of stone, probably where another set of staples had been wrenched out. The rim, which is much worn, has been made good with cement.

The bowl is encompassed by an arcade of 12¹ round arches. The lower part of the bowl has been trimmed off to meet the stem, probably when the font was repaired, thus mutilating the base of the columns.

On the plain chamfer on the stone at the base of the stem are four very crude human faces in pairs, one of each having distinct indications of hair, but too primitive to say whether they are meant to represent females. On the other half of the chamfer are four eight-leaved bosses with a circle in the centre pierced with a hole.

The date of the font may be assigned to the last quarter of the 12th century. The fashioning of it, including the decorative features, was probably carried out by a mason who tried his amateur hand at sculpture.

The height of the font from the base stone is 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches, exterior diameter of bowl 29 inches, interior 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and 16 inches at the bottom, which is nearly flat. There is a double drain hole about 4 inches across, now cemented up, with a modern plug hole.

The solid oak cover dates from about 1854. It is fitted with two iron rings for lifting, and an iron cross, fastened with square headed bolts which are painted black and red. The rest of the ironwork is black.

26. Thornbury. The bowl only of this font is original. The basin is bucket-shaped, 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches across at the top, and 17 inches across the dished bottom. The lead lining, which is not very old, finishes within 1 inch of the top of the bowl, and hides the discharge hole, so one cannot say if it conceals a double drain hole as might be expected.

There is a handsome band of lozenge-shaped ornament round the upper part of the bowl.

The date of the font may be about 1140.

27. Middleton-on-the-Hill. I was told in 1934, by the late Miss Hutchinson of Grantsfield, Kimbolton, that this font was recovered from a farmhouse in the parish, where the use to which it was put accounted for the damaged state of the rim.

The basin is bucket-shaped, with straight sloping sides, 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the top and 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ across the slightly saucer-shaped bottom. The depth is exceptional, being 13 inches. It has a double drain hole 4 inches across, now filled with lead, and a new plug hole. There is no lead lining. The bowl is sculptured with a chevron flame-like pattern.

The date of the font may be about 1150.

¹ *The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments* says there are 13 but I have checked these on several occasions and can make only 12.

28. **Edvin Loash.** A new church was erected in 1860, close to the early Norman one, which has been allowed to fall into ruin, including the sculptured Norman font, which was practically intact in 1903 when I took a photograph, unfortunately a very bad one, of the nave including the font. At that time I noticed that there was a circular stone, level with the floor (still *in situ* December, 1949), and on this, forming the lower part of the stem, were four stones, making the same circumference as the circular base stone. These four stones, each 9 inches in depth, are sculptured with a large zig-zag pattern, and apparently above these was a course of random stones a few inches thick of the same circumference, and on this a circular bowl with a moulding round the base. I estimate that this font in height was about 27 inches from the floor level.

Mr. F. C. Morgan in the photograph here illustrated, taken about 1935, shows the sculptured stones piled in disorder. He again visited the church with Mr. George H. Butcher on 31st December, 1949, when they took careful notes of the remains, and found that the four sculptured stones fitted together, forming a circle 29 inches in diameter. The interior of the stem must have been made up of smaller stones. It may be noted that the same lower part of the stem of a fine sculptured Norman font at Holdgate, Shropshire, has similar large zig-zag decoration.¹ At the same time they found a piece of a bowl with a small drain hole. From the centre of this hole to the *outside* of the bowl is 11 inches, so it can have been only 22 inches across. This stone is 9 inches deep in all, the depth of the basin being $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 inches; there were no lock marks on this piece which was probably part of the basin. *The Historical Monuments Commission*, Volume II (1932), described the font in these few words: "part of a round bowl with chevron ornament". This must be a mistaken description as my photograph (28 inset) proves.

This piece of the bowl shows no moulding at the base but it may have been on a separate stone. The depth of the bowl above the moulding I estimate from my photograph as about 9 inches which would tally with this section if 11 inches were the *interior* diameter of the basin, and if the rim were $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, which would tally with the 29 inches across the bowl that I noted was its size in 1903.

My opinion after a general review of the above conflicting measurements is that the only parts of the Norman font that have survived are the sculptured zig-zag stones and the stone on which they stood, and that at some recent time, perhaps in the 18th century, a new bowl was provided. The shallowness of the basin

¹ Bond, *Fonts*, p. 54, *illus.*

precludes its being of the mediæval period, furthermore it has no lock marks.

The date of the Norman part of the font is probably early in the 12th century.

29. Vowehurch. The bowl only of this font is Norman, made of the local limestone from a similar bed to the Turnstone (62) font; and, unlike the Bredwardine (43) group, has never been polished. The stem and base are of grey sandstone and were probably supplied at the restoration of the church in 1848.

The bowl is decorated with scallops which at one point, now facing east, are interrupted by what appear to be two large leaves, probably meant to convey some allusive reference to the rite of baptism not here apparent. Can it be intended to represent the spring from which the living waters of baptism flow?

The basin is, like Shobdon font, bowl shaped, 25½ inches in diameter, 11½ inches deep, and the thickness of the rim 4 to 4½ inches. The stumps of iron staples remain on both sides. A large piece of stone is chipped off the outer rim on one side.

There is no lead lining to the roughly scabbled basin, but some indication that such once existed.

There is a double drain hole, about 4 inches across, now cemented over.

The cover, probably supplied in 1848, is a pyramidal one of oak, the pyramid now loose, on a solid flat lid, is bonded at the angles with ornamental ironwork and surmounted by a metal cross.

30. Yarkhill. This chalice-shaped font of grey sandstone consists of a round bowl, the under part scalloped, a roll mould, and a hollow chamfered stem worked to an octagon. The bowl is Norman, the rest modern or drastically redressed, as the bowl undoubtedly has been.

In *Duncumb, Radlow Hundred*, 1902, p. 163, it says: "The old font was found two years ago in a garden" presumably referring to the stone bowl concerning which the *Historical Monuments Commission* says: "in the tower is a stone bowl with fluted outer surface probably early 18th century". I made a note under date 1905 that this bowl was in the church in the early 19th century and was found at a farm a few years before and was brought back to the church. (Information from the Vicar at that time, the Rev. A. G. Jones.) It is about two feet across and might be a font mounted on an iron stand like the neighbouring fonts of Stoke Edith and Woolhope. It may on the other hand be only a garden ornament as suggested later.

Returning to the present font, it is dressed with modern upright tooling, and has a small drain hole but no plug. A small mortar

in the font was used for christenings when I saw it in 1937. (Information by the Vicar, the Rev. H. H. Stickings.) There is no lead lining, but there are remains of grey paint or whitewash on the bowl. The rim is $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches across and has been cut down and chamfered on the outer edge, but two small pieces of iron survive where a lock staple has been. The diameter of the basin inside is two feet, and two feet nine inches overall, the depth inside is $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with nearly perpendicular sides of 8 inches, and a dished base. The total height is three feet.

The cover is flat of pitch pine reinforced with ironwork, and probably dates from 1863, when the nave was rebuilt.

There is a large mortar with lugs, modern, may be *circa* 1850 in the porch.

There is some ambiguity in regard to the finding of "the old font" as to which vessel is referred to. The weight of evidence favours the stone "flower vase" one. I do not think this has ever been used as a font because the basin is very roughly scabbled and is only a few inches deep. Also it has no drain hole or other evidence of being a font, such as a rebate for a lid, lock marks, signs of a stem or other features.

The present font seems to have been in use about 1860-70, the lid being of that date and could not have fitted "the flower vase" which was found about 1900.

It dates from about 1190-1200 and is coeval with the sculpture on the south nave doorway, which is Early-English and of that date (*vide* illustration in *Historical Monuments Commission*, Vol. II, 1932, plate 15).

81. Michaelchurch Trotton. This font is decorated with three lines of ornament such as were in use in the second quarter of the 12th century. The upper line is composed of intersecting arches, the next has two narrow rows of primitive star ornament, and the third interlacing chevron and diamond patterns in sections.

There is a double drain hole $\frac{1}{2}$ inches across and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, the actual discharge hole is about 1 inch across.

82. Birley. This interesting font, carved from a block of grey micaceous sandstone, is decorated with a primitive series of lines of interlaced basket work round the upper part of the bowl. On the first section of the stem, which is in one piece with the bowl, is a series of interlacing semi-circular arches and below them a chain and a star pattern. The star pattern decreases in depth at one section as if at this point some obstruction prevented the full size continuation of the design (*see illustration*).

This decoration would lead one to date the font about 1140, but possibly a nearer date is indicated by happenings at the time.

An early thirteenth century account in Norman French¹ narrates that the church of Shobdon was built and consecrated by Bishop Robert de Betune at a date that cannot have been earlier than 1141 and not later than 1147, in which year Robert died. After the church at Shobdon had been dedicated, Oliver de Merlimond, chief steward of his lord, Hugh de Mortimer, overheard that the parson of the church at Birley, by name Wolward, had been deprived for his ill-conduct. Oliver asked Bishop Robert to grant him the patronage of that church, which he did, and Oliver then granted it to a canon sent him by the Abbot of St. Victor in France. It may have been at this date that the church of Birley was given a new font, the one under discussion.

The diameter of the bowl inside is 20 inches, and the thickness of the rim about $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The basin is bucket shaped, 12 inches deep with nearly perpendicular sides of 11 inches, and a slightly sloping flat base. There is a double drain hole 6 inches across and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. There is no lead lining, and the two lock marks are now cemented up.

The date of the heavy flat oak cover is about 1875.

33. Cusop. This is a Norman bucket-shaped font of micaceous sandstone lined with lead in which are slight indications of a double drain hole. There are lock marks on the rim.

The outside of the bowl is carved with a plain lattice pattern, etc. (*see illustration*). *The Historical Monuments Commission* says "13th century but ornament probably modern". That the font has been drastically cleaned and in places retooled (I noted this when I saw it in 1907) is evident, but it may be the original design. This ornament, if it is modern, no doubt was added when the church suffered from restoration in 1857. The retooling is very marked below the decoration on the bowl, where the ugly upright lines of the chisel, in the fashion set by Cottingham in the Cathedral at this time, are very clearly to be seen overspilled on the new or reworked base.

In favour of this design being original 12th century work, it may be claimed as a debased example of Norman interlaced basket pattern (*vide* Eardisley (15)) late in the century, which would be supported by the almost water-holding base, if old, on which the bowl stands. The band of carving between the rim and lattice design is the same pattern as on the late Norman font at Michaelchurch Tretire (31) where it is definitely old. Contrariwise, in favour of it being a purely modern design to furbish up a plain Norman font, is the absence of any traces of whitewash or earlier tooling. The edges of the whole design are very sharp, not worn as would be expected if they were ancient.

¹ *The History of Ludlow*, by Thomas Wright, 1852, pp. 95, 96, 102, *et seq.*

It is difficult to decide on the time this decoration was applied, either when the bowl was made, and recut in recent years, or applied *de novo* when the church was restored in 1857. The balance seems to be in favour of the latter, as otherwise some remains of the original work would be in evidence.

34. Byton. This bowl font of grey micaceous sandstone is a cruder edition of the one at Kington (11) in that they both have an incised chevron pattern round the upper part of the bowl. It now has no cable moulding below, but this may have been chiselled off, for it has been cut back in the lower part. Probably it was a chalice-shaped font originally.

In 1859 a new font was installed and the old one turned out of the church.

The following entries from the parish register were given to me in 1936 by the Rector, the Rev. P. D. Irwin.

"1860. March 18th. The first Baptism in which the new font was used.

1915. July 25th. The first Baptism in which the old restored font was used."

The old font and the Norman tympanum were recovered about 1912 by the Rector, the Rev. T. M. Newberry, from the Woodhouse Farm in the parish.¹ In 1945 I found the new font, a very large one of a white stone in 13th century style, in pieces in the vestry at the west end of the church doing duty as a table!

The old font has a lead lining to within two or three inches of the rim, fixed to the sides with screws. This feature was supplied presumably at the old font's reinstatement.

There are curious lock marks across the rim, on opposite sides of the bowl, consisting of a large rectangular hole 2 inches by 1 inch by 2 inches deep, and a smaller one $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. These would seem to have held an unusual type of staple, but it is possible to picture how the locking would have worked with an iron bar threaded through the staples. There are no remains of the staples in these holes.

The date of the font is probably the same as the tympanum about 1145-1150.

35. Kenderchurch. A shallow bucket-shaped bowl mounted on a round stem on a modern square block of stone with the corners chamfered off, and a standing step.

The old bowl and stem are of sandstone. The depth of the basin is 9 inches and the interior diameter 21 inches. There is

¹ See *Woolhope Club Transactions*, 1920, p. lxxix, and *illus.* of tympanum,

a double drain hole $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches across but partly filled with cement. The width of the rim is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches on which is incised an irregular zig-zag pattern. On the inside of the bowl near the top is a cavity about 3 inches deep, straight across the top and rounded below. This is probably due to some defect in the stone which has been tidied up, as there is no purpose it could have served.

36. Rowlstone. On the rim are four groups of three double lines each, like fragments of a chevron pattern. These V-shaped lines are deeply incised and $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of an inch across, and none of the twelve lines touch each other. Except for this curious decoration the font is quite plain. It has a large double drain hole, 2 inches across.

The date of the font like the church is mid-twelfth century.

37. Wormsley. This font no doubt is coeval with the present Early-English church,¹ about 1170, which has a south doorway with a plain lintel carrying a tympanum formed by a single stone. This is faced on the outer side with small stones set anglewise.² The original windows are single light pointed ones with a rebate on the outside to take lattice work or a wooden shutter.

The bucket-shaped bowl stands on a separate thin stone in the form of a flattened roll mould of the type soon to develop into a water-holding base. The supporting stone between is modern.

The interior of the bowl has straight sloping sides and a very crudely-cut base, the hole in which is not central. On the bottom of the bowl is incised a Maltese cross, the lines of which drain to the $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch hole. The only other bowl I know with anything carved on the base, is Ramesbury (Wilts.), which has fish between the arms of a cross.³ There are two lock marks, one cemented up.

In the Archdeacon's Visitation of the Diocese in 1397 it is stated that the font is not locked, the default of the parishioners (*item dicunt quod baptisterium non est seratum in defectu parochiarium*).⁴

38. Brobury. This fine but plain bucket-shaped font has its base furnished with rather clumsy spurs or gryfs at the four corners. The only other fonts in the county with this Norman ornament are to be found at Stanford Bishop (40) and Whitney-on-Wye (39), but examples may be seen elsewhere, as at the base of the responds of the tower at Fownhope.

¹ *Woolhope Club Transactions*, 1924, pp. 158-162.

² Cf. Hatfield, *Woolhope Club Transactions*, 1918, p. 58, *illus.*, but here the lintel is of three stones joined with joggle joints.

³ *Baptismal Fonts*, by E. Tyrell-Green, p. 68, *illus.* Bond's *Fonts*, p. 159 for the symbolic use of fish in baptism.

⁴ *English Historical Review*, vol. XLIX (1929), p. 281.

The interior diameter of the basin is 23 inches with the depth of the sides $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches, total depth $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches. There is a double drain hole $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 inches across. The rim is 5 inches wide with marks of staples for a cover. The material is a fine conglomerate, either sandstone or Golden Valley limestone.

39. Whitney-on-Wye. The bowl of this font is undoubtedly Norman. The base on which it stands has gryfs, and the upper part is octagonal; it was probably given this shape when recovered from the old church in the eighteenth century. The mouldings are not Early-English or mediæval, and the elongated gryfs not the original shape. I am of the opinion that it has been worked from a circular to an octagonal form. It may have been in a damaged condition when recovered after the flood, which in 1735¹ destroyed the old church that stood by the river.

In the west face of the square part of the base stone, is a hole with a lead pipe *in situ*, and on the east face of the same stone is a hole plastered up. Probably the west drainage hole was to drain the font when in the old church near the river, the water level being too high for a sump to be of any use. The east hole may have been a mistake at an early period. These holes are confirmation that the font base is the original stone re-worked to an octagon. The rim has two large pieces broken off it, where the lock staples have been wrenched out. There have been two other staples on a single leg, the iron stump of one remains.

A circular stone, $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches across, is inserted in the base of the bowl, with a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch discharge hole, evidently to fill up a Norman double drain hole.

The basin, 19 inches in diameter, has vertical sides $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, with a slightly dished bottom, the whole depth being $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The bowl has been knocked about, and has flattened patches on it, the whole worked over with later upright tooling.

Above the chancel arch is this inscription: "This church/ was built at the sole/ expense of/ William Warlow/ Esq, Anno Dn 1740 "/. He was the patron of the living and owner of the estate, which his family acquired by marriage with the house of Whitney.

40. Stanford Bishop. This sandstone font is $36\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, not including the modern square base stone. The diameter of the basin is 21 inches with perpendicular sides of $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and a flat bottom with the corners slightly rounded. The rim is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick but probably reduced to this in modern times (the church was restored in 1885) to tidy up the bowl. Traces of the lock marks have been repaired in stone.

¹ Some authorities say 1730, but 1735 is more likely to be correct, for in that year were great floods over all England.

There is no lining. The drain hole has been reduced in size. There are traces of paint on the rudimentary water holding base at the angles of which are foliage gryfs. There is a modern cover.

GROUP V

Five-legged fonts.

In Herefordshire there are only four examples of this type of font and of these one has lost its legs. A large number of such fonts are to be found in Cornwall, though many of them are subsequent to the Norman period, even as late as the sixteenth century; there one might have expected such fonts to be few and far between owing to the intractability of the local stone. Sussex is another county which is rich in this type of font. Speaking generally, the southern counties have far more of these fonts than are to be found farther north. Probably this class of font was introduced from Flanders and northern France.

41. Madley. This font is one of the group of five-legged fonts. The basin is bowl shaped, and lined with old lead, probably when the font was pieced together again at the Restoration, and the present stem built in lieu of the five supports, which no doubt were broken by the Scotch army in 1645. These soldiers were quartered in the church, and no doubt desecrated the font by breaking it in pieces. The Puritans at Lostwithiel in Cornwall held a mock christening of a horse, which they named 'Charles', in contempt of His Sacred Majesty.¹

The bowl of this font, and those of Bredwardine and Kilpeck, come from the same bed of cornstone locally known as The Limestone, probably that up the valley above Snodhill Castle, and of which Drayton in his *Poly-Olbion* writes "Floods... from the marble veins that spout". Camden in his *Britannia* mentions this quarry and most probably was Drayton's source of information.

The beds of this limestone vary in colour, the bowls of the fonts at Kingstone (1) and Turnastone (62) being reddish, different from Kilpeck (44), Bredwardine (43), and the one under discussion, which resemble Purbeck marble. There is another bowl at Bishop's Frome (61), also of a reddish colour, no doubt from an outcrop in that district.

