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The stage-by-stage development of Tenebrae is described showing the extension of light-loss at Lauds on Good Friday to the three night offices of the Western Triduum. The emergence, development, and use of the hearse at Tenebrae from the eleventh century onwards is explored, together with the integration of that device into the liturgical drama that the service of Tenebrae represented. The varying number of lights used and the extinction-points are shown to be derived from differing liturgical traditions. The presence of other lights at the service is discussed; and the extinguishing of lights is shown to have a rememorative, not a utilitarian origin.

The new fire ceremonies of all the Western rites, which were of Gallican origin, were deliberately adopted by the Church as part of her missionary work. An in-depth survey of the ritual surrounding the kindling of the fire and the subsequent procession with the fire into church reveals a heritage of different cultural and liturgical traditions. Not only was the threefold production of fire linked to the triple performance of Tenebrae; the new fire ceremony was integrated into the Paschal vigil liturgy because of the common theme of light; and to the former was extended the Passover motif.

Not only are the geographical and liturgical origins of the Easter candle considered; an historical analysis is presented of both the Candle itself and of the ceremonial surrounding the blessing of the Candle. This ceremonial, being largely of Gallican provenance, is examined in relation to the corresponding Milanese, Mozarabic, and Roman Vigil liturgies, all of which are related to the Lucernarium of Jerusalem. The study shows that the late medieval Paschal ceremony of light was a synthesis of Roman and Gallican elements; and that a two-fold tradition existed relating to the provision of light at the Vigil.
FIRE and LIGHT
in the
WESTERN TRIDUUM
* * * * *
Their Use at Tenebrae and at the Paschal Vigil

A. J. MacGregor

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Thesis submitted to the University of
Durham for the Degree of Ph.D.

1989
I had originally intended that the present work should form the concluding chapters of a survey tracing the use of light in Christian worship back to its origins in Judaism. It became clear, however, that these chapters could not be adequately accommodated within the framework of this treatise in view of the history and development over more than a thousand years of the numerous services of the Triduum which involve the use of light in both the Western and Eastern Churches. Moreover, in order to do justice even to one aspect of the subject of light at Eastertide, not only was it necessary for me to confine myself to the ceremonies of the western tradition; the limits imposed upon a work such as this demanded that a study of some of the services of the latter part of Holy Week, viz. the Commemoration of the Institution of the Lord's Supper, the Pedilavium, and the Good Friday Passion, should be omitted; whilst the use of light at Baptism has been treated somewhat cursorily in being reduced to an appendix.

There is no monograph in existence devoted specifically to a study of light in the services of the Triduum. Prior to the 1950s most of the information about this subject was confined to entries in encyclopedias and handbooks on liturgy, with occasional references in histories of liturgy. Following the 1951 liturgical experiments within the Roman Catholic Church, which were an attempt to restore to their former prominence the ceremonies of the Triduum, and the 1955 Decree of Maxima Redemptionis, which officially permitted the performance of the revived services, there appeared an abundance of literature treating of the restoration of the Paschal rites. Most of this literature, however, is concerned primarily with the pastoral and theological aspects of the Easter liturgy, and adds little to our knowledge of the history of the Paschal ceremonies. The fullest treatment of this subject is the chapter entitled The Ceremonies of Holy Week in D.R. Dendy's The Use of Lights in Christian Worship. Being a single chapter in a larger work, the subject is perhaps inevitably treated rather cursorily; and the material is presented somewhat indiscriminately.

The present work is written primarily from an historical point of view. It identifies the cultural and liturgical milieux from which the ceremonies of Tenebrae, the new fire, and the Easter candle emerged; and in describing these three light-featuring rituals of the Triduum, it traces their historical development, incorporating the theological
significance and pastoral aspects of each, and relating them to the liturgical changes of the 1950s and the reasons for those changes. This study also shows the close connection that existed between the triple performance of Tenebrae and the threefold production of the new fire, and examines the reasons for the adoption of the new fire ceremony into the liturgy of the Church and its incorporation into the Paschal vigil.

The area covered by the research includes the whole territorial extent of the medieval Latin West. Documentary evidence is plentiful for England, Germany, and especially France, where the existence of a large number of neo-Gallican missals reveals the survival of variant Vigil ceremonials from the early Middle Ages. In other parts of Europe the domination of the Roman rite, as in Spain, or the imposition of a single rite, as in Norway, or the competitive influence of the Orthodox Church, inevitably limited the number of local rites, and so curtails our knowledge about non-Roman local variant ceremonies.

The term Gallican has been used with two different meanings. In the period up to c.1000 it refers to the non-Roman rites of France and Western Germany. It also describes the movement in France in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for liturgical independence from Rome, and the diocesan rites associated with that movement. Throughout the present work 'Vigil' indicates the Paschal vigil of Holy Saturday; and 'Candle' signifies the Easter candle.

Northwich, Cheshire. 

A. J. MacGregor

October 1989
INTRODUCTION

There is no firm evidence before the fourth century for the use of either liturgical or functional light at the Paschal vigil. However, in view of the close association of Baptism with the Vigil and the equating of Christian initiation with illumination, the centrality in Christianity of Christ the Light of the World, as well as the importance of the concept of light in the mystery religions, which may well have influenced both Christian theology and liturgical practice, it was almost inevitable that the ceremonies marking the climax of the Church’s year and the annual commemoration of Christ’s victory over the darkness of this world should be held in an ambience of abundant light. The fourth-century evidence from Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Spain would suggest that the holding of the Paschal vigil in a milieu of light was by then widespread throughout the Christian world.

However, by the end of the tenth century in the West and by the beginning of the twelfth century in Jerusalem, an alternative tradition of holding the Vigil in semi-darkness emerged from a monastic milieu. Both these traditions have been treated in Chapter 15 of Part IV.

The blessing of the Easter candle, the kindling of new fire, and the gradual extinguishing of the lights at the three night offices of the Triduum, later to be known as Tenebrae, were ceremonies peculiar to and confined to the West. The first of these rituals formed the central feature of a transformed Lucernarium, the ancient office of the lighting of the evening lamp, which itself was incorporated into the Paschal liturgy. The production of Paschal fire was not unknown in the East. By the ninth century the ceremony in Jerusalem was accompanied by scenes of frenzied enthusiasm which have characterised the occasion ever since. By contrast, the corresponding ceremonies of the western rites have entailed the production of newly-kindled fire in circumstances less shrouded in secrecy and mystery than those which obtain at Jerusalem. However, the taking home of the new fire would have been no less meaningful to the faithful of France, for example, than to the pilgrims in Jerusalem. The antecedents of the Easter fire ceremonies of Jerusalem and Northern

1 'At Easter...Constantine changed the holy all-night vigil into the light of day by arranging for wax candles of very great length to be lit throughout the whole of the city.' Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 4.22 (PG 20.1169).
2 Wilkinson p.138. See also Part IV Chapter 2 p.230.
3 As attested in *Hagios Stauros* 43. See Stevenson p.182.
Europe were different. For whilst the ritual at Jerusalem was intimately linked with the office of the Lucernarium, the new fire ceremonies of Northern Europe existed as pre-Christian religious rites, which were taken over and incorporated into the liturgy of the Church, in the same way that the Easter egg and the Christmas tree have been accommodated within the traditions of Christianity.