The Madley bowl is 49 inches in diameter and except for one at Ashby in Suffolk,² is the largest ancient font in England that I have been able to trace.

¹ Wall's *Porches and Fonts* (1922), p. 225.

² This is a square font on five legs, said to be 49½ inches in diameter. (*Arch. Camb.*, 6th series, Vol. XVII (1927), p. 253).

The diameter of the top of the basin inside is 35 inches and outside 47 inches, the thickness of the rim being roughly 6 inches. The entire width at the bulge of the bowl is 49 inches.

There are indications in the lead lining that there was a double drain hole about $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches across. The depth of the basin is $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches and of the bowl outside 15 inches. The lead lining is old, and may be *circa* 1660. It makes the basin bowl shaped, but before being lead lined it was no doubt like that of Bredwardine (43). There are two marks which probably are lock marks.

The date of the font is about the third quarter of the 12th century.

42a, 42b. Bosbury. This font is of the five-legged type, but is different from others in the county, in having a square bowl $33\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. The basin is circular, 24 inches across the top, and 17 across the slightly dished bottom. It is lead lined and has initials E R and I W cut in the lead. The lining is fairly old and partly obscures the remains of the lock staples. The whole font has been painted to imitate marble, perhaps in the 17th century which may also be the date of the lead lining. There is a groove on the outside of the rim in which, it has been suggested, there was once a metal band with an inscription, but I could not find the remains of any pins for fixing it in position.

The font may date from the late 12th or early 13th century, at which time nearly all the church was reconstructed.

A sump was found two feet below the font in 1844. This vessel is very roughly made, with a hole in the bottom so irregular that it could never have held a plug, so it evidently was never a font bowl.

REFERENCES :

Woolhope Club Transactions, 1923, p. cvii, *illus.* Charles Cox and Alfred Harvey, *English Church Furniture*, 1907, p. 166.

43. Bredwardine. The bowl of this five-legged font is almost the same size as that of Kilpeck, both are an inch or two less in diameter than the bowl of Madley, but in all other respects they are identical. There can be little doubt that all three came from the same quarry of Psammosteus Limestone in the Golden Valley, and were made about the same time, by the same mason. This stone takes a high polish and these fonts were originally so treated. The fine Norman sculptures here and at Kilpeck church are of quite a different character and stone from that of the fonts. The latter were in all likelihood worked at the quarry, and are contemporary with the sculpture. The four outer legs are of the same limestone. The centre leg in this type of font was not only necessary to carry

the drain channel into a sump below, but useful as an additional support to the heavy bowl.

REFERENCES :

Arch. Camb., 6th series, Vol. XVII, p. 263, *illus.*, 264-267.

Cf. Kingstone (1), Turnastone (62), Kilpeck (44), Madley (41).

44 a, b, c. Kilpeck. This five-legged font is similar to those at Bredwardine (43) and Madley (41), but in one respect is unique in that it is, I believe, the only Norman font with the original stone plug to the double drain hole, which, as I have already pointed out, is to be found in most of the 12th century fonts in Herefordshire and adjoining counties, and no doubt elsewhere. No record has ever been made of this feature, nor is it mentioned in any account of fonts I have consulted, except in the following reference to this plug (44b), made by William Sawyer in the year 1833 in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, part 1, 394, 395, and reprinted in *The Gentleman's Magazine Library, English Topography*, part V, p. 186, where it says after describing the bowl, "A small inner basin, serving as a plug to the drain of the larger basin, is sculptured to resemble basket-work".

When I first saw this plug in the early '90's of the last century it was in the font actually doing duty as a plug. I noted it had a small sinking at the top, as if something had fitted into it, and I have no doubt this was "the small inner basin" mentioned by Sawyer, but whether of stone, china, pewter or other material, I cannot say, but whatever it was it could only have had a stem about two inches long. This fitment must have been introduced after the Reformation, probably during the Commonwealth, when any kind of small basin was used in, or for a font, in preference to the old large bowls. The large drain hole has since been filled up and a modern metal plug fitted.

This plug throws further light on the date of these three cornstone fonts. It has been suggested (*see* Bredwardine (43)) that they came from the same quarry, and were contemporary with the churches in which they are found. Now this plug is of local sandstone, and ornamented with an interlaced pattern, similar to that on some of the corbels on the church. It is evident that the covering of the ball of the plug with this pattern would have been beyond the skill of the man who executed the font. From these two facts we may infer that the sculptor working on the church at Kilpeck was also employed to decorate the plug, and that the date of the church and font are the same, namely, about the third quarter of the 12th century.

This font stood until 1898 in the centre of the chancel (*vide* illustration, from an old photograph in a paper read when the British Archaeological Association held their annual meeting in Hereford-

shire)¹. No doubt we may rightfully surmise that it was moved from its original position at the west end of the nave in the reforming times of the Commonwealth, and a small basin provided as mentioned above.

It is worth noting that in 1610 in the Depositions in an Exchequer suit concerning the tithes of Treville, one of the questions asked on the part of the complainant was " Did you ever hear that the fontstone² or altarstone which once stood in the said church stands in the church or chapel of Kilpeck or in any other place? " As this query was not answered by any of the deponents it can be assumed that this was wishful thinking on the part of the complainant. There is no other mention of Kilpeck in this suit.³

The font is only one inch less in diameter than that at Bredwardine (43).

The late Mr. Illtyd Gardner thought that the four outer legs had not been made for the font but were used from earlier work elsewhere, but as they are of the same stone as the bowl, there seems to be no reason why both parts should not have been made by the same man.⁴

There is another object in this church which has been mistaken for a font, but it is the holy water stoup (44c). A seated figure is clasping in his lap a bowl for the holy water, but unfortunately, the upper part of the figure is missing, and what apparently appears to be the parody of four legs terminates in beak-like tails, unless they are meant to represent the tails of the garment the figure is wearing, who may have been intended for John the Baptist.

GROUP VI

Plain Norman Fonts.

This group comprises the remaining Norman examples, including those with plain mouldings, and a few unclassified specimens. No. 49 is a sump.

45. Stretford. This primitive looking font has the bowl and stem cut from a block of sandstone mounted on a circular stone 5½ inches high, slightly dished on the upper surface, and a quirk near the top edge. Below this is a much larger round stone 6½ inches high.⁵

¹ *The Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, N.S., Vol. XIV. (1900), p. 80.

² Fontstone was a usual term for a font from the 12th century onwards.

³ *Exch. Deps.*, E/134/8, 1 Jan., 1610.

⁴ *Arch. Camb.*, 6th series, Vol. VII, pp. 259-262, *illus.*

⁵ *Woolhope Club Transactions*, 1930, p. 12, *illus.*

The diameter of the basin at the top inside is 20 inches and at the bottom $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the width of the rim is 3 inches and the depth of the basin 13 inches. The total height is $36\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The whole has been retooled in recent times. There are traces of whitewash still to be seen. There is no cover.

The date is probably early 12th century, and coeval with the earliest part of the church.

46. Evesbatch. Here is a plain upright bowl, the basin with straight sides and a slightly dished bottom, resting on a stem of the same circumference built of small stones, with a large circular step below. There is no reason to think that the whole structure is other than the original design.

The lead lining, concealing the drain hole, may be the same date as the cover. In addition the rim has a loose piece of lead turned down over it, obscuring the remains of one lock staple, and the other has been wrenched out and repaired with cement or stone.

The whole is of brown sandstone, no doubt local.

The cover turned out of a single block of wood is quite exceptional. It fits into a groove channelled round the inner rim of the bowl to prevent side slip and dates I think from the early 18th century, but *The Historical Monuments Commission* says early 17th century.

47. Elton. This straight-sided bucket-shaped font is probably a Norman bowl. It was obtained, no doubt, from a local bed of the Wenlock Limestone.

The internal diameter of the basin is $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches and at the bottom $17\frac{1}{4}$ inches, the sloping sides 8 inches, and the depth at the centre $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The rim is $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches in width except on the west side, where a section is reduced to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, brought about by the bowl being trimmed on the west side to a flat face 18 inches across, thus cutting away most of the rim, presumably to fit against a wall. There is no drain hole visible, it is cemented up. Slight traces remain of the lock marks, and there are traces of limewash on the bowl. The stem, base stones, and cover are modern.

48. Hatfield. This primitive font stands under the tower, is circular and cut from a single block of sandstone, with upright sides 27 inches high, and nothing in the shape of a base. The basin has a diameter of $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches inside, with perpendicular sides 11 inches deep, and a flat bottom in which are the remains of a large double drain hole the outlet being about 1 inch across. The thickness of the rim is about $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in which are four lock marks, the removal of the iron work of one has broken away a piece of

the rim. There are the remains of limewash on the bowl. There is no lining or cover.

The date of this bowl may well be soon after the Conquest. It is an interesting example of the type of font in use at that time, when they were more normally of wood.

In 1919 when I visited the church there was a modern font, and the old one was disused.

49. Eastnor. This vessel, or one should rather say, object, is described by the late Rev. H. L. Somers-Cocks, rector of the parish (1915-1929), in his *Eastnor and its Malvern Hills* (Hereford, 1923, pp. 168, 173, *illus.* 186). He says: "The very early date of the church may also be inferred by examining the ancient font, which now stands in the North Aisle, and which, together with the two stones which form its base, was discovered under the floor of the nave when it was being rebuilt in 1851. Its date cannot be determined with accuracy, but it must be one of the earliest in the country, as its much more modern base was carved early in the 14th century and this shows that even the bowl was considered sufficiently venerable to deserve a new support." Unfortunately the position of these stones when found is unrecorded. It can, however, be definitely stated that the bowl is not a font, but a sump beneath a font, into which the holy water drained. The other stones might have belonged to some earlier font, the lowest in the annexed illustration (49) may be Norman, and the upper one late 14th or early 15th century.

Returning to the alleged font, an examination shows a large hole nearly eliminating the entire bottom (perhaps it is needless to point out that these sumps were placed with the base uppermost); on one side near the top is a rectangular hole, the upper part broken away, on the opposite side of the bowl a large piece of stone is missing where there probably has been a similar opening; these were no doubt to help drain away the water in the sump.

Had it been a font one would have expected to find marks of the lock staples, and the thickness of the side is far less, and the depth of the basin far greater, than that found in fonts.

This object may well date to Norman times and is undoubtedly a sump (cf. Bosbury (42b) and Tedstone Wafre (108)).

Mr. Somers-Cocks says the font in use in 1851 was given to "a neighbouring parish", which I have been unable to identify. If the whereabouts of this font could be found it might throw further light on its date and the use of these stones.

The Rector, the Rev. H. C. Elliott (instituted 1932), has kindly given me the following particulars of this "font" in a letter dated the 18th March, 1950. He says "No one has any idea to what parish the old font was given. But the estate clerk, a man well

over seventy, remembers the present old font being found under some trees outside the east end of the church. It was put into its present position, and he thinks the first baby to be christened in it was Lord Somers' daughter."

From these two accounts it may be inferred that this sump was dug up in the nave of the church when it was being rebuilt in 1851 and that it was placed outside the east end of the church where it was found about 1920 and taken into the church and used for baptismal purposes under the impression that it was an ancient font. It is probable that the font given to a neighbouring parish was of 18th century date when improvements were carried out to the church, for it is unlikely that any church about 1850 would have adopted an old Norman font.

50. Dulas. All that remains of this Norman font is the large bucket-shaped bowl incorporated into a very large modern font when the church was rebuilt on a new site in 1865.

The basin is 22 inches in diameter, and the rim $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the depth of the sides is 14 inches to the saucer-shaped bottom, the whole being $17\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep. It is lead lined and a double drain hole can be felt under the lead.

51. Amberley. This bowl stands in front of Amberley Court, and is said to be the font from the adjoining chapel, which it probably is; it may well be of Norman date, but its present use has precluded an examination of its details.

52. Felton. This sandstone bucket-shaped bowl stood in the churchyard, on a loose square stone $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick with the angles cut off, for many years, probably since 1854 when the church was rebuilt.

Recently (1949) these stones were put in the south-west corner of the nave of the church.

The basin is $18\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter with straight sides and a flat bottom, and is $10\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep. The rim is 3 inches across, and there are two lock marks, the stone is broken where the iron-work has been wrenched out.

There is a small drain hole, and some traces of whitewash on the bowl, but no lining.

The large stone on which the bowl stands, is, no doubt, not part of the original font.

The date of the bowl may be late 12th century.

In 1907 there was in the church, when I visited it, a sandstone bowl 7 inches across. On one side was a winged cherub's head and on the other a shield with a coat of arms—a *spread eagle*, with

an impalement *blank*. This *may* have been a late 17th century font bowl.

53. Kimbolton. At The Grange, Leominster, where it has been for a number of years, is this sandstone vessel; it is included here because it is said to be the old font basin belonging to the church of Kimbolton.

The late Mr. Theodore Neild bought and repaired The Grange, the ancient market hall of Leominster, and resided there until his death about 1932; eventually it was purchased by the Leominster Borough Council.

Mr. Neild preserved all such stones, including the old Leominster font (100), with meticulous care, and he told me that the stone under discussion was alleged to have come from Kimbolton.

Mr. F. C. Morgan took the particulars given here on the 22nd of March, 1950, when he saw it in the greenhouse at The Grange; previously it had stood outside. The diameter of the interior is 15 inches and the height of the stone $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The bottom of the basin is flat and the sides perpendicular, very slightly rounded where they meet.

There seems on the face of it evidence that it never was any part of a font for the following reasons: (1) The bowl is too thin for a mediæval font, being $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick; (2) the depth of the basin $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches is too shallow; (3) there is no drain hole; (4) there are no signs of lock marks; and (5) there are four small lugs on the outside of the rim, pointing to the vessel being the lower stone of a quern, or, more probably, a large mortar.

Now what evidence is there to rebut the apparently overwhelming case that this vessel cannot have been a font? In the first place there is the persistent statement that it came from Kimbolton and that it was the parish font; secondly, after comparing it with the basin of the font at Bridge Solers (76) which is dated 1664, it appears not improbable that it *may be* the basin of a font. Both have a circular basin with a flat bottom, Kimbolton with no outlet, Bridge Solers with one of $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch across. The depth of the former is $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches, thickness of the rim $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches, interior diameter 15 inches; and the latter is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, with a rim 2 to $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and is $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches at the top and 15 inches at the bottom.

At Kimbolton the fact of there being no drain hole is not unusual if it is of a later date than the Commonwealth, when a small movable basin was frequently used. The rudimentary lugs may be accounted for by the stone being a large mortar trimmed down to a more respectable size, the lug fragments being left for ornament and strength.

Taking the above points into consideration, I am of the opinion that the evidence is in favour of the vessel being the old font basin of Kimbolton. This is further strengthened by the fact that Mr. Neild owned land in Kimbolton, and the Hutchinson family were living at Grantsfield in the parish within quite recent times, their father having been vicar from 1841 to 1903, a period of 62 years. The late Miss Hutchinson was of the same opinion. The church was restored in 1875 and a new font provided.

If the above conclusion is correct this basin is not Norman and should be included in *section iv, Post-Reformation fonts to the end of the seventeenth century.*

54. Yatton Chapel (in Much Marcle). When I saw this font in 1924, I noted that it was lying loose in the disused Norman building, that it was very rough, and measured 2 feet overall, and had an exterior depth of 18 inches. The *Historical Monuments Commission*, Vol. II (1932), p. 226, describes it in the words "plain cylindrical bowl, now loose, probably 12th century, much damaged".

It probably is the same date as the chapel, mid-12th century.

55. Brilley. This font stands on a stone on which is inscribed "February 11, 1754 aged 24", so it has evidently been moved since that date, probably at the restoration of the church in 1864 or 1888.

The basin is bucket-shaped with straight sloping sides and flat bottom. The original double drain hole has been cemented over, and the size rendered uncertain.

There are no lock marks but the rim may have been reduced in height. On the rim is cut a W and another modern, scratched.

In the basin in 1934 was a heavy pewter bowl which measured 11 inches across the moulded rim, 9½ inches inside and 2½ inches high. It had no pewterer's marks, but roughly incised on the rim "Brilley Ps^b W P C Warden".

The square base stone is modern.

56. Laysters. The inverted cone-shaped sandstone bowl of this font was brought here from the adjoining parish of Pudleston in recent times.¹ The Vicar of Laysters, in 1918, told me that it was in the garden of Pudleston Court. Probably it is the original Norman font belonging to the latter parish, and was cast out of that church when the present modern one was installed. On being set up at Laysters it was no doubt provided with the existing base stone into which the bowl is sunk for about 1½ inches.

¹ *Woolhope Club Transactions*, 1892, p. 281, says "Rescued from a farm building at Pudleston".

The bowl is lined with modern lead turned down over the outside of the rim obscuring any lock marks that there may be. The diameter of the bowl inside is $26\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the thickness of the rim $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches and the depth of the basin $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches. There is a double drain hole $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches across.

The whole font has been worked over with modern diagonal tooling. The cover is modern.

The date may be mid-12th century.

57. Solershope. This is a typical example of a plain bucket-shaped font made out of Caplar sandstone, no doubt coeval with the Norman church of the middle of the 12th century, of which only part of the north wall survives, it having been rebuilt in the second half of the fourteenth century when the Whittingtons were in occupation of the parish.¹

The basin has straight sloping sides 15 inches deep and $22\frac{3}{4}$ inches across the top, and 21 inches across the bottom, the greatest depth being $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The rim, which has been slightly chamfered inside and out, is 5 inches wide but rather irregular.

There are two lock marks where the staples have been cut off.

The bowl is fitted flush to a heavily chamfered base stone, evidently modern.

There is a double drain hole $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches across by $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch deep, and the actual vent is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide.

Duncumb's *History of Hereford*, vol. III, p. 146 (by Judge Cook), says "on the pedestal of an early Norman font a square hole denotes where the upper portion was fixed". I did not see this when I visited the church in 1913. Perhaps there is some confusion here with the base of a cross.

58. King's Pyon. This font is very roughly made. The basin is bucket-shaped with sloping sides, $18\frac{1}{2}$ to $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the top, and $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the very slightly dished and scabbled bottom. There is no lining to it, and the discharge hole has been cemented up as have also the lock staple holes. The thickness of the rim varies from 4 to $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The upper part of the bowl has been broken and repaired.

The base stone is a late addition, it has never been white-washed as has the rest of the font.

In 1903 when I first visited the church the old font was in its present state in the building. In 1897 it was said to be in the churchyard² so it must have been moved between those dates.

¹ *Woolhope Club Transactions*, 1926, pp. 182-188.