The office of Matins/Lauds, known as Tenebrae, emerged from a monastic liturgical milieu, and, as we have argued in Part I, developed as a dramatic and liturgical representation of an historical event recorded in the Gospels.

Unlike the ritual surrounding the Easter candle, which we have argued had its provenance in Northern Italy, the new fire ceremony and the service of Tenebrae emerged from the liturgically-active region of Northern France and Western Germany according to the earliest surviving documentary evidence. In spite of the known influence of Milan in the region to the north of the Alps, the absence of these two ceremonies from the earlier Ambrosian rite, and indeed from the Roman rite, would suggest that both rituals were indigenous Gallican liturgical developments.

The holding of the Vigil in anticipation was already established by the eighth century, probably as a result of changing pastoral needs and circumstances. For in earlier centuries the sacrament of baptism which followed the blessing of the Easter candle and reading of the prophecies, was administered primarily to adults. By the eighth century in regions in which Christianity had been established for several centuries, the perhaps inevitable fall in the number of adults who sought Baptism, the incipient practice of administering this sacrament at other times during the year, and the fact that what had become the traditional time for administering Baptism, viz. a late hour on Holy Saturday or an early hour on Easter Day, was hardly the most suitable for unweaned infants, resulted in the bringing forward of the time at which the Paschal vigil was held. The anticipation of Tenebrae, though unaffected by these considerations, came to pass, it is believed, through a desire within those churches and cathedrals which were served by non-monastic clergy, to sing the night office at a more convenient time.

By the end of the fifteenth century it had become the practice in some parts of Western Europe to kindle the new fire at about 9.00 a.m. on Holy Saturday, and to hold the Paschal vigil on the morning of that
day. The abolition by Pope Urban VIII of Holy Saturday as a public holiday in Catholic countries contributed to the further decay of the Triduum; so that until the middle of the present century it was widespread practice throughout Western Europe to hold the Vigil in the morning light of Holy Saturday.

In 1955 the efforts of the Liturgical Movement over a period of fifty years bore fruit when, following the Decree of Donum Redemptionis, it was officially permitted to hold the Paschal vigil at an hour which was liturgically and commemoratively more meaningful and which approximated to the time at which the Vigil had been held in the early Middle Ages. Previously having burned in the daylight hours of Holy Saturday, the Easter candle reacquired its former importance and significance not only for the members of the clergy, but for the laity also, who in previous centuries had not attended the Vigil either through ignorance or apathy or the demands of work; but who were now once more able to participate in the preparation for the Mass of Easter and to share meaningfully in the Light of Christ.
A Note on the Sources

The principal sources for the period c.AD 700-900 are the *ordines Romani* edited by M. Andrieu. The writer has generally accepted his dating of them. Throughout the present work each of these has been referred to simply as 'Ordo' followed by an Arabic numeral. They are to be distinguished from the later *ordines Romani*, first published by Mabillon and subsequently by J.P. Migne in Volume 78 of *Patrologia Latina*. The latter group of documents are each indicated by 'Ordo' followed by a Roman numeral. The writer accepts the view that the ninth-century Pontifical of Poitiers relates to the Church in Poitiers, in spite of the doubts of A.-G. Martimort and A. Martini. Neither Mabillon nor Martene questioned the provenance of the pontifical. Both may have had access to corroborating information which has since been lost. Information relating to Gembloux is contained in the Customary of Sigibert (Albers, Vol. 2).

In 1984 the writer undertook a survey of the Paschal vigil as held in the cathedrals of France at the present time. Information gained from the 60% of the replies received is indicated by 'Survey of 1984'.

It had been intended to examine a number of other documents, mainly French diocesan missals. Long after he had embarked upon the present work, the writer discovered that these had been destroyed during the Second World War. However, sufficient documents survived the bombing so that the writer was able to proceed with his original plan.

Apart from the primary sources themselves, perhaps the most important quarry of information for the student of liturgiology is Edmond Martene's monumental *De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus*, originally published between 1700 and 1702. This contains extracts from a very large number of liturgical texts which he consulted in the monastic libraries of France. Some of the manuscripts have subsequently disappeared. A.-G. Martimort has demonstrated that the liturgical material recorded by Martene is not only reliable but is invaluable for the liturgiologist. It therefore ranks on a par with other primary documentary evidence.

'Blackfriars Correspondence' relates to communications received from Revd Fr R. Conrad of Blackfriars, Oxford.
Acknowledgements

The writer wishes to express his gratitude to the following persons for their assistance in the writing of this thesis: to the Reverend Dr A. Gelston, the writer's academic mentor, for his highly-valued advice and guidance, and for his continuous encouragement throughout the years; to the Revd Dr D.G. Dragas of the Department of Theology, University of Durham; to Dr J. Rhodes; to the Revd Dr M. Sharratt and Revd Fr N. Paxton, librarians of St Cuthbert's College, Ushaw and St Joseph's College, Upholland, respectively; to the Revd T.P. and Dr J. Wiersum; to the Revd Fr R. Conrad OP of Blackfriars, Oxford; to the Revd H. Taylor; to the Revd Fr A. Griffiths of the Southampton University Catholic Chaplaincy; to the Revd Dr K.W. Stevenson, formerly of the Manchester University Anglican Chaplaincy; to the Abbé P. Grey, Secrétaire Général of the Diocese of Amiens; and to a number of heads of religious houses, and others, both lay and clergy, whose replies to the writer's letters have been greatly appreciated.

Although the entire text of the thesis has been typed by the writer, he wishes to thank profoundly the members of his family for their much-appreciated assistance with the production and printing of this work.

References

A reference in the text to a published work appears in a footnote under the author's name. Where two or more of an author's works have been consulted during the writing of this thesis, an abbreviated form of the title of the relevant work follows the author's name. Where an author has been referred to by name within the text, an abbreviated form of the title of the relevant work only appears in the footnote.
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Alcuin Liber de divinis officiis, formerly attributed to Alcuin.

Bindo F Des Zeremonienbuch des Bindo Fesulani.

CA 1706 Die Sammlung des Codex Avignon 1706.


CMG Consuetudines Monasteriorum Germaniae.

DACSR Decreta Authentica Congregationis Sacrorum Rituum.

DAER De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus, Vol. 3.

DAMR De Antiquis Monachorum Ritibus, being Vol. 4 of De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus.

Decrees Lanfranc's Decreta Pro Ordine Sancti Benedicti.


DLHCR Dictionnaire historique des cultes religieux.

DKY Deae mundi Conditor.

Eph. Lit. Ephemerides Liturgicae.

Gav./Mer. Gavantus/Merati, being the Thesaurus Sacrorum Ritus of B. Gavanti, revised by C.M. Merati.

GeAng The Gelasian Sacramentary of Angouleme.

GeGe The Gelasian Sacramentary of Gellone.

GePh The Gelasian Sacramentary of Autun (Philippis' Gelasian).

GePr The Gelasian Sacramentary of Prague.

GeV The Gelasian Sacramentary (Gelasianum Vetus).

HBS Henry Bradshaw Society Publications.

IEM International Commission on English in the Liturgy.

ILEM Institutions Liturgiques de l'Eglise de Marseille.

JTS Journal of Theological Studies.


LOA Lib. de Ord. Ant.: Liber de Ordine Antiphonarii.

LOP Liturgies of the Past.

LPB Le Liber Politicus de Benoit.

LPS Liturgies of the Primatial Seas.

LRC The Liturgy of the Roman Church.

LRO Liturgies of the Religious Orders.

Miss Followed by a figure, it refers to a document, cited by E. Martene and classified by A.-G. Martimort in Le Document- ation Liturgique de Dom Edmond Martene.


(continued on page xi.)

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Throughout the present work the numbering of the psalms is that found in the Greek Septuagint. For ease of reference both the Greek Septuagint and the Hebrew systems are given below.

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PART I

Tenebrae
Chapter One

MATINS

The origins of the daily offices are obscure. The hymns of the hours by Prudentius suggest that the cycle of offices existed in some parts of the West by the end of the fourth century. Paul Bradshaw has shown that there was a morning and evening service in Augustine's church and in Ambrose's time in Milan. Evidence for the offices at Jerusalem comes from Egeria: by AD 380 the office of Matins was said daily in the church of the Anastasis in that city. In the absence of any reference to illumination at this service, we must assume that in addition to the functional lights in that church, which would have been essential in the early hours of the morning, any liturgical illumination that there may have been was not so unusual as to elicit a comment from Egeria.

Matins, known in the West as vigiliae, had developed within Christian liturgical practice as a daily re-enactment of the vigil par excellence viz. that held on Holy Saturday. Functional lighting there undoubtedly was within the cathedral tradition. However, there is no firm evidence for the use of liturgical light at the night office either in the cathedral or in the monastic tradition until the eighth century, unless the testimony from Poitiers in the sixth century for the service being conducted in total darkness can be classed paradoxically as an instance of the negative use of liturgical light.

In the very early church the real significance of the Easter mystery involved the work of redemption in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. When the commemoration of the institution of the Eucharist on the day before Good Friday became attached to the paschal liturgical drama, there emerged the notion of the Triduum, which came to be regarded as a three-day liturgical unit. The incorporation of Maundy Thursday inevitably resulted in the commencement of the Triduum with the celebration of the night office in the early hours of Thursday morning. By AD 400 the development of the Triduum was complete in the West at any rate; for the liturgical idea of the sacred Triduum is found as early as the time of Augustine and Ambrose. From their writings it is

evident that Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday were regarded as a three-day liturgical unity. We may be confident that the night office of each of these three days were similar in content in that psalms and readings were characterised by a penitential and funereal but 'hope-touched solemnity'. In structure the night offices of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday were similar to those of the other nights of the year; but we shall see presently that Matins/Lauds of Holy Saturday was generally throughout the West quite different.

Pierre Batiffol, treating of Matins in the West in the early Middle Ages, was almost certainly correct to claim that 'the office of these days... was undoubtedly a purely Roman creation.' As early as the time of John Cassian (c. AD 415-435) Matins was divided by the monks into three nocturns, the structure still found in the twentieth century. That St Benedict, whose rule was based on Roman liturgical practice and was drawn up between AD 525 and AD 550, provided no offices of his own for the Triduum suggests that Matins and Lauds at least existed in Rome in the sixth century in much the same form as now. It seems unlikely that Augustine's Tracts on the Psalms which came to be read during the second nocturn of each of the days of the Triduum would have been incorporated into the night office during Augustine's lifetime. Its more or less final form, therefore, would have become fixed sometime between AD 430 and c. AD 525, and in Rome, since after the Vandal conquest of North Africa in AD 429 liturgical ideas between Rome and North Africa probably entailed difficulties of interchange. It is tempting to attribute the fixing of the form of Matins to Pope Gelasius (AD 492-6), who, though it has been shown that the Gelasian Sacramentary was wrongly named after him, has been traditionally associated with liturgical reform. It may well account for the inclusion of Augustine's Tracts into Matins by Gelasius who himself was an African.

The earliest mention of the night office of Matins in the West occurs in the Life of St Ambrose by his biographer Paulinus. It can be

1 History p. 92.
2 De inst. Coen. 3. 8-9. (PL 49.83A and 144A).
3 It is known that in the time of Leo the Great (c. AD 450) monks performed the choral office of Lauds in the Roman basilicas. Under their influence Lauds became closely associated with Matins. It was at this time that Matins with its division into three nocturns was introduced into Rome according to the evidence of John Cassian (ibid.).
4 Liber Pontificalis I p. 255.
Hoc in tempore primum antiphonae, hymni, ac vigiliae in ecclesia Mediolanensi celebrari coeperunt. Cuius celebratatis devotione in hodiernum diem non solum in eadem ecclesia, verum per omnes pene Occidentis provincias manet.¹

The vigiliae mentioned in this extract can hardly be the paschal vigil which in Ambrose's day was an observance of long standing. It must refer rather to the introduction of a daily performance of the night office by Ambrose in the basilicas of Milan. This is further borne out by the additional mention of the content viz. the antiphons and psalms (hymni). Furthermore Paulinus is witness to the establishment of the night office in almost all the provinces of the West (i.e. the western Roman empire) at the end of the fourth century. However, it is not clear from his Latin whether the Church of Milan introduced daily Matins before or after the other provinces.

Evidence for the content and ceremonial of the night office for the three days of the Triduum in the fourth and fifth centuries in the West is lacking. Although we know that the night office of Holy Saturday was an all-night vigil,² there is no reason to suppose that the night offices of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday differed much structurally from those performed on the other nights of the year. It is not until c. AD 569 in Gaul and possibly a century and a half later in Rome that we have evidence regarding illumination at this service, either functional or liturgical, or the lack of it; and it would be unwise to read back into an earlier age the practice of a later century.

Sixth-century Gaul

The first indication we have for the liturgical use of light, or rather in this instance the negative use of it, at the night office comes in an incident, described by Gregory of Tours, which occurred in the Abbey of the Holy Cross at Poitiers in Gaul and which can be dated with some confidence to c. AD 569. The miracle of light which took place in the monastery was seen to have been caused by the presence of

¹ 'At this time Matins with antiphons and hymns began to be celebrated in the Church in Milan. Support for this service survives to this day not only in that church but throughout nearly every province in the West.' Vita sancti Ambrosii (PL 14-15.31D).
² Bradshaw p.132.
a fragment of the True Cross which Queen Radegonde, consort of Clotaire I, had brought back from Jerusalem in the above-mentioned year.

Sexta feria ante sanctum Pascha, cum in vigiliis sine lumine per-notarent, circa horam tertiam noctis apparuit ante altare lumen parvulum in modum scintillae.¹

Gregory supplies us with three items of information which are of especial interest and relevance to our investigation:

(i) The incident took place on Good Friday.
(ii) The vigil lasted throughout the night.
(iii) The service took place in darkness.