² *An Archaeological Survey of Herefordshire, Mediæval Period*, by James Davies and J. O. Bevan, 1897, p. 22.

There is no feature by which to date this font. Possibly the crude bowl is *early* Norman and belonged to the church of this period, the existence of which is indicated by the number of travertine stones incorporated in the later structure. The moulded stone below the bowl may have been supplied when considerable alterations to the church were effected in the late 13th century.

There is an exceptionally good modern oak font lined with lead, with a cover, carved with a figure of St. George and three other saints. Round the base is cut "In memory of Christianna Wilson 1879".

59. Hope Mansel. This font has been remodelled from a bucket, or inverted cone shape, in recent times, probably in 1889, when the nave was renovated. Duncumb in his *History of Herefordshire*, vol. II, additions, p. 373, writes . . . "a large ancient font once at the west end of the nave" was removed from the church with other fittings as relics of popery by Mr. Henry Bisse, rector from 1838 to 1850.

The basin is bucket-shaped, 21 inches across the top and $17\frac{3}{4}$ inches across the flat bottom. There is a double drain hole 5 inches across and 2 inches deep. This large hole has been chiselled to a cup shape to facilitate draining, probably when the font was brought back to the church and the lower part of the bowl gives its present shape.

There are two sets of lock marks with part of the staple in one, all are cemented over. There is no lining to the basin.

The date of the font is undoubtedly some time in the first half of the 12th century.

60. Moccas. This font is of the same type as Peterchurch (9), Kington (11), and others, but it has no cable moulding round the waist. The material is a reddish micaceous sandstone, no doubt local. The diameter of the basin is 21 to $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the depth $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with perpendicular sides and a flat bottom in which is a drain hole $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches across. There is no lead lining and the rim is 4 inches thick.

The rim has evidently been cut down about $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches, or more, a usual depth for such a font being 10 to 11 inches. Furthermore there are no lock marks, and though the rim has pieces of stone let in for repairs, they cannot be identified with the position of staples.

The old bowl, now $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, is mounted on a modern block of stone.

A flat eight-panel cover with a knob for handle (loose) is in the same condition of disintegration as when I drew it fifty years ago.

The date of the font is probably the same as the present church, early in the 12th century.

61. Bishop's Frome. The bowl is the only original part of this font, the stem and base are modern. This bowl is made from the same kind of limestone as the Kilpeck and Bredwardine group of fonts. There is an outcrop of this marble (reddish, like Turnastone) on Fromes Hill, close by.

The basin is lead-lined with the lead turned down over the outside of the rim thus obscuring any remains of lock marks that may exist. The diameter of the basin at the top is 29 inches, and at the bottom which is saucer-shaped 25½ inches. The straight sloping side is 9½ inches and the total depth 11½ inches. There are indications in the lead of a double drain hole about 3½ inches in diameter.

The modern cover is of oak, flat and very heavy. The stem is modern.

The date of the bowl is mid-12th century.

62. Turnastone. The bowl, the only ancient part of this font, is of a local reddish limestone (*breccia*), and has been polished. The interior is pitted with a number of small holes, and not finished with the care of the exterior. The stone is similar to the fonts at Kingstone (1), Vowchurch (29), Bishop's Frome (61), and others.

There are no lock marks, nor lead lining, and I think it never had these features. The basin is slightly dished and 9 inches deep. The rim is 3 inches wide.

The drain hole is blocked a few inches down, but a lead pipe fitted in a hole pierced through the side at the bottom of the basin discharges on the outside of the bowl. The date of this arrangement is uncertain but possibly fitted at the same time as the modern stem.

The date of the bowl is mid-12th century.

63. Brinsop. This appears to be a composite creation of local sandstone. The bowl is Norman, the same date as the church of which the tympanum and other sculptured stones survive. The stem was probably reconstructed and elaborated when the whole church was built anew in the early 14th century.

The basin is now bowl shaped, but this may date from modern times. Possibly it was given this form when the modern lead lining was made. The lead on the rim obscures any lock marks that may exist, and is considerably older than the lining of the bowl. (see Wormsley (37), and elsewhere.)

The original basin was no doubt bucket-shaped with straight or slightly sloping sides and a flat bottom. There is an indication in the lead of a double drain hole about 3½ inches across.

The base stone has a plain chamfer all round, which is overlapped on the west side by a modern standing step.

The massive cover appears to be made of walnut and dates from about 1870.

64. Sutton St. Nicholas. This font is made of the neighbouring Withington sandstone. The basin, 10 inches in depth by $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches across inside, has vertical sides, a flat bottom, and what must be a double drain hole about 3 inches across, now cemented up. The rim is irregular, 3 inches thick, more or less. The Withington stone from which the bowl is fashioned is difficult to work.

The roll mould is original but has been redressed. The base stones below this are modern, though possibly the stem, composed of several pieces of local sandstone, may be the old one redressed.

The bowl has had a large piece broken out of it and refixed by two iron clamps. Perhaps it was thus ill-treated in the Civil War. It is unlined and never appears to have had any provision for locking the lid.

The flat cover, of the latter part of the 19th century, has seventeen sides.

65. Stretton Sugwas. A Norman bowl with two irregular bases which are either modern or redressed.

The standing step is of the same sandstone as the bases. I have no record of any Norman font being provided with a separate standing step. There are remains of whitewash on the bowl but not on the bases.

The font probably underwent a considerable tidying up when transferred in 1877 to the present building on a new site. At that time, no doubt, it was lined with lead, turned down over the outside edge of the rim. It may also have been then that both the edges of the rim were chamfered and the interior given a basin shape instead of its original bucket form. The plug hole is modern.

There are slight indications of where the lock staples have been torn out and repaired with cement.

66. Mansel Lacy. This font with a moulding round its waist is cut from a block of red micaceous sandstone.

The basin is bucket-shaped, $19\frac{1}{2}$ to 20 inches across the top and 14 inches across the bottom and $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. The thickness of the rim is 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with lock marks.

The lining of the bowl is very old but it has been fitted with a new lead bottom.

The total height of the font is $37\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the present floor level. In the opposite sides of the bowl outside are to be seen

large cement patches as if holes had been filled up, but as the interior of the basin is hidden by the lead it is impossible to say what they indicate, otherwise the font appears to be in its original condition. There is a flat oak cover, modern, perhaps about 1860.

The date of the font is probably late 12th century.

67. Clodock. The lower part of the bowl of this font appears to have been undercut when provided with the present stem, going the font a chalice shape. This may have been done when the present cover was made in the latter part of the 17th century. The tool marks on the bowl are wider than those on the stem, both going from right to left. The basin has straight sloping sides, and is $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. The bottom is flat and 17 inches wide; the diameter at the top of the bowl is $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches. When I measured the font in 1932, it was a receptacle for candles and candle boxes, paraffin rags, lamp shade, etc.

The otherwise plain cover, composed of four boards doweled together, has twelve button-like sinkings near the outer edge, and two rings of similar ones near the handle, which is of roughly moulded rectangular iron.

The date of the bowl might be early or late 12th century.

68. Little Cowarne. This font has a typical Norman bowl, the basin with upright sides $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches high and saucer-shaped base, the total depth is 11 inches. There is a double drain hole 5 inches across and $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep, the discharge hole being about 1 inch in diameter, it had a cork in it in 1933, and a white china basin in the font for baptisms.

The stem and moulded stone below are of the same date as the bowl, but all these have been redressed.

The large round stone on which the above have been mounted is undoubtedly the trough stone of a cider mill for crushing the apples. The pick marks for roughing it can be clearly seen in the illustration.

There are lock marks, but no lining to the bowl.

69. Hampton Bishop. Here is a perfect specimen of a plain Norman font with bowl, stem and base, 37 inches high now mounted on two modern octagonal steps. About three feet was an average height for these early fonts, a suitable one for carrying out the baptismal rite when men were shorter in stature. During the later mediæval period there was an increasing tendency to elevate the font to lend more importance and dignity to the performance of the ceremony.

The material of the font is limestone, of which there are beds in the nearby Woolhope hills.

The depth of the upright side to the bottom of the basin is $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches, the diameter at the top 20 inches, and 18 inches at the bottom, which is flat with a slope of $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch to the double drain hole. This hole is 5 inches across by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. The final discharge hole appears to have been enlarged and tapers to accommodate a modern plug. There is no lead lining.

The rim is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches across and has stumps of small iron staples for locking the lid, which is of oak with four ogee open ribs supporting a knob, possibly late 17th or early 18th century.

The font has been lightly redressed with upright tooling perhaps when the octagon base steps were added.

The date of this font may be assigned to the second quarter of the 12th century.

70. Staunton-on-Wye. The rim has been cut down and chamfered on the inner edge, but an iron stump of one of the lock staples has survived.

The depth of the basin is now only 7 inches so it has probably been reduced by about 2 inches. It is bucket shaped with sloping sides, flat bottom, and double drain hole $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches across partly filled up with a modern metal plate and plug.

The cover is modern with ironwork outlined in red and white paint. This and other alterations, and the grey paint with which the whole font has been painted, may date from the incumbency of Canon Phillott, when considerable repairs to the church were effected in 1867.

The mouldings indicate a late Norman date for this font, 1170-1180.

71. Weston Beggard. At first sight this font appears modern, but on closer inspection it proves to be Norman, at least as concerns the bowl. There are two pieces of stone let in the rim, where the lock staples have evidently been taken out.

The bowl has straight sides of $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, and a saucer-shaped bottom. The maximum depth is $11\frac{3}{4}$ inches. There is no lead lining.

The bowl is made of grey sandstone, but the circular stem and octagon base are of a yellowish sandstone. These latter and the flat oak cover are modern.

The church was over-restored in 1881, at which time, no doubt, the original Norman bowl was given its present ornate finish.

72. Walterstone. The bowl of this font has been split in two horizontally two-thirds from the bottom, and joined by the insertion of two or three dovetailed pieces of stone.

The exterior base of the bowl is roughly chamfered, to meet a necking and circular stem provided no doubt when the font was repaired. The bowl has been cut down as the basin is only $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep. It is $17\frac{3}{4}$ inches inside at the top and $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches across at the base, with straight sloping sides, and a slightly dished bottom with a small discharge hole. A piece of the rim is broken out where a lock staple would have been, the corresponding one having disappeared when the height of the bowl was curtailed.

The date of this bowl may be early or late 12th century.

73. Fawley. This font is composed of two sandstones joined at the waist making a chalice shape, standing on a circular stone which, no doubt, is a modern addition; the whole is $38\frac{3}{4}$ inches high. In modern times the upper part of the bowl has been trimmed into an octagon and tooled diagonally, whereas the rest of the font has vertical tooling.

There is no lining, and the small outlet is stopped up.

The circular basin has perpendicular sides and a flat bottom, but rounded where it meets the sides.

On the rim are cut the following initials in 17th century type. I. C. (or G ?) and I. T.,¹ also in later lettering R. J.

The font has been whitewashed.

The diameter of the basin inside is 22 inches and outside 30 to 32 inches.

The date of the font is probably late 12th century.

74. Avenbury. This interesting church ceased to be used for divine service about 1923, and its valuable fittings dispersed to the four quarters of the compass, or suffered to fall into decay, or left to the mercy of the plunderer. An Elizabethan chalice has luckily found a home in the Hereford Museum, but a fine 13th century chest, a pre-Reformation bell, an almost unique 13th century stone coffin lid with the figure of a knight, linenfold and other panelling, Jacobean carving and sundry valuable objects, including the architectural features of the building from the Norman period onwards, have been either sold or abandoned to a precarious fate.

But to come to the font. This has now found a resting place in the chapel at Mundersfield in the parish. It has a circular sandstone bowl mounted on an octagonal stem, part of which is modern, the upper part being most likely so trimmed when the lower new part was supplied.

The diameter of the basin is 22 inches, with sloping sides and a flat bottom, the depth is 12 inches. The rim is 3 inches wide

¹ R.C.H.M. says I.C. and E.T.

with lock marks, there is a lead lining and a 1 inch drain hole but there are indications of a larger one.

The total height is 43 inches.

The date of the font is probably late 12th century.

75. Sellaak. The upper part of this originally chalice-shaped font has been cut into an octagon from a round limestone bowl. The thickness of the rim at the narrow part is now only $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The lock marks have been trimmed away, or perhaps there never were any, for in the *Archdeacon's Visitation, 1397, Historical Review, Vol. XLIV (1929), p. 281*, there is a note *non est seratum*. There is no lining. The diameter of the bowl inside is $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the depth inside 12 inches, and the diameter of the base inside $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with sloping sides and a flat bottom. The octagon base may be original, trimmed from a round one. There is a double drain hole 3 inches across.

The date of this font is probably mid-12th century.

76. Bridge Solers. This Norman bowl has had the upper part of the original rim cut down probably about 5 or 6 inches, and the bowl pared back into a hexagon form to meet a new basin cut to this shape. This alteration was no doubt necessary due to damage at the time of the Commonwealth. The date of this repair is cut on two faces of the new bowl by an illiterate person, on the east face 1664 I R, and on the west face 46 I R I, the 46 no doubt should read 64, and the Rs are cut backwards. The Norman bowl and the bottom stone have been trimmed off flush with the face of the new hexagonal basin, as if they were to abut against a wall. The bottom stone has in recent times been made good with a narrow strip of stone.

There is no lead lining, or lock marks. The rim is 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, and the faces of the new bowl 9 inches by 10 inches high. The added basin is circular, $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the top, 15 inches at the bottom and $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, with a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch outlet and sides slightly bulging inwards. The total height of the font is 34 inches.

The 17th century bowl is grey sandstone rubbed smooth, the rest of the font of a coarser grey sandstone.

There is a pyramidal cover of deal *circa* 1820. In 1937 I saw an unhandled Bristol cup in the font, presumably for use at christenings.

The Norman part of the font is no doubt coeval with the nave, mid-12th century.

77. Ballingham. The upper $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches of this once bowl-shaped font has at some time been renewed in octagonal form, and the lower portion partially trimmed to meet it. The faces

are about 12 inches across. Otherwise the font seems to date from the late Norman period, except the square base stone and standing step which are modern.

The material of the Norman part is grey micaceous sandstone. The width of the bowl outside at the narrowest part is 28 inches, and 30 inches at the angles of the octagon, the width of the rim at the corresponding parts being respectively 4 and 5 inches. The width of the basin at the top is 20 inches, and the depth $10\frac{1}{4}$ inches with straight sloping sides and a flat bottom. There is a double drain hole now cemented up.

The height from the standing step of 4 inches is $39\frac{1}{4}$ inches, which renders it probable that the circular stone, 5 inches high above this, is also a modern addition.

There is no lining and the basin is roughly tooled inside.

The rim has a sunk channel with another smaller channel below tooled smooth, perhaps made when the church was restored in 1884, to take the cover seen in the illustration, which is probably the flat base of the one described below.

The font may have been mutilated in the Civil War and the bowl mended in the latter half of the 17th century. The sinking for a cover might well indicate such a date. Further there are no lock marks.

The above particulars were taken by Mr. F. C. Morgan on the 16th of September, 1949. When I made notes on this font, on the 29th of March, 1947, the basin was lined about halfway up with tin or very thin lead, making a bowl-shaped bottom. The rim to the sinking was painted red and the bowl had been covered with a yellow wash. There was an oak cover with rising scrolls, surmounted by a cross, about $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches high and of 18th century date.

78. Aymestrey. The only old part of this font, no doubt of Norman origin, is the stem of grey sandstone (? limestone) with the remains of whitewash. At the base is a double roll moulding.

At first sight one might suppose the bowl, of reddish sandstone, was the original one reworked, but on examination it is clear that this is entirely modern for there are no lock marks, the interior is basin-shaped, and there are no signs of early tooling, etc., to be found.

79. Grendon Bishop. The shape of this font is difficult to describe. The *Historical Monuments Commission* calls it a "cylindrical partly tapering bowl". It stands on a circular stone with a roll mould, and below this is a modern square stone 7 inches thick. The height of the whole is 27 inches.

The diameter of the basin is $19\frac{1}{4}$ inches, with straight sloping sides and a flat bottom, and the depth 9 inches. A double drain

hole is now blocked with a stone 4 inches square, no doubt cut to this shape as easier to fill than the original round one. There is now a small modern outlet.

There is no lining and no lock marks are visible; the bowl may have been cut down, it seems to have been plastered over and painted. There is a flat cover with a knob handle.

The date of the font is probably late 12th century.

80. Tedstone Delamere. The bowl of this font is fashioned from a block of millstone grit. The stem and its supporting stone are old, and the six-inch stone below this is travertine, of which there is an abundant supply a few miles away at the South Stone Rock.

The font in this condition was ejected into the churchyard no doubt at the restoration of the church in 1857, and is so shown in a lithographic sketch of the exterior of the church dated 1860. The present one took its place at this time. The stone, now below the travertine one, presumably was supplied when the font was replaced in the church, some time after 1903, when I saw it in the churchyard in use as a flower pot.

The interior of the basin is $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches across, the rim being 3 inches wide, with slightly sloping sides of 7 inches, the bottom flat with a slight slope making the whole depth $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. It has what may be called a triple-drain hole about $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches across and about 1 inch deep, when the hole is continued with a width of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches to a depth of a further $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, when it is reduced to the usual small hole. It would be interesting to know why it was so constructed and how it was plugged. There must have been difficulty in retaining the holy water in these fonts for a lengthy period, and renewal of the water in many cases would have been necessary from time to time. There are the usual two lock marks on the rim and, between each of them, three small dowel holes fairly evenly placed, the purpose of which is not apparent but may have been to receive stump dowels in the cover to keep it in place. I do not think they were to receive a frame for training plants, as at Shobdon (19), on the removal of the font to the churchyard for such is not shown in the 1860 drawing, nor were there any in 1903; the six holes are also too shallow for such a purpose. The lid now on this bowl is too small for it.

The date of the font is probably coeval with the Norman church, which there is reason to believe must have taken the place of one of the Saxon period.

81. Waston. The church here was pulled down in 1881. The sandstone bowl of the font was taken, presumably at that time, to Bredenbury, and deposited in the churchyard where it is now against the wall of the nave. By the side of it is another

smaller bowl said to be that of the Bredenbury font discarded when that church was practically rebuilt in 1873.

The former is a bowl-shaped vessel of a 12th century Norman font. The diameter of the basin, which has straight sloping sides and a flat bottom, is $18\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the depth 9 inches and the rim $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches across. There is a double drain hole which is 4 inches square.

82. Aston (Pipe). This cannot properly be classed as a Norman font, though the stone is of Norman origin and is now used as the parish font after being recently mounted on a modern stem.