All-night vigils belonged to the older tradition of monasticism which derived from the East.² It would appear, therefore, that Benedict's Rule, which prescribed a shorter night office, had not yet been introduced into the monastery at Poitiers. The apparently unassailable statement that the night office of Good Friday was conducted in total darkness raises a number of questions and merits further examination. (a) Was Matins in the monastery at Poitiers in the sixth century conducted in the dark on every night of the year? We cannot be absolutely certain; but it does seem likely that some form of illumination was used, if not for liturgical, then for utilitarian reasons especially for reading. Moreover, the very mention of sine lumine³ would imply that a service held in total darkness was not normal. (b) Assuming that it was the usual practice to have illumination at the night office, was Matins/Lauds held sine lumine on either of the other two days of the Triduum? The earliest documentary evidence for the night office of Good Friday according to early Gallican practice is Ordo 17. Though written some 200 years later than the incident in question, it probably reflects some of the usages of a much earlier age. This ordo does imply the use of lights at Matins of Good Friday,⁴ which conflicts with the evidence from the monastery; but in view of its lateness and unknown provenance should not be taken as corroborative of Gregory's information. (c) Is the night office that the author has in mind that held in the early hours of Friday morning, or that which followed Good Friday early on Saturday morning? According to Gregory's account the vigiliae took place

¹ 'When the all-night vigil was being observed on Good Friday before holy Easter, a small glint of light like a spark appeared before the altar about the third hour of the night.' Gregory of Tours, Miraculorum Liber de Gloria Martyrum 1.5 (PL 71.709B).
² Aurelian, Regula ad Monachos (PL 63.396).
³ The phrase must indicate total darkness otherwise the effect and significance of the pin-point of light would have been considerably weakened.
⁴ See also Chapter 2, Stage 1 p. 9.
"sesta foria ante sanctum Pascha." The usual interpretation of this requires us to understand that the author is referring to the office held in the early hours of Good Friday. However, if we study the account of the miraculous occurrence more closely, it is possible to arrive at the conclusion that the office which Gregory is referring to is actually that of Holy Saturday morning.

Gregory continues with his narration to relate how this tiny spark of light began to increase in size, and as it did so, scattered rays of brilliance (comae fulgoris) in all directions. Then gradually it began to rise into the air, lighting up the sky and bathing the earth in luminescence. Little by little it began to fade; and eventually it disappeared from view.¹

It is clear that the light represents Christ; and its emanation from the fragment of the Cross kept in a casket under the altar, its upward movement, and the illumination of the entire universe by its brilliance symbolise respectively the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the universality of Christ. We may leave to one side the question of the incident's historicity, and rather concentrate on the significance and time of its occurrence within the context of the Triduum; and consider the possibility of the miracle having taken place at the night office of Saturday rather than of Friday. It is of course not possible to comment upon or rationalise about the timing of a miracle or strange occurrence to the extent that one can say with authority that an incident should have occurred at a specific time to suit the circumstances. Nevertheless, if we reflect upon the timing of the miracle in relation to the predicament or situation in which the Pictavian monks found themselves, it may seem that the luminous phenomenon which was inseparably linked to the fragment of the Cross can be more readily understood and explained within the context of Friday night's devotions rather than Thursday night's. Assuming that the Triduum in Poitiers in the sixth century bore the same funereal aspect that was prominently characteristic of it in later centuries, then the significance of the inbursting of light can be interpreted in two different ways according to whether the miracle occurred at the vigiliae of Friday or Saturday. At the night office of Friday it would be seen as an indication that the darkness of the Passion which was about to be commemorated was not permanent, and as an anticipation of the return of the divine light in the early

¹  Miraculorum Liber, ibidem.
hours of Easter morning. However this interpretation is strained, and detracts from the sequence of events in the Passion narrative since a foretaste, as it were, of the Resurrection is at this juncture in the Triduum both awkward and out of place. On the other hand the appearance of the light at the night office of Saturday is easier to explain both liturgically and from a symbolical point of view: (i) This office follows the Veneration of the Cross, upon which the attention of the monks had been fixed some hours before. (ii) Friday night/Saturday morning is the time when the Church is in deepest mourning. The appearance of the light, literally as a ray of hope, would have been much more meaningful and significant at that time. (iii) The light is intrinsically associated with the fragment of the True Cross which may well have figured in the ceremony of Good Friday afternoon.

There are three additional considerations which support the view that the service in question was the night office of Saturday. (i) The first centres around the phrase sine lumine. We have already referred on page 4 to the probability that the night office was usually held with some form of illumination, and that total darkness at this service was exceptional. Since the office consisted of psalms, antiphons, and readings from Scripture, the presence of lights must be presupposed. It is true that in view of the frequency of repetition by the monks the whole of the psalter was generally known by heart so that reference to the written word could be dispensed with. At an all-night vigil conducted in darkness, it seems unlikely that lessons were 'read'. The importance, if not necessity, of light for the purpose of reading lessons is clear from a rubric in Ordo 3OB.

A clue to the content of the office of Matins/Lauds at Poitiers in the sixth century may be found in the former service of the night office for Holy Saturday according to the Ambrosian rite. This office can be traced back to the tenth century; but the primitive form of the service, especially its structure, suggests a ceremony of considerable antiquity. The combined office of Matins/Lauds comprised twenty-three psalms and one canticle. Like the corresponding office in the Gallican and Roman rites, it featured the Omissions; and the entire service took

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1 See Chapter 2, Stage 3 p.14. The idea of a lesson being read 'by heart' figures in St Benedict's Rule. (Bradshaw p.145.)
3 Appendix 1: The Omissions.
place in darkness. Moreover, Holy Saturday at Milan even in the reformed rite is the only day when the night office is said without light. Admittedly, in trying to envisage or reconstruct the form of the night office at Poitiers in the sixth century, one must use the Milanese evidence with caution since it attests the practice of another church, and, in spite of its likely antiquity, is valid strictly only as far back as the tenth century; but as we shall see in the next chapter, the Milanese form of Matins, in spite of its relatively late date, in all likelihood preserves the primitive form of the night office for Holy Saturday that was once widespread throughout the West.

(ii) We have already suggested that, although the Gallican Ordo 17 is to be dated to the latter part of the eighth century, it may well describe the ceremonial and practice of a hundred or even two hundred years prior to the period in which the ritual was committed to writing. Since this ordo attests the absence of light in church on the night of Good Friday (§ 98), it is reasonable to believe that no lights were lit that night at the monastery in Poitiers.

(iii) Reference has already been made to the all-night monastic vigils which were held during the night of Good Friday and the early hours of Saturday morning. 1 In view of this it is almost certain that it is this vigil to which Gregory of Tours is referring, and not to one held on the previous day.

1 Bradshaw p.132.
Chapter Two

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TENEBRAE

We suggested in the previous chapter that the tenth-century Matins/Lauds of the Milanese rite may well preserve the primitive form of this office in the West especially in view of the sixth-century evidence from Poitiers. Fortunately there are sufficient references to and descriptions of the night offices of the Triduum in the ordines Romani and elsewhere to trace the likely and logical development of Matins/Lauds from the vigiliae of Holy Saturday to the twice-repeated office of Tenebrae, and to confirm our conclusions regarding the night office of Holy Saturday at Milan and at Poitiers. We propose to reconstruct the stages showing how the night offices of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday may have developed into the service of Tenebrae in the period from the sixth to the eighth century.¹ However, throughout this tentative reconstruction the following preliminary observations should be borne in mind. (i) Although each stage of the development is to be found in the sections of one or more of the ordines which relate to the night offices, it does not necessarily follow that a particular stage of development occurred for the first time in that church with which the ordo is associated. In view of the fluidity of liturgical practice during this period, features of ceremonial may have been borrowed from elsewhere. (ii) In the likelihood of the interchange of liturgical ideas and customs, it is very doubtful that every church passed through each of the six stages of development. (iii) This development was not chronologically parallel throughout the churches of Gaul. For instance, since Ordo 26, which attests the fully-developed service of Tenebrae on all three nights (is. Stage 6), can be dated with some confidence to the period AD 750-775, that stage antedates Stages 3 and 4 by several years, and Stage 2 by as much as sixty years.

It should also be borne in mind that the evidence from both Rome and Gaul should be studied closely in conjunction, since the rites of the Roman and the Gallican churches were mutually influential.² Moreover, the evidence of the ordines is at times frustratingly fragmentary,

¹ The practice of extinguishing gradually the lights at Matins/Lauds emerged within the Gallican Church. It was unknown in the Mozarabic rite; and in the Ambrosian tradition up to Vatican II corresponded to the saying of Matins on Holy Saturday without lights (Borrella p.402).

² See Appendix 2: Roman and Gallican.
the descriptions of the services being by no means complete. Therefore, the silence of an ordo does not necessarily signify the absence of a particular feature wherein it might have been expected to appear; and some omissions of rubrical details may be fortuitous. At times the latter can be inferred from the complementary evidence of other ordines.

Stage 1

The funereal aspect of the entire Triduum is apparent from the Omissions in the Roman Ordo 23 and in the Gallican Ordo 17. ¹ Though the former refers only to the Omissions at Matins/Lauds on Maundy Thursday and the latter to those on Good Friday, it is reasonable to assume that they formed a feature of the night office for these two days both at Rome and in Gaul; and although there is no written evidence for the Omissions on the Saturday, it is almost certain that they were also observed on the third day. For not only would they have contributed to the imposition of liturgical unity on the three night offices of the Triduum; it would be especially at the night office of Holy Saturday when one would most have expected the Omissions. ²

Of greater importance, however, for our study are the statements in both the Romano-Gallican Ordo 16 and Ordo 17 that on Good Friday night, no light was lit in church; but that it was hidden away out of the sight of all until Holy Saturday. ³ It follows that in the churches to which the two ordines relate the night office of Holy Saturday was held in total darkness. Although direct evidence from the eighth century is wanting for illumination at this particular office in Rome, the absence of light at this service can be inferred with confidence from the testimony of Pope Zachary (AD 741-52). In a letter to Boniface of Mainz ⁴ he describes how fire is reserved on Maundy Thursday at the Lateran Cathedral in three large lamps for consecration and use at the Vigil on Holy Saturday. The concealment of the newly-kindled fire in a remote part of the church and the consignment of the unhallowed element to a state of limbo, as it were, emphasized the unsuitability of the secular flame for liturgical use. It is true that the two honorific lights, which

1 OR 23.1 and OR 17.93 respectively. The former, though written in the period AD 775-790, almost certainly reflects earlier liturgical practice.
2 See Appendix 1: The Omissions.
3 OR 16.36 and OR 17.93 respectively.
4 PL 89.951. For a fuller discussion of this evidence, and for the text of the letter, see The New Fire at Rome, pp.170-7.
5 Or more likely, an already-living flame.
accompanied the Pope when he walked from the Lateran Palace to the Church of S. Croce in Gerusalemme on Good Friday, were kindled from one of the three reserved lamps. However, these torches or thick candles, adopted by the papal court in the fourth century in imitation of those borne before the Emperor, were civic lights, and remained outside the above-mentioned church on Good Friday because their flames were unconsecrated. In view of this it is hardly likely that lights for the night office of Holy Saturday would have been kindled with a flame taken from one of the three lamps. Elsewhere we have suggested that the Lateran Cathedral, in which the night office in question was held, remained unilluminated throughout the whole of Good Friday and for most of Holy Saturday for both liturgical and symbolic reasons. There can be little doubt, therefore, in view of the evidence from Poitiers, Milan, and Rome and the attestation of the two ordines that the primitive night office of Holy Saturday throughout a large part of the Western Church was conducted in darkness. It is also likely that the content of the service was similar to that of the Ambrosian night office, consisting primarily of psalms with accompanying antiphons, and, as at Milan, lacked scriptural readings because of the absence of light.

There is no evidence to suggest that the provision of light at the night offices of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday differed from that during the other nights of the year. According to the ordines Romani illumination was of two kinds. The church lamps provided the functional light, whilst the seven lamps that were placed before the altar supplied the liturgical luminosity. Throughout the centuries in the Ambrosian rite the lighting arrangements for the night offices of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday remained unchanged.

Summary of evidence - Stage 1

| MT  | Matins and Lauds: normal lighting. |
| GF  | Matins and Lauds: normal lighting. |
| HS  | Vigiliae: psalms sung in total darkness. |

1 OR 23.10. The writer accepts Andrieu's suggestion that the phrase ex unguario refers to one of the three reserved lamps (Les Ordines Romani III pp.318-19).
2 Jungmann pp.132-33. See also Fulgentius Ferrandus, PL 67.884C.
3 Theodore, the Archdeacon of Rome, is quite explicit about the absence of illumination in S. Croce during the Solemn Prayers and the Veneration of the Cross: nullum lumen habetur lampadum sive censerum in ecclesia in Hierusalem (AD 832). (Amalarius, Lib. de Ord.Ant. XLIV 2.)
4 See The Roman Vigil, p. 325.
5 MT = Maundy Thursday; GF = Good Friday; HS = Holy Saturday.
Evidence for the development of Stage 1 comes from Rome, and is recorded by Amalarius of Metz on the occasion of a visit by him to that city in AD832. He had asked the Archdeacon Theodore about the use of light at the night offices in Rome during the Triduum. The reply came:

*Soleo esse cum apostolico in Lateranis, quando officium celebratur de caena Domini. Nihil autem ibi in eadem nocte observatur de extinctione luminum. In feria sexta nullum lumen habetur lampadum give cereorum in ecclesia in Hierusalem, quamdiu dominus apostolicus ibi orationes solemnes facit, aut quamdiu crux salutatur, sed tamen in ipse die novus ignis accenditur, de quo reservatur usque ad nocturnale officium.*

At first sight Theodore appears to have ignored Amalarius' question concerning the extinction of lights at the night office. This has led scholars like H.A.P. Schmidt to believe that Amalarius and Theodore have a different problem in mind. Schmidt goes on to say that Amalarius is concerned with the extinction and production of fire and light at the time of the Holy Triduum, Theodore with the use of light on Good Friday. It is true that in Chapter XLIV Amalarius is indeed concerned with the extinction and production of fire and light; but Schmidt has overlooked the fact that Theodore has not only mentioned the extinction of lights, but he has informed Amalarius about the production of new fire. Dendy, assuming that Amalarius' question is primarily about the extinction of light at the night office, writes that 'Theodore does not give a complete direct answer'; and a superficial reading of the question and the answer would suggest that this was so. However, let us examine in greater depth exactly what the question was which Amalarius asked, and especially the information from which the question arose. Amalarius wrote:

1 *Officium* must be translated 'service', and not 'office' which would almost certainly signify Matins, Vespers etc.; and the phrase *de caena Domini* refers to the institution of the Eucharist and not to Maundy Thursday generally. Otherwise Amalarius is almost certain to have referred to that day as *quinta feria*.