The Rev. A. Bannister, rector of the parish (1887-1939), told the members of the Woolhope Club on the occasion of their visit to Aston in 1921 that this carved stone was purchased by him for twenty shillings from a new resident in the parish, who brought it with him.¹ On it are carved a lion and a winged dragon, now upside down. The height of the bowl is 12 inches, and the exterior width 15 inches. The width of the basin 11 inches and the depth 6 inches. It has no drain hole. The material is sandstone.

Its original use might have been the base stone of a small column, perhaps of a holy water stoup. At some much later time it has been converted into a mortar by turning it upside down and scooping out the present basin.

83. Colwall. This sandstone font, at first glance, appears to be modern, but a closer inspection proves that the bowl, and probably the round stem below, are of the Norman period. The octagonal stone below the stem and the base stone are no doubt modern. The whole is covered with modern tooling.

The circular bowl has a basin $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter and is 10 inches deep. The rim is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches across. The lock marks have been repaired with new stone.

There is a double drain hole $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches across, with a modern $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch outlet.

The date is possibly late 12th century.

84. Lea (The). This vessel of white marble was given to the church by Mrs. Hope-Edwardes in memory of her mother, Mrs. Bradney² of Wharton Lodge in the adjoining parish of Weston-under-Penyard.

¹ *Woolhope Club Transactions*, 1921, p. xxiii, *illus.*

² Mrs. Hope-Edwardes was a sister of Sir Joseph Bradney of Talycoed, Monmouth, author of *The History of Monmouthshire*.

It was acquired from a London dealer who had it direct from Italy and is of 12th century date. The basin is said to be a holy water stoup. It has no drain hole. The stem, mounted on an elephant, is of a different period and use. The stoup is adorned with eight fine sculptured scenes, a detailed account of which will be found in *The Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archæological Society*, Vol. XXXII (1909), pp. 308-310, *illus.* This says "it has now been rededicated and in future will serve as a font for the rite of baptism".

It stands on a square stone inscribed "To the Glory of God and in memory of Sarah Decima Bradney who died August 25 1907".

The displaced octagonal basin of the old font is now an ornament in the garden of Castle End. It will be dealt with under Section 3.

85. Preston-on-Wye. The redressed stones of the stem of this font seem to be all that survive of what must have been one of Norman date; as regards the rest, it is a modern creation probably dating from the restoration of the church in 1883 and 1887.

The remains of the old font may be about 1200 when, or shortly before, the church was rebuilt.

86. Llandinabo. This plain Norman font, of grey lightly micaceous sandstone, has received drastic treatment in modern times and lost most of its original character. The rim has been pared off and a new stone, about 1 inch thick and $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide with its edges chamfered off, has been fitted to the bowl, obscuring any lock marks there may have been. The bowl is now octagonal but, probably originally, it was circular, which is rather indicated by the roll moulding at the base of the bowl; this at the angles is about 4 inches thick. The bowl and stem have been badly retooled. The base stones are modern.

The basin is now $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep with an ordinary drain hole of $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches; there is no lead lining. The diameter of the old part of the bowl is 19 inches. A cheap white basin on feet is in the font presumably for baptismal purposes.

The cover, *c.* 1850, has four brackets which support a knob. This cover may be a reproduction of a 17th century one.

The date of the bowl and stem is probably early 13th century.

SECTION 3.

THIRTEENTH CENTURY TO THE REFORMATION.

During this period fonts continued to be manufactured on lines similar to Norman ones, requiring no change, for the liturgical observances in the order of baptism had remained the same. What

structural alterations occurred in the fonts themselves were brought about more by the dictates of fashion than anything else. For instance, from the fourteenth century onwards the bowl, almost invariably, took on an octagonal or other multiangular shape externally, at the same time retaining the circular shape of the basin.

With the advent of the Reformation the ritual of the baptismal service was disregarded; fonts and their covers, in many cases, were destroyed, basins being used in their stead, and the whole service administered in defiance of canonical decrees.

GROUP I

1200 to 1299

During the early part of this period the presence of a water-holding base was a common feature, and sometimes the double drain hole was still retained. In the second quarter of the century multiple pillar stems were favoured with lobed-shaped basins, by which their date can be approximated. A few fonts, however, are of such a crude and featureless nature that it is impossible to date them with any certainty. One of the best Herefordshire fonts of the latter part of the century is Hope-under-Dinmore (97). Marden (105) has the unique privilege of being associated with a holy well inside the church.

87. Yarpole. This is a curiously shaped octagonal font. Apparently the central part of the bowl is the only portion of the original vessel. In Cassey's *Directory of Herefordshire 1856*, it says under Yarpole "An old octagonal bowl in churchyard," probably in allusion to the central portion of the bowl. In 1864 the church was restored, and at the same time this part of the bowl was reconstructed as it now exists. It is probable that originally the arcade had pointed arches and was carried up in alignment with the portion below. The octagonal stem and standing step are modern.

The basin is 22 inches in diameter, the depth is 10 inches, and the rim $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick. No lock marks can be seen as the lead lining is turned down over the outer edge of the rim, but if, as suggested, this part of the bowl is a modern restoration, of course there would be none. The drain hole appears to be large, but is covered with lead. There are traces of limewash.

The flat cover is modern.

The date of the font is early 13th century.

88. Collington. This font has an arcade in the fashion of the Norman period, but the arches are pointed and the bowl is

octagonal, so it can undoubtedly be classed with Early-English fonts, probably about the year 1230.

It seems to be of sandstone. There is no lining to the basin and no lock marks can be detected. The diameter inside across the top is $18\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the perpendicular side is $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and it is $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches to the bottom of the dished basin. There is a $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch double drain hole. The rim is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and in the centre a groove round it. The basin, halfway down, and the rim have been painted, and there are traces of paint on the bowl and stem.

89. Peneoyd. This font has, no doubt, had the stem heightened, the 8 inches base stone being modern; it has been redressed, in the process probably reducing the thickness of the rim which is now only $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The basin is 20 inches in diameter and 10 inches in depth with a small drain hole.

There is no feature to date it by, but it can almost certainly be attributed to the early 13th century.

90. Llanello. At first sight any solution as to how this font came to be constructed seems an unanswerable riddle, but the answer to it may be as follows.

It is composed of three stones, a bowl, a stem, if it can be called a stem, and a base stone. Taking them in this order I would suggest that the bowl was originally bowl-shaped throughout, but at some subsequent period the upper part was trimmed into an octagon. This is more than likely for, if it had been an octagonal bowl to start with, it would have been that shape throughout, but the lower part only is evidently the remains of a bowl-shaped font.

The basin is shape 3, the side $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the total depth $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches and the inside diameter of the top $21\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The drain hole has been stopped up. The rim is now, at the narrowest part, only 3 to $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide. This bowl has been split vertically in two and joined together again and secured with iron rivets, one of which may be seen in the illustration.

The date of the bowl may be early 13th century with later alterations.

The second stone, which now does duty as the stem of the font, is a square block with the upper angles gouged out to form this part into an octagon. Almost certainly this is the base stone for the shaft of a churchyard cross which might be proved if the bowl above were removed, when the square hole to the shaft would, I feel sure, be seen. For this part of the base *The Standing Crosses of Herefordshire*, 1930, by the late Alfred Watkins should be consulted. It may be contended that there is already a churchyard cross in this burial ground, but this is a modern shaft

re-erected on recent steps and base; probably it was not recognised that the old base had been already re-used to sustain the font bowl.

The third stone, the font base stone, is a modern piece of Bath stone.

The font has been whitewashed. There are no lock marks and probably never have been. There is no cover.

The damage to the bowl is most likely to have taken place in the Commonwealth period, and it may be noted that the font in the adjoining parish of Walterstone has suffered in the same way, perhaps at the same time.

At the Restoration the font may have been reconstructed in its present form using the base stone of the churchyard cross, as has already been described. The cross no doubt was destroyed at the time the font was damaged.

91. Ullingswick. The alterations this font has undergone are difficult to unravel. I think that the stem and moulded stone below it are the only parts of the original font, the bottom circular stone having been added at some subsequent period. This stone is very rough and may have been a runner from a cider mill. On the stem must have been a much smaller circular basin than the octagonal one now precariously poised upon it.

Now what can be learnt from it with regard to its date? It has a circular basin of the shape A.1, is 11 inches deep, lined with lead which overlaps the rim, and has a small drain hole. The narrowest part of the rim is 3 inches wide, and there are two repairs at opposite points, probably where the cover staples have been pulled out. The bowl has been retooled in modern times.

From this it may be concluded that the bowl is that of an early font cut down at some time into an octagon, but that it is not likely to be the original bowl of this font. The stem and moulded base are early 13th century.

92. Burrington. This is a large octagonal font, of micaceous sandstone, mounted on a stem of four conjoined circular columns. The diameter of the basin is 26 inches with perpendicular sides and a slightly sloping flat bottom. The inside is very rough, especially the bottom. The depth is $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches and the thickness of the rim $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The height, without the $5\frac{1}{2}$ inch modern standing step, is 44 inches. There is no lining to the basin and there are no lock marks.

At some period, probably the Commonwealth, the bowl has been broken in two about half way down. It was later pieced together with six rivets, all about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and 5 to 8 inches long. This repair may have been executed at the Restoration.

The bowl no doubt has been cut down about two inches as there are no lock marks, the basin is only $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, and the rim has been given a narrow chamfer.

The two lower stones are modern and not part of the original design.

The date of this font may be mid-13th century.

93. Sarnesfield. The only unaltered original feature of this font is the stem, composed of a four-sided pillar with acute angles, against which are set four half-circular columns.

It seems probable that the bowl is original, although of a different sandstone from the stem, and that it has been trimmed to an octagon from a straight-sided bucket shape, and that the rim has been pared down an inch or two, hence there are no signs of lock marks. It is known to have been in its present state in 1890, otherwise one would suggest that the water-holding base was later. The font may have been given its present form, including the cover, in 1870 when a restoration of the church took place. Further evidence in support of this would be if the drain hole could be seen and if it proved to be a double one. It is now an ordinary small one in the modern lead lining.

The date of the original font may be about 1200.

94. Tarrington. This is a sculptured octagonal font of sandstone. The basin is $20\frac{1}{4}$ inches across, 10 inches deep with a dished bottom and small discharge hole, which may originally have been larger. The rim is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. There is now no lining, but a black line along the inner edge of the rim indicates where one has been. There are traces of paint on the stem and the lower part of the bowl. There are lock marks, that on the north side has been repaired, and on the south side part of the iron staple remains.

The stem is composed of a group of eight columns, one with a fillet down the centre, alternating with another with a hollow, and on either side a flat-faced strip, and on each side of this another hollow, each of the members is about two inches wide. The octagonal bowl has a tracery pattern carried continuously round the eight faces. The stem and the bowl do not look to be of the same period; the former may be the first half of the thirteenth century and the latter a hundred years later. The moulded cap stone above the stem looks modern. Whether the pattern on the bowl is a reproduction of an old one is more than doubtful. I do not think it can be, otherwise some indication of the original would surely have survived.

In Duncumb's *Radlow Hundred*, 1902, p. 147 it is recorded "The Font, some 200 years old, was rescued by Mr. Phelps, 1832, from base uses in the farmyard". Mr. Phelps was rector here from 1832 till he died in 1854. The latter part of this statement, if not the actual date, is probably true, and it may be surmised correctly

that "the base uses" were as a pig trough. However that may be, the font, or anyway the bowl, was reinstated and used in the church, and perhaps given its present appearance either at the restoration in 1855 or that of 1872, more likely the latter.

The date of this font may be in the last quarter of the 13th century.

95. Baeton. This font stands at the west end of the nave, is of grey sandstone, is 35 inches high with an additional 4 inch standing step. The stem is mounted on a plain chamfered stone above which is one with a water holding moulding. The diameter of the basin inside is $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the shape No. 6, and it is 7 inches deep, and the thickness of the rim 2 to $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches. There is no lining, nor are there any lock marks. What must have been a double drain hole, 3 inches across, has now, sunk in it, a grating of lead about 2 inches across.

This bowl has evidently been trimmed into its present shape by reducing the rim two or three inches, and by trimming the sides off an inch or more from an ordinary bowl shape. The reasons for these conclusions are, that there are no remains of lock staples, that the bowl is only a little more than 2 inches thick, whereas a medieval bowl would not be less than 3 inches, that the depth of the basin is only 7 inches whereas one would expect a font of this period to be 9 to 10 inches, that the under-cut bowl is evidently the remains of a bowl-shaped vessel, and that the double drain hole is a feature to be found, almost universally, only in Norman and Early-English fonts.

The cover is a pyramidal one of light oak, which dates from about 1930.

96. Upper Sapey. This font now stands at the west end of the church under the tower arch. It has been mounted on two modern stones, but except for this it seems to have retained its original condition and has never been retooled. There is a rudimentary water-holding base. The old part of the font is 25 inches high. It has a flat oak cover carved with rosettes; the same pattern appears on the boards with the Commandments dating from 1847. There are two lock marks but no lead lining. The basin has been painted blue in recent times.

The date of the font is *c.* 1200.

97. Hope-under-Dinmore. This fine sculptured font has survived in an excellent state of preservation. The illustration renders a description of the general outline unnecessary. The standing steps are modern, but the remainder of the font seems to be in its original condition.

The depth of the basin is 10 inches, the lower 2 inches being saucer shaped, but the bottom nearly flat. It is lined about three-quarters of the way up. The diameter is $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The thickness of the rim is 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. In it have been two sets of lock staples, the one with repairs cut right through the rim, the other with one place filled with plaster, the companion one having a piece of stone let into the inner side of the rim. There is an oak cover, surmounted by an urn of about 1790 (*see illustration*).

The faces of the octagonal bowl have these seated figures sculptured upon them :

1. Christ with a very small beard and a halo. His right hand with two fingers raised in the act of blessing, the left holds a book, with a strap on the binding, resting on his knee.

2. On Christ's right hand is St. Peter wearing a short beard, in his left hand two keys back to back, and holding an open book with his right hand.

3. On Christ's left hand is St. Paul with a long beard, in his right hand a drawn sword, and a book in his left hand.

4. On the left hand of the last is a figure of St. John the Baptist with a short beard, his right hand raised in the act of blessing, his left hand holds a circular object on which is the Lamb.

The remaining figures are the four evangelists, reading clockwise from St. Peter.

5. St. Matthew with a short beard holds a large cross in his right hand, and an open scroll across his knee in his left hand.

6. St. Mark, with a short beard, and an open scroll across his knees.

7. St. Luke wearing a short beard, his right hand in the act of blessing, and his left holds a book.

8. St. John, beardless as a young man, his right hand holds a scroll, and his left rests on his knee.

Possibly the names of these Saints were intended to have been inscribed on the flat surface of the canopies over their heads.

The date of this font is about 1290.

98. Lingon. This octagonal 13th century font of grey limestone has very good mouldings but unfortunately those on the bowl have been trimmed off leaving it a shapeless lump ; no doubt these mouldings had become chipped in the course of centuries. Probably the mutilation took place at the rebuilding of the church, (except the tower), in 1890-1891.

The basin is bowl shaped No. 3, with $8\frac{1}{2}$ inch perpendicular sides, and a total depth of 11 inches. It is lined with fairly old lead lapped over the rim, which is $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches in the narrowest part. The width of the bowl inside is $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The total height is about 28 inches to the modern standing step.

The ancient lock marks have been cemented up. Inside the basin is a modern miniature font, and there is a modern pyramidal cover.

The date of the font is about 1230.

99. Leinthall Starkes. No doubt this three-piece font is one that has kept its original form, standing as it does only 27 inches high. Unfortunately, it has modern upright tooling; otherwise it retains its ancient character. As far as one can gather 27 inches was an average height for the Norman and early fonts.

There is an old lead lining, turned down over the outer edge of the basin, and the lock staples seem to have been in position when the lead was fitted.

There is a double drain hole now reduced to one of an ordinary size.

100. Leominster. This small font stood for many years in the garden of the Grange at Leominster and was said to have been the font of the Priory Church. It was probably ejected in 1842, when the present large font was given to the church.

A few years ago the old font, made of a coarse grey sandstone, was replaced in the building. The stem and the chamfered base stone are old, and these, with the bowl, were all that made up the font in its original condition. The two square base stones were added when it was removed to the Grange.

The bowl has at some time been trimmed down from a four lobed shape, with which the basin would have conformed, to an irregular octagon, the larger sides of which are $14\frac{1}{2}$ and $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the smaller ones 5 inches, the thickness of the rim being about 3 inches. At some period, perhaps before removal from the church, the bowl and part of the stem were fractured and mended with two iron rivets, which may have led to the cutting down of the basin. It now has no lead lining but in 1938 when I saw it at the Grange I noted that it was lined.

The total height is now $36\frac{1}{2}$ inches, originally it was about 8 inches less.

The drain hole has been roughly scooped out to enlarge it, possibly when used as a flower vase at the Grange.

The date of this font can without doubt be fixed as 1239, at which date the Norman south nave aisle was rebuilt and consecrated,

101. Pembridge. This very large and fine 13th century font, most likely, came into being when considerable alterations were made to the church in the Early-English period, evidence of which survives in the 14th (*sic*) century rebuilding at the chancel end.

The material is a sandstone (? limestone), the stem consisting of four short pillars attached to a square centre shaft set anglewise, the plain capital of which, on the same plan, constitutes the bowl. These stand again on a stone of the same plan, beneath which is a large circular step. These two lower stones, I imagine, are modern. What stands above them would be the original height of the font and is about 38½ inches.

The outline of the basin is four lobed, as also is the step, and the shape is No. 3. The height of the upper perpendicular part of the basin is 6 inches and the total depth to the hole 11 inches. It is lined with lead, turned over into the quirk of the roll mould of the outer rim, with punch marks of dots on the lead on the rim. The lead is fairly old but it covers the lock marks. There is an oldish brass plug, but originally there was a large double drain hole. A piece of stone about 7 inches long has been let into the rim, perhaps to repair a place where a staple has been wrenched out.

There is a good pyramidal oak cover, with a twisted upright knob to lift it by, which dates from about 1680.

The font has been painted and colour washed. The date of it is about 1220-1230.

102. Brimfield. This four lobed 13th century font has a modern stem of four columns conjoined, mounted on the original Early-English water-holding base. The original bowl is four lobed inside and out. The basin has been lined with cement and the drain hole obliterated. The total height with the modern base stone is about 38 inches. The material is sandstone. The bowl has a small channelled line round the base. Pembridge (101) has a similar line and another near the top of the bowl. These fonts are in the same class. May they not have been executed by the same man? They are only about ten miles apart.

The date of this font is 1220-1230, about which time the tower was built.