2 'I am accustomed to be with the Pope in the Lateran Cathedral when the service of the Lord's Supper is being held. That night in the cathedral there is no ceremony involving the extinction of lights. On Good Friday there is no light from any lamp or wax-candle in the Church of S. Croce in Gerusalemme when the Pope recites the Solemn Prayers there or during the Veneration of the Cross. However new fire is kindled on that day, and this is reserved for use at the night office.' Amalarius, *Lib.de Ord.Ant.* XLIV.2.

3 *Hebdomada Sancta* II p.811.

4 *The Use of Lights* p.135.

5 *Lib.de Ord.Ant.* XLIV.1 and 2.
Two facts concerning the custom of Amalarius' church emerge as being important for our study. (i) The lights of the church were extinguished at night. (ii) This happened on three successive nights. We have already noted that in this chapter Amalarius is concerned with the extinction and production of fire and light; and in recording these two facts he wishes it to be known that in his church an extinction of light takes place, and that it occurs on three separate occasions. It could be argued that his mention of it having taken place at the night office is almost incidental. We can only surmise as to the actual form of words which Amalarius used when he asked Theodore about the custom of the Roman Church; but in view of his concern about illumination, and from Theodore's reply, it is clear that he was interested primarily in the extinction or rather in the possibility of the extinction of lights at Rome, and not in the night office or the fact the loss of light took place at night. This makes Theodore's reply both intelligible and satisfactory. Theodore had been asked about the extinction of light; he answered on that subject.

It is clear from the statement of Amalarius and from the reply of Theodore that the development into Tenebrae of the three night offices of the Triduum was almost complete within the church with which Amalarius was familiar, but only in an embryonic stage in Rome. (Liturgiologists have often commented upon the conservative nature of the Roman Church; and it is true that liturgical development took place much more quickly in the regions to the north of the Alps. However, to refer to the purity of the Roman rite, and to speak of the somewhat colourful developments of transalpine liturgy as 'Gallican corruptions' betrays an approach to scholarship which is marred by bias and lacking in impartiality.)

1 'During the last three nights of Holy Week, that is on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, it is the custom of our Church that the lights of the church building should be extinguished. Concerning the custom of our holy mother Church of Rome, I asked the Archdeacon Theodore, of the said Roman Church. He replied....'
2 Thus Dendy p.137. His prejudice is further borne out by a typically vague assertion that Rome was 'for a considerable period largely successful' in repelling such corruptions. (The writer's italics.)
In view of the reply of Theodore it must be assumed that in Rome in the first third of the ninth century there was nothing unusual about the provision of light at the night offices of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. We saw that for the night office of Holy Saturday, according to Theodore's testimony, fire was kindled on Good Friday and then reserved for use at that service. How many lights were kindled at this office we are not told; but a glance ahead at Ordo 30B, which we have adduced as evidence for Stage 3, may provide us with the answer. According to that document a lamp was lit at the night office of Holy Saturday for the purpose of reading (§ 36). This, we suggest, was the result of the inclusion of lessons in the night office for that day. Prior to that time the service was held in darkness, as Ordo 23 attests (Stage 1). It was therefore sometime between the first half of the eighth century and the archidiaconate of Theodore that illumination was introduced into the office in question. During the reign of Pope Leo III (AD 795-816) Gallican influence resulted in the appearance in Rome of the Minor Rogation Days. His reign may well have witnessed other importations from Gaul. Andrieu's dating of Ordo 30B to the end of the eighth century is entirely consistent with a Leonine introduction of illumination into the night office of Holy Saturday.

The testimony of Ordo 30B and the even earlier evidence of Ordo 26 conclusively demonstrate that the use of light at this service of Matins/Lauds on Holy Saturday first appeared in Gaul and not in Rome. We suggest that in Theodore's time only one lamp was used at the office.

Summary of evidence - Stage 2

| MT  | Matins and Lauds: normal lighting. |
| GF  | Matins and Lauds: normal lighting. |
| HS  | Matins and Lauds: one lamp (or candle) for reading. |

Stage 3

In the evidence of Ordo 30B, which constitutes Stage 3 in the development of Tenebrae, we encounter for the first time the phenomenon of the gradual extinction of lights. Formerly known as St-Amand from its provenance at the Monastery of St-Amand-en-Puelle, this ordo has a marked Roman appearance; but its provenance, date, and the distinctive Gallicisms it contains indicate that it was used by a church in Gaul.

1 Martini's dating. Vogel p.160.
which had adopted the Roman liturgy possibly as a result of the influence of Charlemagne, but which was still retentive of traditional ceremonial and receptive to indigenous influences. There are three reasons for believing that Gallican influence is present in the night offices of Good Friday and Holy Saturday as recorded in Ordo 30B. (i) There was during this period, that is, the eighth and ninth centuries, a tendency for the austere Roman ceremonial to yield to the more vigorous Gallican ritual especially if the former had been divorced from its native Italian milieu. (ii) The ceremonial of the night office of Ordo 30B features a development in the use of light at Good Friday's service which was unknown in Rome in AD 832. (iii) The evidence of Ordo 26, attesting in Gaul the gradual loss of light during each of the night offices of the Triduum, antedates Theodore's testimony by at least fifty years. It is therefore difficult to believe that the ceremonial in Ordo 30B which relates to the use of light in the night offices of Good Friday and Holy Saturday — soon to be described — could have had its provenance in any other liturgical tradition but the Gallican.

The silence of Ordo 30B regarding nocturnal illumination at the office of Matins/Lauds on Maundy Thursday suggests that the service was held with a display of lights normal for the night office; and there is no reason to believe that it differed in this respect from the night office of Maundy Thursday of Stage 2. Matins/Lauds of Holy Saturday is likely to have been similar to the corresponding office of Stage 2 in respect of lights; for we are told that for the service:

tantum una lampada accendatur propter legendum (§ 36).

As suggested for Stage 2 it was almost certainly the addition of lessons from Scripture to the night office of Holy Saturday that necessitated the introduction of a light into a service previously held in the dark; and it is reasonable to suppose that this was placed on or next to the lectern.

However, it is in the use of lights at the night office of Good Friday that we find a significant development from and contrast with the practice known to Theodore of Rome. Matins would appear to be conducted with the usual illumination; it is at Lauds that we encounter for the first time the gradual extinguishing of lights:

sed tantum inchoat ad matutinum antiphona in primo psalmo, tuta lampada de parte dextra, in secundo psalmo de parte sinistra;
There can be little doubt that the lamps, extinguished gradually as the office progressed, were the seven sanctuary lamps attested in other ordines. The lamp, hidden at the Benedictus and reserved until Holy Saturday, is to be identified with 'the light which was concealed on Good Friday'. From this flame were lit the archdeacon's two honorific candles which remained burning during the reading of St John's Passion on Good Friday (§30), the lamp for the night office of Holy Saturday (§36), and the two Vigil-candles for the Blessing of the Font (§37). It must be assumed that the seven lamps were alight during Matins also; but the ordo makes no mention of any other form of illumination, functional or liturgical, at either of these combined offices. It is likely that at this stage in the development of Tenebrae church lights featured at Matins, and were extinguished before the start of Lauds. In view of the absence of evidence to corroborate this, however, this suggestion must remain suppositional.

It is a matter for speculation whether the lamp, removed at the conclusion of Lauds on Good Friday, was subsequently brought back into church, its flame having been transferred to another lamp, and replaced in its original position in readiness for the Vigil of Holy Saturday; or whether it remained in the place of reservation until the following day. It is unlikely, however, that this lamp provided the light for reading at the night office of Holy Saturday. For the physical removal of the sole source of fire would have exposed the flame of the lamp to the possibility of wick-failure or some other mishap, to the inevitable dismay and discomfiture of all.

1 'But as soon as the antiphon for the first psalm at Lauds begins, a light is extinguished on the right-hand side and at (the antiphon of) the second psalm one on the left. Similarly (they are extinguished from right to left) before all of the psalms i.e. until the sixth or seventh psalm, or at the end of the Benedictus. Let the last lamp be concealed and reserved for Holy Saturday.' OR 30B.28. Note the solecisms in the Latin text.
2 See Appendix 3: The Seven Lamps.
3 'Lumen, quod feria sexta absconsum est.' This formula is found in Ordines 17, 23, and 30A, and in four Gelasian sacramentaries. See especially p. 101.
4 Unlike the flame from Zachary's three lamps - see above p. 9 - this reserved light was obtained from already-consecrated fire; and could therefore be used for liturgical purposes.
Summary of evidence - Stage 3

MT Matins and Lauds: normal lighting.
GF Matins: normal lighting.
Lauds: gradual extinguishing of seven lamps.
- last light removed.
HS Matins and Lauds: one lamp (or candle) for reading.
- extinguished at conclusion of service.

Stage 4

Evidence for Stage 4 is provided by Ordo 30A, a document from northern France, more or less contemporaneous with Ordo 30B. Section 1 of this ordo, which refers to the nine psalms, lessons, and responsories of Matins on Maundy Thursday, makes no mention of illumination at this service. However, at the same office on Good Friday it records (§ 5):

Deinde sequitur matutinum. Lucerne extinguuuntur.

Although the points at which the lights are extinguished are not given, unlike Ordo 30B, it is almost certain that a gradual loss of light is to be understood here; for the presence of light at Matins and its loss at Lauds corresponds with the arrangement described in Ordo 30B. It is in the description of the night office for Holy Saturday that a divergence from the practice attested in Ordo 30B occurs (§ 12). We read

in lucernis accendendis vel extinguendis, sicut superius diximus ita fiat. 1

This duplication of Good Friday's ritual on Holy Saturday is perhaps the most significant stage in the development of Tenebrae. It is likely that the repetition occurred both to signify the continuing period of mourning within the Church and at the same time to commemorate the three hours of darkness on Good Friday, a suggestion advanced by Rupert of Deutz. 2 Though the number of lamps to be extinguished is not stated, there is no reason to believe that it was other than seven. These were lit on Friday night and extinguished one by one at Lauds which followed.

Elsewhere in this ordo we learn that fire was hidden away on Good Friday for use at the Raschal vigil on Holy Saturday night. There can

1 'Let the arrangements for the kindling and extinguishing of the lamps be the same as we have prescribed above (i.e. for Good Friday).'
2 De Div.Off. V (PL 170.148B). He adds that the extinguishing of the candles also signifies the darkness of the Jewish nation which killed the prophets.
be little doubt that this fire was obtained from the lamp reserved at the conclusion of Lauds on Good Friday. Since there was no need of a second reserved flame at the end of Lauds on Holy Saturday, the last of the seven lamps would have been extinguished at the conclusion of that office.

Summary of evidence - Stage 4

| MT | Matins and Lauds : normal lighting. |
| GF | Matins : normal lighting. |
|    | Lauds : gradual extinguishing of seven lamps. |
| HS | Matins : normal lighting. |
|    | Lauds : gradual extinguishing of seven lamps. |

Stage 5

It was perhaps inevitable that the light-feature, which now distinguished the night offices of Good Friday and Holy Saturday, should be extended to include Matins/Lauds of Maundy Thursday in view of their common funereal character; and it might have been expected that uniformity would be achieved according to the following scheme:

| MT | Matins : normal lighting. |
| GF | Lauds : gradual extinguishing of seven lamps. |
| HS | |

However, no evidence has survived to show that development ever took place along these lines. Before any changes occurred in the lighting arrangements for Maundy Thursday's night office, further development took place at Matins/Lauds of both Good Friday and Holy Saturday, in which the gradual loss of light became a feature of Matins as well as Lauds; and in view of the tripartite division of Matins into nocturns, the complement of lights at this office was required to be divisible by three. Gallican Ordo 28 is our sole witness for the employment of this light-feature at Matins of Good Friday and Holy Saturday (§ 49). According to this same ordo the night office of Maundy Thursday began shortly after midnight; and for its celebration it was prescribed that the church should be fully illuminated (§ 7) : *At vero ecclesia omni lumine decoretur.* The silence of this ordo in respect of the loss of lights on this day, in contrast with the clear directions to extinguish them on Good Friday and Holy Saturday again indicates that normal illumination

1 'Then let the church be filled with light.'
obtained for the duration of the service. The use of the phrase omne lumen suggests that the illumination of the church should be brighter than usual. In two ordinices the phrase appears in the rubric prior to the start of Matins in which the gradual loss of lights occurs. For those participating in such a service the experience of passing from a world of light into a darkness that symbolised death must have been quite dramatic.

Although the offices of Matins and Lauds were sung concurrently, the extinguishing of the lights, spread over the two services, had the unifying effect of combining even further the two originally-separate parts, and imposing upon them the single name of Tenebrae.

Summary of evidence - Stage 5

| MT  | Matins and Lauds : normal lighting. |
| GF  | Matins : gradual extinguishing of all church lights. |
|     | Lauds : gradual extinguishing of seven lamps. |
| HS  | Matins and Lauds : as for Good Friday |

Stage 6

The final stage in the evolution of Tenebrae is attested in Ordo 26 and Ordo 29. The practice of extinguishing the church lights at Matins and the seven altar lamps at Lauds on all three days of the Triduum is now established, and the shape of the service is fundamentally the same as that which has survived into the twentieth century. The attestation of the twice-repeated service in the early Ordo 26 need not cause surprise. For in the eighth and ninth centuries liturgical disorder reigned throughout Gaul, and the development of ritual was sporadic and lacked uniformity, as is apparent from a comparison of the rubrics of Ordo 26 with those of later ordinices.