A plate fixed to this font bears the following inscription:
This Font restored Jubilee Year 1887, G. J. Garton, B.A., Rector,

*A. Hewett
G. H. Marshall } Churchwardens.*

103. Lyonshall. The stem of this font, composed of eight clustered marble columns on a base in the Early-English style, is modern, having been supplied when the church was restored in 1873. The original eight lobed bowl, made from a reddish micaceous sandstone, rises from beautiful stiff-stalked Early-English foliage. The basin is rectangular with slightly rounded corners, 21 inches by 19 inches, and is lined with modern lead turn down 1 inch over the rim which is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick. The lead is worked into a basin shape, 8 inches across at $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch from the bottom, from which point it is drawn into a $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch drain hole. The depth is about 12 inches. No doubt originally it was unlined and the interior of the basin four lobed shape with a double drain hole about 3 inches across. There is no cover.

The bowl has been roughly treated at some time for there is a crack, extending from the east side to the north through the foliage, which has been strengthened by two iron rivets. In addition to this damage on the north side, the upper part of the bowl has been chipped as if hit by a mason's pointed hammer.

There are four lock marks, one on each side of the four large lobes, in pairs. One of these has a narrow piece of iron 2 inches long with a piece in the middle protruding about $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch, presumably the stump of a single lock staple. Alongside this is a discoloured mark of the same size, but how it arose is not apparent. There is a similar piece of iron on the corresponding lobe with a piece like a small nail head sticking up at one end about $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch, perhaps a leg of a two-legged staple. A piece of the rim is broken away, no doubt in an endeavour to get out the iron. In the other large lobes are same sized pieces of stone with no traces of the staples remaining. The rim has, I think, been trimmed down. The damage to the bowl and these double pairs of staples may be explained if, at the Reformation, an attempt were made to deface the font, and a year or two afterwards, in Marian times, it was again brought into use, the new staples being a copy of the old. The cover at the time may have escaped destruction.

104. Coddington. The stem is the only ancient part of this font, which is composed of a square column with four attached shafts, all with a plain moulded necking. Possibly the circular stone from which the stem springs may be the original one redressed. The material seems to be a grey sandstone. A Directory of 1858¹ describes it as an antiquated font of granite.² There is no cover. There are traces of whitewash.

¹ Cassey's *Directory of Herefordshire*, 1858, p. 53.

² Possibly the stem is the local limestone of Bishops Frome. It has no tooling and may have been polished.

GROUP II

1300—1399

At this period the bowl-shaped font went out of fashion, and greater building activity led to many earlier fonts being replaced by others more in keeping with the graceful outlines of the arcaded and beautiful traceried windows which so enhance the appearance of our churches. Octagon bowls and stems for fonts became almost universal and so continued until ousted by the Renaissance. Among the outstanding fonts of the period special attention may be drawn to Dilwyn, Weobley and Dewsall at the beginning of the century, and later to Bodenham and the ten-sided font at Foy.

107. Lea (The). The octagonal bowl of this font and the cover are all that survived when they were turned out of the church at the restoration in 1854. The bowl lay for many years in a cottage yard, when in 1915 Mrs. Carrodus of Castle End, in the parish, bought it and preserved it in her garden. An old font cover (*see* illustration) lying in the vicarage stables was found to fit the bowl exactly and proved that these were from the church at Lea.

The many conflicting statements with regard to the fonts previous to the Italian¹ font (No. 84), now in use, must be examined.

The earliest is a statement in *Handbook to Ross and Archenfield*, 1863 [by George Strong], p. 97, referring to Eccleswall Castle which reads "Formerly there was also a Chapel, the Bell and Font of which were removed about a century ago to the Lea Chapel: the latter is ornamented with Tudor roses in the panels and cannot be of earlier date than Henry VII". As this statement was made about 1863, evidently the font at that time was adorned with Tudor roses, but there are none on the bowl now at Castle End. Possibly, they were on panels on the stem.

The next printed reference is to be found in Duncumb's *History of Herefordshire*, Vol. II (1812), p. 400; this is in the additional pages written by Judge Cooke about 1870. It reads "The interior of the church was renovated in 1854 at a cost of £800. The oldest portion of the Font was brought from the demolished chapel of Eccleswall."

The only conclusion to come to from these statements, combined with the existing undecorated bowl of a font turned out of the church about 1854, is that the stem of the font, in the church

¹ Mr. Marshall included this among Norman fonts owing to its date. (*Ed.*)

at that time, was retained, a new bowl supplied from Eccleswall Castle, and the plain octagon one now at Castle End discarded as not being worthy of the decorated stem.

Later accounts throw no further light on the matter.

The measurements given by Fryer in his account of the *Fonts in Gloucestershire* in the *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society*, XLVIII, 1926, p. 111, are faces 11 by 10 inches, diameter of basin 21 inches, depth of basin $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches, rim 3 to 4 inches.

It is not improbable that this basin was new after the 17th century Restoration, the original one having been destroyed in Cromwellian times. Fryer calls it an 18th century font (*Ibid.*, p. 101). The *Hist. Mon. Com.* call it 13th century.

108. Tedstone Wafer. The date of this font is uncertain, but in its present state, possibly, 13th or 14th century. It may have been reworked from a late 10th or early 11th century one, but this is unlikely.

Only the bowl of the font remains. The exterior is somewhat flattened, in two halves, with a quirk round the bowl just below the upper half. The stone on which the bowl stands, as shown in the illustration, is not part of the original font.

The bowl is made of mill-stone grit the same as Tedstone Delamere font. The diameter of the basin is $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the rim, which is rounded, 5 inches, and on it two lock scars opposite each other with a third one some inches from one of these. The interior has straight sloping sides $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep with a shallow saucer-shaped base making the interior depth 11 inches.

A peculiarity of this bowl is that it has two drain holes, one normal in size and position, and the other made diagonally from the bottom of the basin discharging at the angle formed by the side with the flat base (cf., Turnastone 62). This hole has a small channel cut in the basin to drain the water off. The central hole, no doubt at some time, became blocked as a piece of the stone base has been spalled off just below the exit, probably, in trying to clear the drain.

The stone, on which the bowl stands, may have been intended for a sump. It is $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches in exterior and 10 inches in interior depth and of much the same shape as the font basin, but if a sump it has no hole and must therefore have been useless for the purpose. Can it be that the provision of a hole was overlooked, and so necessitated the additional outlet to the font basin?

All that is known about these stones is that they were at Saltmarsh Castle in 1932 (*R.C.H.M.*, Vol. II, p. 187), and not long

after were placed in the churchyard of the new church, and later in the church itself.

109. Dewshall. This fine and large font for so small a church is made of grey hard sandstone. The bowl is circular and its under side trimmed to an octagon, on the four faces of which is a bold ball-flower ornament, one of them now broken off. The stem is also octagonal with hump stops, reducing it to a square at the base. This stands on a modern stone. The total height is $33\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The unlined basin is $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the top and $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the bottom, the length of the sloping side to the dished bottom is 7 inches, and the total depth to the drain hole is 8 inches. The rim is $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick. There is a double drain hole $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches across and about 1 inch deep, fitted with a cork bung.

As there is a double drain hole, an exceptional feature at the date of this font, that is about 1310, and seeing that the upper part of the bowl is circular, and that the octagon under cutting of the bowl and the stem have tooling different from the circular upper part, I am of the opinion that the bowl is a Norman one cut down when the church was entirely rebuilt in the early 14th century, as nothing previous to that period seems to have survived.

The lock marks are slightly oval and filled up.

James Brydges, "The Princely Chandos", was born at Dewshall Court close to the church on the 6th January, 1673, and was baptised here on the 12th. He built Cannons in Middlesex at a cost of £200,000, was created Duke of Chandos in 1719, and died the 9th of August, 1744.

110. Dilwyn. When Dingley wrote his *History from Marble*¹ this font stood in the centre of the nave on a line between the north and south doorways, and he gives a sketch of the interior of the church looking east. It is now at the west end of the south aisle, behind the door.

It has features similar to Weobley (112). The mouldings on both are evidently the creation of a local stone mason; both have a double drain hole, and both have the exceptional height of about 42 inches, whereas the average height for a font at this period would be about 35 inches.

The diameter of the basin (shape 4) across the top is 26 inches, and across the bottom 20 inches, the depth of the sides, which have a very slight inward curve, is 12 inches, and to the drain hole, which is 9 inches across by $2\frac{1}{2}$ deep, is $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches. There is a T shaped iron plug, no doubt of 1867, the date when the church

¹ In the last quarter of the 17th century.

was restored. The rim is $\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick with indications of remains of lock staples as follows: a single stump no doubt of a one-legged staple which defied removal: opposite, a piece of the inner rim is broken away where the corresponding staple has been: and passing round clockwise there are two small holes, and opposite these two corresponding ones. There are two other holes fairly close together which I think must have held a bracket to carry the baptismal service book.

The font is unlined and has traces of whitewash.

There is a flat modern wood cover surmounted by tall pyramidal iron work, which is raised by a counter weight. It carries this inscription: *To the Honour and Glory of God this Font Cover was presented to the Church of St. Mary, Dilwyn, at the restoration, A.D., 1867 by Margaret Morris Bray of the Hucco.*

The date of this font may be put at about 1310. It is slightly anterior to Weobley, the decoration and general outline of which are a decided advance.

111. Dilwyn. There is another sandstone vessel in Dilwyn church (*Illus.* No. 111) now standing on a low stone platform in the south west angle of the church. This has generally been thought to be an old font. I thought myself that it might be a font sump, but a closer examination convinces me that it was made for neither of these purposes.

That this is not a font may be concluded because it has no discharge hole, and although on the rim there are a pair of holes opposite each other which might have held staples, there are no traces of the iron ends of such or of the lead in which they would have been imbedded. The four holes are quite clean and undamaged, and 1 inch or more deep. There is a slight groove round the inner top face of the rim and the edges of the rim are slightly rounded, presumably, to prevent chipping.

It is a perfectly plain cylindrical vessel. The exterior height is $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the interior depth $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the diameter across the top of the basin is 23 inches. It has straight sides and a flat bottom which must be 6 inches thick.

At some time the vessel has been damaged. There is a crack round the bottom from 6 to 9 inches up that does not appear to go round the whole way but necessitated a large iron rivet being let in to prevent the fracture getting worse: this is now missing. The whole top of the bowl, for 2 to 4 inches down, has been split off and riveted on, one rivet is still in place. It is not possible to see all round the vessel as it is partly in the wall. It appears to have had cement smudged round the inside, this is probably modern.

I think, undoubtedly, that this vessel can be of no great age, but might be as old as the 17th century, and I would suggest that it was for heating water on the occasion of the village ales,¹ and that it belonged to the parish and was hired out on these occasions. There are no signs of great wear, such as would be expected if in constant use, and the damage to the upper part of the bowl might well have occurred in moving such a heavy and awkward object. The lower part of the bowl may have been cracked by the fire, especially as the fracture does not encircle the whole bowl. One might doubt whether a stone vessel would be used for such a purpose, but I have heard of one in the Rhondda Valley, rectangular in shape, being in use within the last forty years as an ordinary farmhouse copper.

The holes in the rim may have been either to receive pins in the lid; or for staples fixed in the holes with wood, to receive wood or iron ears on the cover, to prevent it slipping off.

112a, 112b. Weobley. This fine sandstone font has the unique distinction, in this county, of retaining a locking arrangement with a chain for securing the cover. A few other devices survive elsewhere as at Great Malvern.²

The bowl is octagonal, the faces decorated with different patterns of window tracery; three are repeated; one incorporates the³ spreading trefoil which is found, as is the ball flower ornament, in the first quarter of the 14th century. Both were first used in Hereford cathedral about 1292; they were in vogue until 1320, and sporadically later. Below the bowl is a curious almost scratch moulding (*cf.* Dilwyn 110), and a graceful octagonal stem.

The interior diameter of the basin is 19 inches, the shape 3, the straight side $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, total depth 10 inches.

There is an extraordinary large double drain hole 9 inches across and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. I came to the conclusion, before noting that the drain hole at Dilwyn (110) was similar, that these two fonts were cut by the same mason, which the mouldings and these

¹ These were held for much the same purpose as present day bazaars are in the village hall, only they took place in the equivalent, the Church House, when there was one; or in earlier times in the church itself, or in the churchyard if weather permitted. Games and dancing took place and refreshments were sold to raise funds for the particular purpose for which the Ale was held; for instance it might be a Church Ale for the church generally, or for some special purpose connected with it as Clerk Ale for the parish clerk, Bride Ale, and so on.

² *Some Sussex Fonts* by Maud S. Drummond-Roberts, 1935, pp. x, xlv, *illus.*, at Ford, Sussex. *Study of English Fonts*, by A. Katherine Walker, 1908, pp. 34, 94, *illus.*; at Wickenby, Lincolnshire, *Fonts and Font Covers*, by Francis Bond, 1908, p. 284.

³ A drawing of this font and the five different faces may be found in *The Herefordshire Magazine*, 1907, p. 85.

drain holes corroborate. The Norman double drain hole had gone out of fashion a hundred years earlier, and was not of such a large size. These must have been the invention of this individual mason. There is no lining. The total height is $41\frac{3}{4}$ inches without the modern base step.

As regards the arrangement for locking the cover. This consists of a chain of four large links attached to a staple in the rim. At the other end of the chain, instead of a link, is a flat piece of iron about 12 inches long which went through the handle of the lid, and at the end is a slit to go over a staple on the opposite side of the rim, through which staple a padlock secured it in place. This device can be seen in the illustration (112b). An old padlock is locked on the chain but I think not of a very great age.

The date of the font is about the first decade of the 14th century.

113. Winforton. An octagonal bowl with splayed underside worked to sixteen faces to meet an older round stem, which stands on a circular stone 8 inches thick, from the same sandstone bed and with the same old upright tooling. This stone stands on another large one of the same shape but only 6 inches high and apparently modern. The height without the modern base stone is $32\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The upper part of the bowl has been split off and re-joined very neatly. Whether this was an accidental break or an intentional damage is uncertain, but as the fracture scarcely shows, perhaps the first, as had the pieces been lying about for a long time the edges of the break were bound to get chipped.

The lining is fairly old, and has one rectangular and one oval slit to accommodate the lock staples, which have now gone.

The cover is of oak with two cross pieces (*see* illustration), with holes cut through it for the lock staples, one irregular and larger perhaps for a padlock. The cover may be late 17th century, but could not be secured with a straight bar unless the cross pieces are more recent than the flat boards.

It is evident that the stem and circular 8 inch stones are part of a Norman font, or at least one much earlier than the octagonal bowl, which, presumably, had to be supplied owing to some defect in the original one. It is almost impossible to fix a date for this new bowl except to say that it is pre-Reformation and probably 14th century.

114. Letton. This coarse grey sandstone octagonal font and stem, with typical 14th century cushion stops, is mounted on a large circular stone which, no doubt, formed the original font.

Now it is $38\frac{1}{2}$ inches high and stands on a large modern stone inlaid with mosaic.

The basin has upright sides and a flat bottom, the inside diameter being $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The original drain hole is $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches across but reduced by lead stopping to quite a small outlet. There is no lining. The thickness of the rim is 4 inches. There are two lock marks, one with an iron stump standing up $\frac{1}{4}$ inch and the other with a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch stump. There are indications of earlier staples.

There is a flat pitch pine cover of about 1870-1880.

The date of the font is about 1330, at which time the large south chapel was added, to be followed, shortly after, by the erection of the north tower.

There is a mortar in the chancel 9 inches high by 12 inches across.

115. Marstow. This font, of reddish sandstone, was moved to the new church when it was built in 1855. It has an octagonal bowl with a moulding (*cf.* Dilwyn, Weobley, Norton Canon, *etc.*). The *Hist. Mon. Com.*, Vol. I, say the stem is modern.

The basin is shape 1, and is $22\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter inside and $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep with a small drain hole. There is no lining. The height of the font is 39 inches, and it stands on a $3\frac{1}{2}$ inch octagonal base stone. The open pyramidal cover is modern.

The date, probably, is in the 2nd decade of the 14th century.

116. Wellington. The plain octagonal font with 14th century mouldings (*cf.* Dilwyn, *etc.*) is made, as regards the original part, of a fine grey sandstone. It has been mounted on a modern standing step and above this is a modern octagonal stone. The original height would be about 37 inches.

The basin is shape 3. The perpendicular sides are $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches, the total depth $12\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The diameter across the top inside is $21\frac{3}{4}$ inches and the thickness of the rim $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. It is lined with modern lead turned over the outer edge. The lock marks have been filled in with square stones.

It has a panelled oak cover with a stem supporting a large ball surmounted by a cross, stained and varnished. The cover with ball may be about 1780-1800, the cross and varnish added about 1850.

The date of the font is c. 1340.

117. Yazor. The octagonal bowl and probably the stem of this font are old, for both have been whitewashed. Presumably, they were removed from the old church when the present one was

built on a nearby site. The bowl, of a white stone, has been cut down an inch or more. The base stone, on which the stem stands, is a fine grey sandstone but the added standing step is a local micaceous sandstone.

The diameter of the basin at the top is $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches and at the bottom about 20 inches. The thickness of the rim is 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The depth of the basin is now only 7 inches. The total height of the font is 37 inches. It has a modern flat oak cover. The lead lining which comes to within 2 inches of the top is fairly old. On the rim can be seen marks of the lock staples. The moulding on the bowl is ancient.

The date of the font is approximately mid-14th century.

118. Hereford. (All Saints). Only the bowl of this font is ancient, all the rest is modern.

The bowl in its present octagonal shape is probably 14th century, but has been cut down from an older one of circular shape, judging by the under cutting of the bowl. The basin is 22 inches across the top, the shape No. 5 and the depth 11 inches.

The rim is 4 inches wide. It is lined with lead turned over the outside of the rim. This was done by a Mr. Alexander of Hereford about 1859, according to an order in Council for all fonts to be so treated (*The History of the Parish Church of All Saints*, by A.L.O.H., Hereford, 1909). In 1624 the cover was repaired, the seats and other work done for 16/-, and in 1626 $3\frac{1}{2}$ was spent for "mendynge of the Fonte".

David Garrick was baptised in this font on 28th February, 1715.

119. Norton Canon. This is one of the largest Herefordshire pre-Reformation fonts that have survived. It is 52 inches in height and $36\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the bowl. The bowl is made up of two stones, the upper one $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches and the other $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick. There are two lock marks: the stump of a staple remains in one.

The bowl looks quite different from the rest of the font, but after a careful inspection it appears that it has been plastered over and whitened to cover up defects that had shown themselves in the stone which is of a very friable nature. The stone from which the stem is fashioned is harder and has not been so treated. The two parts of the font look as if they were of a different stone whereas they are both from the same bed of local sandstone.

The moulding is very similar to that on Weobley (112) and other like fonts.

There is a curious standing step which, when in use, must leave the clergyman conducting the service in a very precarious position.

In the basin is an escallop shell, presumably for sprinkling the candidate for baptism.

There is a modern cover.

120. Kingsland. This octagonal font, of a grey, slightly micaceous sandstone, has been badly damaged. A portion of the upper part of the bowl has been detached and a section of this has the rim broken off where a lock mark was. These bits were all pieced together again so that the defects are now hardly visible.

The basin, shape 5, is 24 inches in diameter, the straight side is $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches and the depth $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches. It is lined with modern lead turned over the rim and scalloped. The rim is $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide with lock marks. There is no cover. The font has been white-washed.

The bottom step may be a later addition, the one above it being originally the lowest stone. This has a rhomboidal standing stone, which is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches higher than the adjoining base stone. The height of the font, omitting the bottom step, is $44\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

The date of this font is late 14th or early 15th century. At this time considerable alterations were being made to the building.

121. Eyton. It is very difficult to suggest a date for this very large font in a very small church. It is composed of three massive octagonal stones of reddish sandstone, none of which has any moulding to date it by. There are two lock marks on the $4\frac{1}{2}$ inch rim, measured to the outside edge of the wide chamfer, which is, no doubt, modern. The one mark is repaired with a piece of stone, and the opposite one has been cemented up. As there was a locked cover the font is almost certainly mediæval. The basin is, however, a pure bowl shape (7), and lined with modern lead screwed to the rim. I suspect that this is not the original shape of the basin but was so formed to cover up the defects in the bowl which at some time has been badly fractured, about half the lower part of the bowl being broken off and re-joined, necessitating large pieces of new stone being let in to further repair it. A basin of this shape would be a rarity in a pre-Reformation font. The only example I can cite is Shobdon in this county.

Taking the above points into consideration the font is most likely of 14th century date, though it might possibly be late 15th century when a fine screen was erected which still exists.

The paving stones are roughly fitted round the font, which has nothing in the nature of a standing step. No doubt the font stands on the earth floor level before the flagging was laid.

122. Stoke Prior. The octagonal font is made from a fine sandstone. The basin is shape 6. The diameter at top is $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches,

at the bottom 18 inches ; the depth of the straight side is 11 inches and the total depth $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The inside of the bowl has been painted and there are traces of whitewash on the stem. The rim is $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick, and there are two lock marks, one a single large hole, the other two small holes. The total height is $41\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The cover is of deal or pitch pine, surmounted by a brass ornamental knob.

This font was probably cleaned when the church was entirely rebuilt in 1863.

It is very similar to Kingsland (120), and dates to the late 14th century.

There is a large holy water stoup, late 14th century, loose in the church.

123. Bodenham. This octagonal reddish sandstone font has on each face a very wide and depressed ogee canopy. A similar feature is found in other parts of the church which was receiving alterations that I should say took place in the last quarter of the 14th century.

In a Visitation of the Archdeacon in the year 1397 are the following words¹: *Parochiani dicunt quod baptisterium non est seratum sed est competenter custoditum alio modo* ('the font is not locked but competently secured by another method'), from which it is evident that the font lacked a cover, but as it goes out of the way to record that there was nothing else to find fault with, no doubt it was about this time that alterations were made in the fabric and a new font, the present one, installed.

The interior diameter of the basin is $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches, shape 1, depth $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches, width of rim $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and drain hole 2 inches to 1 inch. It is lead lined to within about two inches from the top. There are no lock marks, but the rim is entirely new except for small pieces of the original at two of the angles ; it has a staple fixed in it to which is attached a modern chain and plug. No notice was probably taken of the Archdeacon's citation, for apparently no fine was imposed, and so no cover was ever provided for the font, quite an exceptional case.

The total height is $48\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the standing step of 6 inches is modern, and the octagonal base stone 10 inches, but whether this last is part of the original font is doubtful. The stem above this is made up of two stones, the upper one, seemingly, modern. The lower stone has traces of paint and has been repaired in places. The bowl has been cleaned by rubbing down, one ogee tracery head has been renewed and another repaired.

¹ *English Historical Review*, Vol. XLIV (1929), p. 282.

The proportions of the font, mounted as now on these two base stones, have been spoilt; originally it may have stood on one about the thickness of the present standing stone, when it would have been about 38 inches high, a size one would have expected to find at the period.

Duncumb in his *History of Herefordshire*, Vol. II, 1812, p. 59, describes the font thus: "The font is a large and hexagonal stone thus inscribed

' This church was paved by William Bowkes, A.D. 1714.
Thomas Beddowes, John Derry, Churchwardens ' "

This as it stands is evidently incorrect, and I suggest it should read

" Near the font is a large and hexagonal stone," etc., etc.
which would solve all difficulties of the ascription.

124. Foy. This very large font is decagonal throughout, the only example of such a shaped font in the county.¹ The diameter of the bowl is 35 inches over all, the thickness of the rim 4 inches, and the width of the basin (shape 6) at the top is 27 inches, the straight part of the side 15 inches, and the total depth 16½ inches. The total height, including the ten-sided base stone, which is 6 inches high, is 39 inches. This base stone is most probably old but has been re-dressed. The rest of the font above this is original but has been badly knocked about and repaired. The lock marks have been made good with stone.

On one face of the under-splay of the bowl are the outlines of two trefoil headed mouldings, perhaps of an arcade. As they are only outlined it would seem that this feature of the font for some reason was never finished. One of the outlines has been cut into by a piece of stone inserted to effect a repair, and there is another repair on the rim of the bowl in which red mortar has been used.

The date of this font is probably late 14th century.

The Hist. Mon. Com., Vol. I, p. 66, says: "In chancel dis-used bowl of circular font with tapering sides, 12th or 13th century. This crude vessel has a very rough rim much worn, a flat bottom and sloping sides. It is 12½ inches high, 29½ inches at top overall, the rim is 4 inches thick, the interior depth is 8½ inches and has a 4 inch hole through the base. There are no lock marks.

This bowl may have been provided for, and if found under the present font, perhaps it was a font sump, or possibly it may be a comparatively modern pump trough which is more likely, as the discharge hole is considerably out of centre.

When I noted it in 1938 it had a mortar with lugs inside it.

¹ *The Mon. Com.*, Vol. I, p. 66, erroneously describes the font thus: "octagonal bowl, each face with three trefoil-headed panels, splayed underside, late 14th century, stem and base, modern."

125. Clifford. The bowl only of this grey sandstone font is mediæval; the stem and base are modern, supplied at the restoration of the church in 1888.

The diameter of the basin is 21 inches, the thickness of the rim 4 inches, the depth 9 inches and the shape No. 1. It has a lead lining now turned over the rim and scalloped, and there are lock marks. The bowl has been whitewashed. The cover is flat with a large acorn knob to lift it by. It is probably about 1820.

The date of the bowl is some time in the 14th century.

126. Wigmore. Here is a large plain octagonal font without any features to date it by. The bowl is undercut with a hollow chamfer, connecting with a plain octagonal stem which stands on a plain circular stone. This stone and the standing step are modern. The joints of all these stones lack any mouldings.

The plain massiveness of this font is in keeping with the tower, which *The Historical Monuments Commission* ascribes to the middle of the 14th century.

Taking into consideration the events at Wigmore before the Black Death in 1348, the tower was probably erected some time after that date, perhaps between 1370-1380 when Edmund Mortimer, who married Philippa Plantagenet, daughter and heiress of Lionel, duke of Clarence, was in possession of Wigmore Castle, and the font may have been made at the same time.

It is of a white micaceous limestone. The diameter of the bowl inside is $24\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the thickness of the rim $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the sloping straight side is 12 inches and the width at the bottom $22\frac{1}{2}$ to 23 inches. The total depth is $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches. There are two stumps of the lock staples but no lining. The font has been whitewashed; there is no cover. A small modern stopper with a T upright to withdraw it by is fitted into a square filled with lead.

127. Eye. It is impossible to say whether this octagonal limestone font belongs to the 14th or 15th century, as it has no moulding or other feature to date it by, for it is only the bowl that is old. If a period be suggested, the latter part of the 14th century would seem to be the most probable. It was at this time that the chancel, nave and aisles were built, when a new font would almost certainly have been provided. Further strong support is given to this suggestion, for the interior diameter of the basin is 21 inches, with straight sides and flat bottom (shape 1), an earlier type than the more usual dished bottom, it is $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, and the rim is 2 inches thick. There are two lock marks, but no lining or cover. It has traces of paint.

128. Croft. This limestone font has an octagonal bowl undercut, now mounted on several stones (*see illus.*), but probably not the original arrangement.

The diameter across the basin of the bowl is $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the rim is $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches, with the lead lining, which is old, turned over it, but the lock marks can be detected underneath. The bottom of the lead has been renewed. The straight side is $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The width at the bottom is 19 inches, the shape 6, and the total depth $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The total height of the font now is $38\frac{1}{2}$ inches. It has been painted stone colour. There is a plain cover.

The date of the font may be the last quarter of the 14th century, and may be compared with Eye (127).

129. Tretire. Before 1910, when put into the church, this bowl was used as a pump trough, but in 1931 it was in the rectory garden. It has now been returned to the church.

A hole had been cut in one side to take the water out of the basin. At two opposite points in the bowl there were marks where the staples for locking the bowl had been removed.

The church was rebuilt in 1856, when the old font was cast out and its place taken by a five-stemmed one, which is in use at the present time.

It is impossible to date this bowl nearer than the 14th or 15th century.

GROUP III

1400-1550.

130. Brockhampton (near Bromyard). This derelict chapel retains its ancient font. It is cut out of one piece of stone, the upper part into an octagon and the lower into a bowl shape. It is probably the same date as the east and west windows which are about the year 1400.

131. Dorstone. *The Hist. Mon. Com.* describes this font thus: "Octagonal stem and moulded base, early 14th century, bowl modern." No doubt the reconstruction of the font took place when the church was rebuilt in 1889.

The diameter of the basin is $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the thickness of the rim is $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches, there are no lock marks, and the lining of the bowl is finished off with the lead cut into an indented pattern.

There is a small drain hole and a modern cover. The stem has traces of whitewash. The total height is $46\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

It is evident from the above description that the stem is the only part of the original font, probably of the early 15th century, which is borne out by an inspection of this and the bowl.

182. Mansley. This octagonal font, of a coarse sandstone, has the bowl splayed off in hollow curves to an octagonal stem of a single stone which in turn stands on an octagonal one with flat splayed faces. The impression created is that the bowl is much too large for the stem and base, not an uncommon fault in the 15th century.

The bowl, which has, on the outside about one third of the way from the top, two narrow lines close together, is $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches in interior diameter, shape 1, a rim $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and the depth of 12 inches. The total height of the font is $37\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

There is now a modern discharge hole with brass plug, let into a new piece of stone $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. At a depth of $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches it is rather larger than the modern outlet, but I do not think this can be taken to indicate a double drain hole but only the sinking to accommodate the stone in which the modern drain hole is cut. The baptismal water is, or has been, kept in the basin as there is a stain mark about half-way up. Also about half-way up is a small half-moon shaped recess about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep, but I think this is only a defect in the stone.

One of the lock staples is perfect. It is squarish with the inner side curved; the corresponding one, also on two legs, has been cut off. There is no cover, and the font has been whitewashed.

The date may be mid-15th century.

183. Dinedor. This plain octagonal limestone font has the bowl under-cut to meet an octagonal stem which has at the junction a narrow moulded necking, and is mounted on a hollow splayed base stone. The whole font is very perfect and a graceful example of an octagonal font.

The basin, cut to an octagonal shape, is, at its narrowest 22 inches in diameter; the depth at the sides is 8 inches, and 10 inches to the centre. The rim is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide with lock marks. There is no lining and the cover is modern. The drain hole is 2 inches across.

The whole font is much discoloured with damp and no doubt has been whitewashed.

The date is late 15th century.

184. Peterstow. This is a large severely plain octagonal font of reddish sandstone. The diameter of the basin inside is $24\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the thickness of the rim $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. There is no lining

but a mark on the edge of the rim looks as if one had been there. The inside of the bowl is slightly concave as is the bottom and it is only 7 inches deep. There is one staple $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches high and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in section. The total height of the font is $42\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

There is a flat cover strengthened by strips from the centre to the eight angles. This is, I think, made of poplar and has never been used for locking the font, as, though there are slits in the cover for the staples, they do not come through the cover far enough, and are only useful to prevent the cover slipping off.

185. Pencombe. In 1864-5 a new imitation Norman church was built at Pencombe, and the old limestone font was turned out into the churchyard where it seems to have suffered damage. It is now under the tower on the south side of the nave, and, when measured, was being used as a receptacle for old oil lamps.

It is octagonal with a diameter from point to point of $30\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and of 21 inches inside the basin. The interior depth of the nearly straight sides is $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the exterior measures 28 inches. The base stone is 8 inches, giving a total height as it now stands of 36 inches. There are no lock marks, but the lower part bears traces of having been painted. There is a large roughly-cut drain hole at the bottom edge, and when this was made it appears that the outside of the basin and the base stone were badly broken, especially the latter, of which some is missing.

A new square font standing on a central column with a small pillar at each corner, in keeping with the taste of the period when the church was built, is now in use.

186. Ocle Pychard. This is a plain octagonal font with a hollow chamfer underneath the bowl to meet the stem.

The church was restored in 1869, when a new font was provided and the old one cast into the churchyard, subsequently to be rescued and put back in the church. Here it remained in its damaged condition until Mrs. Cresswell of Ocle Pychard Court, near the church, had it repaired, and on the 16th of March, 1940, it was returned to its original use.

The bowl of the font has at some time been cracked through, perhaps in the Commonwealth period, and the two pieces are held together with rough iron clamps.

The outer rim of the bowl has a plain iron chamfer.

The cover, although used for the modern font, was evidently made for the old one, being of an octagonal shape, whereas the new font was circular. It is an open four-sided pyramidal one of deal, and very light, painted with blue, red, and gold. It may be about 1840.

The font is of gray local sandstone, and the date is about 1450. Cf., Peterstow (134), Pencombe (135).

187. Garway. This large octagonal font of a grey sandstone is decorated with the following incised figures. On the rim at each angle is a Maltese cross, just below the rim on each face are three triangles with the points alternately reversed, and beneath these, on the west face, is a serpent, head downwards, entwined round a plain cross. In modern times these objects have been picked out in colour, the Maltese cross in blue and the triangles in red; the serpent cross has a like background.¹ There are indications of earlier paint on the font, it looks like marbling of the late 17th century. The crosses on the rim are the badge of the Hospitallers, the triangles in threes, the emblems of the Trinity, in a double sense, and the serpent, overcome by the cross, represents the power of baptism.

The basin across the top is 27 inches in diameter, it has no lining, the 9 inch side is slightly incurved, the shape No. 5, and the depth 11 inches. The thickness of the rim is 4 inches and there are two lock marks. The discharge hole seems to have been about 3 inches across, but is now cemented up. There was a miniature white stone octagonal font in the basin when I measured it in 1934. There is a flat cover early 19th century.

The date is said by the *Hist. Mon. Com.* to be 14th century, but I think it is more likely to be early 15th when the round nave was rebuilt in its present form (*Woolhope Transactions*, 1927, p. 97).

188a, 188b. Canon Pyon. This font is built up out of four blocks of stone, the upper one the octagonal bowl, the next one an odd uneven shaped sculptured piece of what may have been part of an early capital, and the third one a circular stone about four inches thick which appears to be the runner stone of a cider mill, and the fourth a moulded stone, round at the top with a square base.

It has evidently undergone some alteration in modern times for there is an engraving in *The Antiquarian and Topographical Cabinet*² where this font is composed of three stones, the two top ones divided as above, the third stone is missing and the fourth is shown as a shapeless mass, but it is just possible that it could have been worked into number four, as it is of that period. However that may be, stone number three is evidently a modern addition to give the font a more balanced proportion.

The font is of sandstone and of considerable size. The diameter of the basin is 20½ inches, and the thickness of the rim

¹ It is said that the Rev. P. J. Oliver Minos found traces of this colouring, and I believe renewed it, and painted other emblems about the church without any ancient evidence, see *The Woolhope Transactions*, 1920, p. 207.

² Vol. VII, London, 1807-1811. See small illustration.

5½ inches. The latter has been cut down about an inch and chamfered on the inner and outer edge. There are two small marks on the rim which may be the bases of lock staples. The depth of the basin is 12¼ inches.

The total height of the font is now 40¼ inches.

There is a modern plain oak cover, with a small angel reading a book for a handle. This was given by the late Miss Wells, who resided in the parish.

139. King's Caple. There is half an octagonal stone, now doing duty as a step, before the door leading into the tower which I was told was part of the font. If so it may be the base stone, and as it is small, perhaps a 15th or 16th century one.

140. Doeklow. At West End Farm in this parish, on the lawn, is a garden ornament composed of various cider mill stones as seen in the illustration. The upper one, with a stone in the basin, is the octagonal bowl of the old font, probably cast out of the church when a considerable restoration was carried out in 1880.

It has not been possible to take measurements and other particulars of this bowl. All that can be said is that the date is most probably 15th century or possibly later, as it is evidently a shallow basin. *The Hist. Mon. Comm.* says: "Now at Westend Farm in this parish—octagonal bowl with rounded lower edge, mediæval, perhaps from this church."

141. Stretton Grandison. This, the only hexagonal font in Herefordshire, has on each face a sunk quatrefoil. It is made from a slightly micaceous grey to whitish sandstone. The basin, 22¼ inches across, has straight sides and a very slightly dished bottom 20 inches across and 10 inches deep. There are two lock marks where the rim has been broken and mended. A small staple remains in one place but it is doubtful if it is the original one. The width of the rim at the narrowest part is 3½ inches. The faces of the bowl are 17 inches square. It is lined with lead, overlapping the rim.

There is a join across the stem about one third of the way down. All above this appears to have been rubbed down, and below it the stem is of a different sandstone, rather reddish. The standing step is modern.

The font has been painted a reddish colour, probably in modern times.

The cover is modern open pyramidal work with this inscription painted round the bottom framework: "+ I acknowledge + | + one Baptism + | + for the + | + remission + | + of sins + | + Amen + | +".

142. St. Weonards. This octagonal font is made from a red sandstone, and is unlined. The basin is 24 inches across the top, the sloping side $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with a flat bottom of 12 inches, the total depth being $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The thickness of the rim is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Each face of the bowl is decorated with a sunk quatrefoil.

A little hole below the rim inside was, probably, for a staple to which was attached the chain for the plug.

The date is probably early 16th century, when the north aisle, the south porch, and the tower were rebuilt.

The cover is modern, being a panelled pyramidal one.

143. Walford. This is an octagonal font with side panels 12 inches wide and 14 inches deep. The stem also is octagonal each face being $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, standing on an octagonal sloping base 15 inches on the slope.

The width of the bowl is 31 inches and the rim 3 inches. It is $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, octagonal inside for the first $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with a rounded bottom, and is lead lined from about $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches below the rim. The height of the bowl is $18\frac{1}{2}$ inches, of the stem $16\frac{1}{4}$ inches, the base 15 inches, the standing step $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, making a total of 54 inches.

On the sides of the bowl are quatrefoils, with roses and four-leaved flowers alternating; similar roses and flowers are on the chamfer. Each face of the stem has a sunk trefoil-headed panel, and the base has mouldings with roses and four-leaved flowers as above. Here, however, the sculptor made an error putting a four leaved flower instead of a rose on one face, with the result that three of the former come together.

The material is a grey sandstone, apparently from the Forest of Dean. There was perhaps a factory or quarry in the Forest where fonts were made, as similar examples appear in Gloucestershire. Walford font is of exceptional elevation.

144. Llangarron. This font is made from a block of limestone and is exceptionally well decorated. The bowl, which is an octagon, has on each face a pair of rosettes of different patterns. The stem, which is round, is much worn in places, and has similar objects, but in one place is a shield undecipherable or blank.

The two lower stones, which include the standing step, are modern.

The date is probably early in the 16th century.

145. Upton Bishop. The Rev. F. T. Havergal, incumbent of this parish 1874-1883, says when he first saw this font in 1857, it was coated with paint which was removed with difficulty, and

from the upper part about a third of the quatrefoils were missing. He goes on to say: "The font was most successfully restored by Mr. Hards, of Ross, and mounted on a new base of octagon stones. The oak cover is spiral, terminating with a cross about 7 feet 6 inches in height, all of solid but fine work, by Rattee, of Cambridge."¹

The font is probably about the middle of the 15th century.

146. Brampton Abbotta. The *Hist. Mon. Com.* gives the following description of the font: "octagonal bowl with quatrefoiled panels each with central enrichment or carved cusp-points, trumpet-shaped stem with panelled and traceried faces and modern lower part, late 15th century."

Upton Bishop (145) and this font probably were made at the same time, mid-15th century, not late 14th and late 15th centuries as suggested by the *Hist. Mon. Com.*

147. Kinsham. The evolution of this primitive grey to reddish sandstone font may be as follows. In the first place it was a late 12th century tub-shaped font with a double drain hole 4 inches across by 4 inches deep in the basin, which was and is 17 inches in diameter. The height of the straight side is 7 inches and the total depth to hole 8 inches with a saucer-like bottom (shape 6). There is no lining.

No doubt this bowl, in the late 14th or early 15th century, was cut into its present octagonal shape, so fashionable at the time, and given some support in the nature of a stem, which for some unknown reason it was found necessary to renew. This renewal, judging by the bricks used, may date about the beginning of the 19th century. This new base was worked to a rising octagon in three receding tiers with the sharp edges of the bricks rubbed down as may be seen to-day.

There are the stumps of two single-legged staples in the 2 inch wide rim. There is no cover.

148. Hentland. The bowl of this font is octagonal. It is lead-lined and basin-shaped and there are no lock marks. It is made of limestone (?). The diameter of the inside of the basin is 15½ inches and the depth 8 inches. The eight faces of the bowl have various patterns on them, including roses, and a man's and a woman's head, no doubt those of the donors of the font. The eight faces of the underside of the bowl and those of the base of the stem also have patterns and the font is heavily decorated. It is quite an exceptional specimen among Herefordshire fonts. (Illustration No. 163.)

¹ *Records of the Parish of Upton Bishop, 1883, illus.*

149. Acton Beauchamp. This octagonal font, *The Hist. Mon. Comm.*, Vol. II, describes thus: "octagonal bowl with moulded top, concave underside carved with large pateræ, plain stem and hollow-chamfered base, late 15th century, much repaired in cement."

There is a cover of three diminishing tiers of wood surmounted by a knob handle, which may date about 1800.

150. Michaelchurch Ezeley. This font of local reddish sandstone is a very good example of an early 16th century font which is all original except the modern standing step. It has been damaged in two places where the staples, which once existed for locking the cover, have been wrenched out, otherwise it is perfect. It seems to me that the date is early in the 16th century rather than the 15th century as the *Hist. Mon. Com.* vaguely suggests.

There is a pewter bowl, $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, in the basin, on which the letters DSW are cut, perhaps the initials of the churchwarden of the time, the W for warden. There are no pewter marks; the date may be about 1700.

151. Pixley. In the continuation of Duncumb's *History of Herefordshire, Radlow Hundred*, by Morgan G. Watkins, 1902, p. 127, it is stated that "The Font is Early English, supported on two oak posts". It is an octagonal basin-shaped font, $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep with moulded underside, standing on a plain stem and moulded base stone. The exterior diameter from flat face to face is $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the interior is 17 inches, with rim $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches at the widest and $3\frac{1}{2}$ at the narrow parts. There is no lining or sign of lock marks. The total height is $38\frac{1}{2}$ inches. There are signs of tooling but no colouring is to be seen.

152. St. Devereux. This severely plain octagonal font can be safely ascribed to the middle of the 16th century, when, in the year 1549, the church was burnt down. This is about the time one would attribute it to, even if one had not known the year when a new font was likely to be required.

It has apparently been re-tooled in some recent restoration. (Illustration No. 166.)

153. Welsh Bicknor. This font, when photographed a few years ago, was out in the churchyard: it is now in the south chapel on the floor. It is round, with a flat bottom only $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. The height is 9 inches, the diameter is 26 inches outside, and 21 inches inside the rim. The interior is straight sided with a slight slope. Perhaps this bowl was cut down when ejected from the church and used for secular purposes. The font in use today is a very elaborate 19th century example.

SECTION 4

 POST-REFORMATION TO THE RESTORATION
 1560-1660

Very few new fonts were introduced into our churches during this century.

All sorts of irregularities occurred, among which basins were often used as fonts, though orders were promulgated against this being done, without much effect. During the Commonwealth liturgical observances were in a chaotic condition. Archbishop Laud did what he could to get matters put right, and in consequence he lost his head. So things went from bad to worse until the Restoration, when order was slowly restored, but a large number of fonts had been destroyed in the meantime.

154a, 154b. Pipe and Lyde. The old basin is outside the church (154b) and the old stem is under the modern font. The former is shallow octagonal, worked with sunk faces, and under-curving to a round. This would fit on the stem in the church, which finishes in an octagon, and would fit on the base which has a hole through it. The basin is 16 inches across inside and only 4 inches deep, without lock marks. It is probably post-Reformation, made from a circular and damaged Norman font, with a stem dressed down to meet it. Mr. Marshall thought that the basin had been cut down, and that the base stone outside is the original.

155. St. Margarets. The material of this font is a local micaceous limestone. *The Hist. Mon. Com.* (Vol. I, p. 226) describes it in these words: "octagonal bowl with moulded upper and lower edge, plain stem and chamfered base, 14th century." I think there can be no question that the font is not of 14th century date but 16th or possibly early 17th century. The general layout points to this, a large shallow bowl poised on a comparatively slender stem, quite unlike anything found in the 14th century. Added to this, when the basin is examined it is found to be exceptionally shallow, only $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches, an unusual depth for a font basin in the pre-Reformation period.

In the early 16th century considerable improvements were being carried out in the church; the nave was given new windows, one each in north and south walls, and a fine screen and rood loft were erected. It is possible that a new font would be provided at the same time, but, taking into consideration the shallow basin of the bowl, it is perhaps more likely that the font dates from the second decade of the 17th century, and that the pyramidal oak

cover is original. At this time Lord Scudamore was carrying out extensive work at Abbey Dore and in the neighbouring parish of Bacton. Such an example may have been followed in a minor degree at St. Margarets. Against this suggestion is the fact that the font at St. Margarets has lock marks while the new font at Abbey Dore has none. The weight of evidence is I think in favour of the 17th century date, the shallowness of the bowl being against a mediæval one.

The diameter of the basin is $24\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the thickness of the rim is 3 inches, and the drain hole 2 inches in diameter.

156. Abbey Dore. This font is fashioned out of a piece of grey sandstone, and was made when Lord Scudamore rebuilt the church in the beginning of the 17th century. The exact date (1632) has recently come to light in some accounts of his, discovered in the cathedral archives.¹

The basin is shape 6, the diameter across the top 21 inches, and the depth $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches. There is no lining. There are two holes in the rim, $1\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch, where lock staples have been. The rim is 3 inches thick. All below the stem is modern and the base stone is made up of mediæval tiles, this was done at the restoration by Roland W. Paul in 1895. The font has been moved several times in recent years. It stood in the choir after Lord Scudamore's restoration.

There is a pewter bowl in the basin $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches across the rim and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. Stamped on the bottom is "LONDON" and something unreadable. The date is probably about 1770.

157. Byford. This octagonal font is made of a grey micaceous sandstone. On one face is the date 1638 and below I.H.C. ; on another a double rose, on another face one much larger, and on another a smaller rose. The intervening faces are blank.

The entire font seems to have been re-tooled in recent times. The bowl at some time has been cracked and strengthened by an iron rivet at one angle of the rim.

158. Sutton St. Michael. The Norman font (21) belonging to this parish was reported on when dealing with those of that period. A remark of a former vicar recorded in *The Woolhope Transactions* for 1917 has been the means of bringing to light what is one of the most extraordinary fonts of its time. It happened in this way. Another vicar, the Reverend Prebendary S. H. Martin, who recently retired, happening to read the above account,

¹ These will be printed in the *Woolhope Club Transactions* for 1950, now in the hands of the printers.

told me that the basin there mentioned was still in the church and was kept under one of the pews, and at a baptism it was used by being placed in the Norman font, and further said he had been told that this basin, presumably before the reinstatement of the old font, probably at the restoration of the church in 1867 was placed in the hands of an angel which was in the centre of the east wall of the chancel, but added he did not see how the rite could be administered as the altar was just in front of it.

On receipt of this information Mr. F. C. Morgan photographed this angel reunited with the basin; and I examined the arrangement and offer the following explanation of this remarkable font.

In the first place it was at once apparent that the angel was not intended to hold the basin, but held an open book inscribed: "Suffer little children to come unto Me and forbid them not", and above his head was a shelf on which to stand the basin (*see illustration*). The angel and shelf are let into a recess below the Norman single light east window, and are hidden behind a hanging which forms the reredos to the altar, and if one had not known it was there it is most unlikely that its use would have been suspected. The angel and basin are of a whitish stone.

They no doubt were made to conform with the Commonwealth Directorate of Public Worship of 1645 under which all fonts were to be abolished and a basin placed near the Reading Desk from which to administer baptism by sprinkling or affusion. A basin was used indifferently anywhere in the chancel even on the altar. It was no doubt in conformity with these instructions that the angel and basin were provided, but I know of no other such arrangement.

In the Commonwealth period the altar was placed lengthwise, east and west, which here would have enabled the ceremony to be administered with the basin on the shelf under the window. A time for its erection may, with some probability, be suggested. On the south wall of the nave of the church is a fine monument to Elizabeth Cotton, widow of George Cotton of Warblington in Hampshire. She died on the 2nd June, 1643. On it is recorded that it was erected in 1654 by Richard and Elizabeth,¹ seemingly the step-children of Elizabeth Cotton, out of pious affection.

Some of the details of this monument and font are very similar and probably were executed by the same sculptor at the same time.

159. Fownhope. There are two fonts here, the one about 1600. Cassey's *Directory*, 1858, and Kelly's *Directory*, 1863, both say that a carved granite font was, about 1853, dug out of some

¹ *The Genealogist* (1883), Vol. VII, p. 235. Harleian Society. Vol. LXIV (1913), p. 129.

"neighbouring ruins". Of this font the centre part of the stem may be new or re-dressed. The fleurs-de-lis on each face are all worked down quite smooth, the font has evidently undergone much cleaning up. The cover is modern, and there are no lock marks.

I was told that this and the neighbouring font at Bolstone are made of a hard sandstone from a quarry called Lakeways Quarry. (Illustration No. 161.) See also Bolstone (160).

160. Bolstone. This octagonal font was intended to have on each face two trefoil panels. Cut on one is a thistle and in the adjoining compartment a fleur-de-lis; the panel to the left of the thistle has a cross with a rose at the end of the north arm, a fleur-de-lis at the end of the south arm and leaves sprouting from the other two. The font never seems to have been finished as the other compartments are left in the rough. The emblems are evidently in reference to James the First.

The date of the font no doubt is early in his reign, say about 1605. (Illustration No. 162.)

161. Llanrothal. This church, within the last few years, has been abandoned to its fate. The font has been pushed down and is lying on the ground.

It stood at the west end about the middle of the aisle. The material is a coarse reddish sandstone, painted inside the basin, and it may have been painted all over, for it has evidently been re-tooled in recent times. There are lock marks. The shape of the basin is No. 2, the depth only $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the diameter across the top $16\frac{3}{4}$ inches, and across the bottom 14 inches and the rim is but 1 inch thick. It is evident that this is not a medieval font. There is no lining.

There was a pewter basin inside the font, $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches across and $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep, and on the bottom of it "M. Barry Llanrothal" and "L.P.1783", and on a shield a *chevron engrailed between three eagles' heads crased* and round it "Birch and Villiers". In the bowl was a mother of pearl shell, not a reproduction.

The date of this font may be about 1645. (Illustration No. 183.)

SECTION 5

THE RESTORATION TO 1830.

With the advent of the Restoration fonts once again assumed form more in the character of ancient vessels though the ornamentation with which they were adorned easily differentiates them from

their forbears. By the first decade of the 18th century fashion fell back to the bad example, set during the Commonwealth, of using a small basin instead of the ancient font bowl that had done duty for so many centuries.

We get an example of a font at the other extreme in the enormous bowl that was used at Burghill at the beginning of the 19th century.

162. Credenhill. This font bowl was acquired from Eaton Bishop about the year 1919. The latter parish kept the portion below the bowl on which to erect their new font. The inscription on the Credenhill font reads: "The gift of John Squier who lived at Colford 1667." I have failed to find out who he was, probably a relation of someone living at Eaton Bishop. (Illustration No. 165.)

163. Kenchester. This font dates from the end of the 17th century, but it is just possible that the base stone on which the stem stands is late 11th or early 12th century. The two other stones are, undoubtedly, Roman material reclaimed from *Magna Castra*. The tooling on these two is upright, the upper one is a coarse micaceous grey sandstone, but the stem is a fine grey sandstone with little pebbles in places. The top one has the lower end slightly pared down to fit the lower stone.

The interior of the bowl is basin-shaped. The diameter across the top is 11 inches, it is only 5¼ inches deep and it has *no discharge hole*. The rim is 3¼ to 3½ inches thick. The basin has been painted but the outside of the font shows no sign of paint or whitewash. There is no cover. There is a shallow black modern metal bowl in the basin. (Illustration No. 159.)

164. Mordiford. There is a large octagonal bowl in the porch, said by the *Hist. Mon. Comm.* to be a font bowl, which it may be; on the other hand it more corresponds to a mortar.

It has a date on it 1663. I think it is made from a micaceous limestone. The basin is bowl shape, 17 inches across the top, 6½ inches deep, and the thickness of the bowl is about 3½ inches.

The discharge hole, if there is one, seems to be stopped up roughly with mortar. There are lines cut round the outside of the bowl with a few double ornamentations.

There was another font in the church, which looks as if it dated from the middle of the 18th century, with a fluted stem and a tiny bowl. (See *Woolhope Transactions*, 1941, p. lxxii, from a drawing of about 1810, in the Hereford Public Library.)

165. Mansell Gamage. The stem and base of this font would lead one to think it was a 13th century font, but the bowl renders it impossible that this could be the case, the bowl being cut and undercut into irregular octagons, the faces varying from $8\frac{1}{2}$ to 11 inches. The basin is cone shaped. A name cut on two of the adjoining faces of the rim is "Mary Baynham" in 17th century lettering, and there are no lock marks, all of which points to it being of 17th century date, probably the third quarter of that century. It is most likely a new bowl and an old stem and base, of a local sandstone. (Illustration No. 160.)

166. Leominster. Unknown font. At the Grange, Leominster, there was another font, but where it came from is unknown. Mr. Marshall dated it about 1800. A former resident at the house collected many sculptured stones from various places around Leominster, and used them as garden ornaments. On the panels of this font there are lilies and a sheaf of wheat. (Illustration No. 152.)

167. Thruxton. This is a plain octagonal font with an inscription round the outside of the upper part of the bowl, which is as follows: "THIS FONT WAS MADE MARC THE 16TH 1677", and on the base: "BAPTISMUS EST ABLUTIO PECCATORUM" ('*Baptism is the washing away of sins*').

Except in having an inscription, it is a typical early post-Restoration font.

168. Monnington. This octagonal font is grey sandstone, and has no lining or lock marks. The basin is 18 inches in diameter at the top and 12 inches across the flat bottom, the shape No. 2. The thickness of the bowl is $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches and the depth $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The total height with step is $39\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The cover is of oak, is the same date as the font, and has a large acorn knob to lift it by.

Upon one face are the initials and date V.T.M.
1680

The initials stand for Uvedale and Mary Tomkyns who lived at Monnington Court. They rebuilt the church and provided the fittings, including the altar rails, the screen, the Royal Arms, the wooden altar table, etc.

169. Aston Ingham. This is one of the two lead fonts in Herefordshire. It bears the date '1689' and the initials 'W.M.' and 'W.R.' and six other different stamps, some repeated. I have failed to find out for whom the initials stand. They are evidently not the Royal initials.

The Hist. Mon. Comm. says: "modern stem with 13th century moulded capital and chamfered base." The lower stones are apparently mill-stone grit.

170. Callow. The bowl of this font is grey sandstone but the stem and base are of a reddish sandstone. It has no lining or lock marks. The base stone looks like a 13th century stone, but I think the font is all of one date and not of the 13th century. It is evident that the bowl is made out of the base of a churchyard cross, the remains of the niche, a common feature in Herefordshire crosses, may still be seen. Further proof of this is the shape of the basin. The diameter across the top of this is 19 to 20 inches, 10 to 11 inches across the bottom, shape No. 2, the total depth 7 inches and the thickness of the rim $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches. Enough evidence to show it is a post-Reformation composition. The total height is 39 inches.

171. Tyberton. This font was supplied by a firm at Bristol when the church was rebuilt in 1720 by William Brydges of Tyberton Court.

It is of an oolite stone and has been painted to represent a grey marble.

The basin is bowl shaped, 18 inches in diameter, with a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch channel round the top to receive a cover, which apparently is lost. It is $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep and the discharge hole is stopped up. There is no lining and the total height is $43\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

There is some correspondence to be found about this font in the Tyberton papers in the Public Library, Hereford.

172. Llanwarne. The new church was erected in 1864. Prebendary Seaton in *A History of Archenfield*, 1903, tells us that among the fittings then provided "the pulpit and font are of stone, relieved with coloured insertions". About 1920 this new font gave place to the old one, which is a rough reproduction of the font at Holme Lacy and most likely is made by the same firm.

The bowl is decorated with crude acanthus leaves, and the stem with looped up drapery.

The basin is bowl shaped, 5 inches deep and 15 inches across, measured inside the channel, which is cut to prevent the cover from slipping off.

The total height is $40\frac{1}{2}$ inches including the base stones which are $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

The font is made of limestone. The date is about 1675.

173. Holme Lacy. This font is on the same lines as Llanwarne (172), but has a very superior finish. The bowl is adorned with four cherubs' heads, and stem and bowl have similar ornament to Llanwarne, only not so crudely executed.

The font is cut from an oolitic stone and must, soon after being made, have met with a disaster, for the bowl was cracked and mended with iron ties let in flush with the stone. At some subsequent period it was fractured again, and I suspect will not hold water, as the plug hole is stopped up.

The diameter of the basin is 18 inches with a flat bottom $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches across, the depth is $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The thickness of the bowl is $33\frac{1}{4}$ inches and the total height of the font $44\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The rim has a sunk channel into which the cover fitted but this is now missing.

The date of this font may be about 1670.

See also Ross (197).

174. Cradley. When I first saw this font, in 1891, it was in the tower and disused. This year, 1950, it has been returned to its original use, and has been given a new elaborate cover. The font is inscribed: "Thomas Bisse—D.D.—1722." He was Rector of this parish 1713–1731, and was a brother of Philip Bisse, Bishop of Hereford. He died in 1731 and was buried at Weston-under-Penyard.

There are the remains of a previous font incorporated into a doorway in the tower. Probably this was done in 1724, when a peal of bells was hung by the Rudhalls. The old font bowl appears to have been sawn down and the inner halves made to do duty for the arch to the doorway, and the stem used up by cutting it through, as may be seen by traces of the discharge hole.

175. Hereford, St. Peter's. The bowl of this font is only 18 inches by 12 inches, with a rebate to take the cover, which is a flat mahogany board, with a carved rosette in the middle, and a small brass knob for a handle. The font is made of an oolite Bath stone, and the stem has no base.

The following entry appears in the churchwardens' accounts: "Sept. 23, 1727, to Mr. Richards for taking downe the oulde ffont and makeng a step for a new one £1 - 10 - 0." As no cost of a new font appears in the accounts, probably it was a gift to the church.

This font now stands at the west end of the south chapel of the chancel. Mr. Charles Evans of Hereford tells me that it formerly stood on one of the altar steps. He also gave me the entry from the churchwardens' accounts.

176. Fownhope. This font seems to have superseded No. 159. It was found in the vicarage garden and put back in the church in 1933, though I do not think it has been used for baptismal purposes since that date.

The date of this font is probably about 1769.

177. How Caple. This font was turned out of the church on its restoration a few years ago, since when it has been in the churchyard, unfortunately exposed to the weather.

It has inscribed on it: "Bap. 1698", a year or two later than a restoration the church underwent at that time.

It is made of sandstone and has no lock marks or lining. The bowl is basin shaped, the thickness of the rim is $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches and the total height 35 inches. The depth of the basin is 8 inches and there is no cover.

178. Weston-under-Penyard. This font is in the churchyard where it has been at least since 1934. It is made of grey sandstone, and has no lining or lock marks. The diameter across the basin is $17\frac{3}{4}$ inches, not including a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch rebate for a cover. The thickness of the bowl is $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and the depth of the basin $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, which is bowl shaped.

The date of the font is about 1680.

179. Stoke Edith. This font has a wrought-iron stand, painted blue, picked out with a little gilding, and supporting a small white-marble bowl with an octagonal moulded stone to weight it at the base. The photograph gives a better idea of it than any description.

The interior of the bowl is basin shaped, and the thickness of the rim 2 inches, the depth is $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The original cover is oak. The font is 41 inches high, not including the cover.

The date no doubt is 1741, the time the church was rebuilt.

180. Woolhope. This old font is not mentioned in the *Hist. Mon. Comm.* It is evidently a copy of the one in the adjoining parish of Stoke Edith (179), of which it is a much rougher reproduction and is perhaps by a local craftsman. It has lost its cover, which was probably similar to Stoke Edith.

The date of this font is somewhere around 1745.

181. Ashperton. This font was in the church in 1910. It is now in the churchyard and is standing on a stone level with the ground; its height, from this stone, is 42 inches. The diameter, inside the groove for the cover¹, is $18\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and across the flat

¹ The *Hist. Mon. Comm.* says: "Cover, in second stage of tower, of oak with turned central post and three scrolled supports, 17th century." No doubt this was the original cover of the font.

bottom $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches. On the inside of the basin, about three-quarters of the way up, is a small iron staple, to which was evidently attached the chain of the plug.

There is now a circular thick slab of slate that takes the place of a cover, which, however, neither holds water in or keeps it out.

The date of this font is probably about 1680, not 13th century as stated in *The Hist. Mon. Comm.*

182. Aylton. This is a very primitive font and consists of a plain stem built up out of small circular blocks of sandstone; it looks as if it could be turned over with a slight push. Something of the sort happened a few months ago when the question arose, if the discharge hole or what appears to be such, should be restored to use or not. It was found that an iron pin through the stem held the stones together. This seems to have been the original, and the churchwardens were advised to retain it, it being very doubtful if a discharge hole was ever meant to follow the pin. If so, it had ceased to function for many years.

The diameter of the sunk groove for the cover is 13 inches and the width of the rim $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches. There is no lining or lock marks, and no cover. The total height is 42 inches.

Probably the font is of the 17th century.

183. Huntington (by Kington). The *Hist. Mon. Comm.* describes the font thus: "octagonal bowl with curved undersides, set diagonally on octagonal stem, probably 14th century, base modern." It is evident that this is not a 14th century font but more probably a 17th century one because it has no lock marks, the thickness of the rim is only $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches, the shape of the basin is such as is not found in the 14th century and the general appearance of the font does not coincide with one of that date.

The date of this font is more probably about 1670.

In 1934 it had a small Benares bowl in the basin for the baptismal water. (Illustration No. 148.)

184. Westhild. The *Hist. Mon. Com.* state that this font is probably 13th century, but Mr. Marshall, who examined it in 1940, believed that it was of the 17th century. It now stands in the north-west corner of the south aisle, before a blocked doorway. Formerly it stood in the centre of this aisle, a little to the east, where the marks on the floor and the drain hole can be seen.

It is of grey sandstone, and the bowl measures $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches across with an interior width of $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The side slopes and is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. The centre is 8 inches. There are no signs of lock marks or lining. It is 38 inches high with an additional

standing step that is modern. The illustration shows that the upper three quarters of the bowl has been added to the lower piece; probably the damage was done during the Civil War. There are remains of whitewash on both parts.

There is an oak cover with raised turned piece in the centre and a turned knob, probably of the 18th century.

In the church is a pewter dish with 'Westhide' on the rim and a pewterer's mark. It may be a christening bowl of the late 17th century.

185. Burghill. In the centre of the tower there stands on the floor a large sandstone bowl (*see page 16*). Its diameter at the top of the basin is 27 inches, and the rim is 6 inches thick; there are two grooves a few inches from the top by way of ornament. The basin is bowl shaped and is made in two separate pieces; evidently it was found difficult to get a block of sandstone to make it in one piece.

It has a large piece of stone, $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches square, let in at the bottom of the basin, into which is let the $2\frac{3}{4}$ inch plug hole. Possibly a cutting of such a size was necessary through some defect in the bottom of the bowl.

The history of the bowl is as follows. When the tower fell in 1810, as described on page 16, this monstrosity of a bowl was substituted for the crushed lead one, and was used as a font until the latter was restored. It was then turned into the churchyard and stood as an ornament on the remains of the churchyard cross, but when this was restored it was wheeled into the tower, where, covered with boards, it forms a platform from which the bell-ringers ring the bells.

Note. The descriptions of some of the preceding and most of the following fonts are from notes left by the author, who passed away on 11th December, 1950, to the great regret of all who knew him, leaving this important work unfinished. Errors in these are due to the Editor. As all but one of the fonts from No. 186 onwards are modern they are not of such great interest as those of earlier date.

186. Shobdon. This font was added to the church by public subscription when the fine Norman font was converted to a garden ornament (*see No. 19*).

187. Tretire. The church at Tretire was restored in 1856, when the old font (*see No. 129*) was turned out and this one substituted.

188. Bridstow. This church was rebuilt, except for the tower, in 1862. The font dates from this year.

189. Donnington. As this church was restored in 1862 the font probably dates from this year.

190. Aconbury. The church was 'completely restored' in 1863, when there is little doubt the present font was added.

191. Little Dewchurch. Another church that was rebuilt, with the exception of the tower, in 1863. The font is clearly of this date.

192. Linton. The church having been thoroughly restored in 1875-6 from plans by G. E. Street, the new font was then added.

193. Withington. This font of peculiar design may have been added to the church when it (as were so many others in Herefordshire) was 'thoroughly restored' in 1858.

194. Hereford, St. Peter's. This font of Caen stone was sculptured by Robert Clarke in 1885. Clarke came to Hereford to carve the front of the City Library about 1871, and remained in the city until his death.

195. Richard's Castle (new church). This church was built in 1891-2, but probably the font which is mentioned in Baker, O., *Ludlow Town and neighbourhood*, 1888, as modern, was brought here from the old church. Mr. Marshall thought that it was given by the Fosters of Moor Park, and transferred to the new church which they built some years later.

196. Brockhampton, near Ross. The new church at Brockhampton was built by Mrs. Alice Madeline Foster, in memory of her parents. It was designed by Professor W. R. Lethaby, and erected in 1902. The font was designed by the same architect.

197. Ross. This font, similar to those at Llanwarne (172) and Holme Lacy (173), apparently was unknown to Mr. Marshall. It is 45½ inches high with a diameter of 22 inches, with a sunken rim for the cover, now missing. There is a drain hole at the side, which evidently was made when the font was turned out of the church and the new font took its place. In a lithograph of the first half of the 19th century it is shown with a narrow, rounded moulding at the base of the stem and standing on a square stone (*cf.* 173). It is probably of the same date as Holme Lacy.

198. Ross. This modern font was probably added to the church at the restoration of 1878.

199. Clehonger. Mr. Marshall believed that this font is modern in spite of its early appearance. It is not mentioned in the *Historical Monuments Commission* under Clehonger (Vol. I, p. 37), and therefore the members share this opinion.

200. Newton (near Clodock). *The Historical Monuments Commission* believed that this font bowl dates from the 12th or 13th century, the base being probably 13th. There was not a church at Newton until 1842; the present one was consecrated on 2nd May, 1844, having been built through the exertions of John Powell, who gave the land and a sum of money. Probably the font came from some other church: Ewyas Harold has been suggested.¹ (Illustration No. 185.)

201. Urishay. Here we have an old domestic mortar being adapted for a font; probably this was done when the chapel was restored for services and re-dedicated on 29th July, 1912. (Illustration No. 200.)

202. At Moor Park, Richard's Castle, there is a domestic mortar which tradition says is the old font from the church there. This is evidently an error. In some few churches these mortars can be found, in the belief that they are holy water stoups. (Illustration No. 201.)

203. Domestic mortar in the church at Holme Lacy. (Illustration No. 202.)

BOSBURY FONT

Note by the Rev. H. E. Grindley.

Perhaps the remark that the font (42) has been painted may have been suggested by the fact that one of the pilasters—an obvious restoration—is painted in black and green. Mr. L. Richardson and I came to the conclusion that the font is of local cornstone. The motley nature of the stone might also contribute to the painted appearance. The stone trough spoken of by Bentley as a Saxon font is said to have been found inverted under the font, for drainage? [This is the sump as stated by Mr. Marshall.]

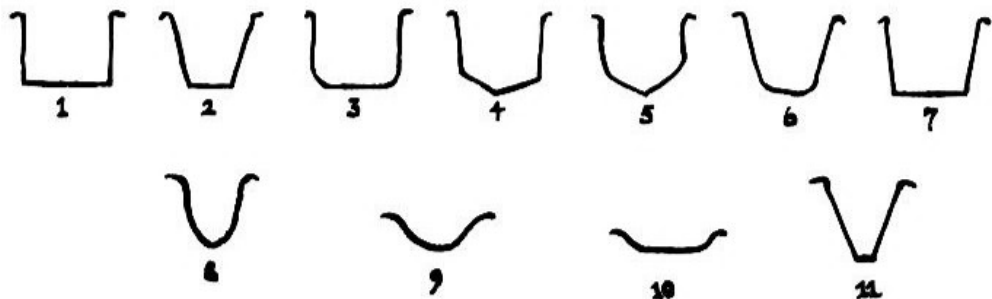
The foregoing are believed to be descriptions of all the pre-nineteenth century fonts in Herefordshire, though there may be more hidden away in various unlikely places. There is also a representative selection of the later fonts to show the styles that appealed to the Victorian age.

¹ This font should be included in Section 2, Group IV. Mr. Marshall thought it might be modern as he was unaware of the belief that it came from another church.

The vicissitudes of the early fonts have been great. It will be seen that they have been used for a door-step (139), lintel to a doorway (174), garden ornaments (19 and others), a feeding trough (107), pump-troughs, etc. It is to be hoped that this great work by the late George Marshall will prevent further misuse of these important articles of church furniture, and that greater interest will be taken in them. It is known that even today some are used for holding firewood or other wrong purposes. It is surely time that such things should cease.



SHAPES OF INTERIORS OF FONTS.



INDEX

- Abbey Dore 156
 Aconbury 190
 Acton Beauchamp 149
 Amberley 51
 Ashperton 181
 Aston (Pipe) 82
 Aston Ingham 169
 Aymestrey 78
 Avenbury 74
 Aylton 182
 Bacton 95
 Ballingham 77
 Birch, Little 10
 Birley 32
 Bishops Frome 61
 Blakemere 12
 Bodenham 123
 Bolstone 160
 Bosbury 42 and
 page 95
 Brampton Abbots 146
 Bredwardine 43
 Bridge Solers 76
 Bridstow 189
 Brilley 55
 Brimfield 102
 Brinsop 63
 Brobury 38
 Brockhampton, near
 Bromyard 130
 Brockhampton, near
 Ross 196
 Bromyard 2
 Burghill 17, 185
 Burrington 92
 Byford 157
 Byton 34
 Callow 170
 Canon Pyon 138
 Castle Frome 16
 Clehonger 199
 Clifford 125
 Clodock 67
 Coddington 104
 Collington 88
 Colwall 83
 Cowarne, Little 68
 Cradley 174
 Credenhill 162
 Croft 128
 Cusop 33
 Dewchurch, Little 191
 Dewchurch, Much 25
 Dewsall 109
 Dilwyn 110, 111
 Dinedor 133
 Docklow 140
 Donnington 188
 Dormington 3
 Dorstone 131
 Dulas 50
 Eardisley 15
 Eastnor 49
 Edvin Loach 28
 Elton 47
 Evesbach 46
 Eye 127
 Eyton 121
 Fawley 73
 Felton 52
 Fownhope 159, 176
 Foy 124
 Garway 137
 Grendon Bishop 79
 Hampton Bishop 69
 Harewood 22
 Hatfield 48
 Hentland 148
 Hereford, All Saints 118
 Hereford Cathedral 20
 Hereford, St. Peters 175, 194
 Hereford, Little 7
 Holme Lacy 173, 203
 Hope Mansel 59
 Hope-under-Dinmore 97
 How Caple 14, 177
 Humber 8
 Huntington, near
 Kington 183
 Kenchester 163
 Kenderchurch 35
 Kilpeck 44
 Kimbolton 53
 Kings Caple 139
 Kings Pyon 58
 Kingsland 120
 Kingstone 1
 Kington 11
 Kinsham 147
 Laysters 56
 Lea, The 84, 107
 Leinthall Starkes 99
 Leominster 100, 166
 Letton 114
 Lingen 98
 Linton 192
 Llancillo 90
 Llandinabo 86
 Llangarron 144
 Llanrothall 161
 Llanwarne 172
 Lyonshall 103
 Madley 41
 Mansell Gamage 165
 Mansel Lacy 66
 Marcle, Much 5
 Marden 105
 Marstow 115
 Michaelchurch
 Escley 150
 Michaelchurch
 Tretire 31
 Middleton-on-the-
 Hill 27
 Moccas 60
 Monkland 4

Monnington 168
 Mordiford 164
 Munsley 132
 Mewton 200
 Norton Canon 119
 Ncle Pychard 136
 Orleton 18
 Pembridge 101
 Pencombe 135
 Pencoyd 89
 Peterchurch 9
 Peterstow 134
 Pipe and Lyde 154
 Pixley 151
 Preston-on-Wye 85
 Richard's Castle 195,
 202
 Ross 197, 198
 Rowlestone 36
 Saint Devereux 152
 Saint Margarets 155
 Saint Weonards 142
 Sapey, Upper 96
 Sarnesfield 93
 Sellack 75
 Shobdon 19, 186

Sollershope 57
 Stanford Bishop 40
 Staunton-on-Wye 70
 Stoke Edith 179
 Stoke Lacy 106
 Stoke Prior 122
 Stretford 45
 Stretton Grandison
 141
 Stretton Sugwas 65
 Sutton St. Michael
 21, 158
 Sutton St. Nicholas
 64
 Tarrington 94
 Tedstone Delamere
 80
 Tedstone Wafre 108
 Thornbury 26
 Thruxton 167
 Tretire 129, 187
 Turnastone 62
 Tyberton 171
 Ullingswick 91
 Upton Bishop 145
 Urishay 201

Vowchurch 29
 Wacton 81
 Walford 143
 Walterstone 72
 Wellington 116
 Welsh Bicknor 153
 Welsh Newton 6
 Weobley 112
 Westhide 184
 Weston Beggard 71
 Weston-under-
 Penyard 158
 Whitbourne 13
 Whitchurch 24
 Whitney-on-Wye 39
 Wigmore 126
 Winforton 113
 Withington 193
 Wolferlow 23
 Woolhope 180
 Wormesley 37
 Yarkhill 30
 Yarpole 87
 Yatton Chapel 54
 Yazor 117