In view of the symbolism subsequently attached to the extinguishing of the candles, and of the possible origins of that feature, and of the significance of the Omissions, the performance of Tenebrae in the early hours of Maundy Thursday could be said to be anachronistic. This was a direct result of imposing liturgical uniformity on each of the services of Matins/Lauds during the Triduum. On the other hand the funereal tone

1 OR 26.10 and OR 29.11.  
2 OR 26.13-14 and 29.11-12.
of Tenebrae on Maundy Thursday both forewarned the subsequent events of that day, and anticipated the period of mourning on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

This extraordinary service, known since the twelfth century and possibly much earlier as Tenebrae, continued to be performed officially on the last three days of Holy Week until the liturgical reforms following the Second Vatican Council. Although the service underwent some modifications in the use of light, its basic structure remained the same and in its eighth-century form it is still recognisably the same service as that held in the twentieth century.

Ordo 26 contains the following directions for extinguishing the lights (§ 13): An unspecified number of lamps or candles is lit before the start of Matins, as are also the seven sanctuary lamps. The former set of lights is gradually extinguished throughout the course of Matins, the first at the very beginning of the office. At the end of the first nocturn a third of the lights have been put out, and at the end of the second nocturn another third. By the conclusion of the last nocturn, which is the end of Matins, the remaining third has been extinguished, and only the seven altar lights remain burning in the church. These are extinguished one by one during the course of Lauds. The central light is put out last at the Benedictus.

Summary of evidence - Stage 6

| MT  | Matins: gradual extinguishing of all church lights. |
| GF  | Matins and Lauds: as for Maundy Thursday. |
| BS  | Matins and Lauds: as for Maundy Thursday. |

1 It is still performed in some monastic houses e.g. at Solesmes, in the London and Birmingham Oratories, and by the Society of St Pius X.
Chapter Three

THE TIME OF TENEBRAE

By the end of the eighth century the two traditions relating to the time at which Tenebrae began were of long standing. Our sources at this time attest the start of this service both at midnight and at the eighth hour.¹ In the cathedral churches the first office of the day was sung at the former time, which significantly was the beginning of the old Roman civil day. Within the monasteries and those churches which followed monastic practice the later time was observed. In the sixth century St Benedict had changed the time of rising for the monks under his discipline so that, instead of rising at midnight, 'the brethren shall rise at whatever time shall be calculated to be the eighth hour of the night'.² The change was made so as to allow more time for sleep.

Ordo 26 is our oldest authority attesting the start of Matins at the eighth hour of the night, and Tenebrae on all three nights of the Triduum;³ and we find that Ordo 29 in the ninth century, and Poitiers and PRG in the tenth also prescribe monastic practice.⁴ However, from about 1200 the trend began in Benedictine houses to commence the night office at the earlier time; and it is tempting to discern in this the beginnings of that process whereby Tenebrae became an anticipated office, generally performed in the late afternoon of the previous day. Two later ordines,⁵ which describe papal ceremonial in the fourteenth century and which were instrumental in shaping the liturgy of churches subject to or in close contact with the Roman Church, state that Tenebrae began in the late afternoon of the previous day. The Caeremoniale Episcoporum explains that, according to the ancient Italian method of counting hours, the service should begin at the twenty-first hour, that is, at 4.00 p.m. in March and at 5.00 p.m. in April.⁶ The former time is attested at Limoges in the fifteenth century.⁷ The change was brought about, it is generally believed, partly through a wish to make the service more accessible to both secular clergy and laity, and partly by the persistence of the tradition inherited from Judaism in which a day is reckoned from sunset to sunset; and this arrangement obtained generally until the liturgical reforms following the Decree of Maxima redemptionis which is

¹ For the equivalent of this time by modern reckoning, see Chap.9 pp.93-5.
² Life of St Benedict of Aniane, PL 103, 872A; and Bradshaw p.143.
³ OR 26.11 and .13. Tenebrae on MT implies Tenebrae on GF and HS.
⁴ OR 29.28; p.137; II p.56 § 212, respectively.
⁵ OR XIV.82 (PL 78.1204B) and OR XV.62 (PL 78.1305D).
⁶ II.22 p.264.
⁷ Martène, DABR 4.22.1 p.81 (M 160).
dated 16 November 1955. However, in France certain cathedrals such as Rouen and Langres, and the Collegiate Churches of St Victor, and of The Virgins in Paris continued to observe the original time of singing Tenebrae as late as the eighteenth century; whilst at the Abbey of St Germain at Auxerre, and in several Cluniac hospices, the office was held very early in the morning up to the same period.

In the monasteries and houses of some of the religious orders, which were not affected to any appreciable extent by the presence of the laity at the offices, the primitive tradition of holding Tenebrae in the early hours of the morning was perpetuated. In the seventeenth century some monasteries such as St Maur and St Vanne in France reverted to holding the service at the former time of 2.00 am. The Cistercians sang the office at about 3.00 am until the time of the Second Vatican Council. On the other hand among the Dominicans, the Franciscans, and some Benedictine houses such as Quarr Abbey, Tenebrae was always an anticipated office as in the Roman rite. Following the liturgical changes of 1955, Matins and Lauds were no longer to be anticipated on the previous evening; but were to be 'said in the morning (of the day itself) at the appropriate hour'. This has allowed a certain flexibility among the religious orders and in the churches where the office of Tenebrae still survives.

In the history of this rite three main schemes are known to have existed for the provision of light prior to the commencement of the office. In the period up to c. AD 1000, all but one of our sources mention the extinguishing of a certain number of (church) lights at Matins, and also the putting out of the seven sanctuary lamps which stood before the altar. From the eleventh century onwards in most places, the seven lamps no longer feature in the ceremony, and the extinguishing of the other lights is spread over Matins and Lauds. In the third phase of development, which occurred probably in the fifteenth century, the extinguishing of the six altar candles is incorporated into the ceremonial during the Benedictus.

(i) The Lighting of the Lamps and Candles

The time for lighting the lamps and candles could vary depending upon which of the three days was involved, and upon whether the new fire was kindled on Maundy Thursday and subsequently reserved, or on each separate day. According to the Customary of Fruttuaria² the lights for Tenebrae on Maundy Thursday were lit after Compline on Wednesday; and it is very likely that this was the practice of other monasteries. However, since there was no obvious liturgical or ceremonial reason why they should have been lit at this time, it is likely that in other places the lights were kindled only shortly before the start of Matins. If the seven lamps before the altar were perpetually alight, it would have been necessary to kindle only the church lights prior to the commencement of Maundy Thursday's office.

The rekindling of the church lights and the seven lamps during the daytime of Maundy Thursday is clearly described in most of our sources for the period up to c. AD 1000.³ They all agree that illumination returned to the church after the new fire had been brought in procession into the building, at times ranging from 11.00 am (PRG) to 3.00 pm (OR 26); and it is assumed that, until the arrival of the new fire, the lights

1 Viz. Ordines 26, 27, 28, 29, 31; PRG; Poitiers; and CMG.
2 Albers IV p. 49.
3 Ordines 26.4; 28.25; 29.17; 31.29; PRG II p. 58; CMG (Albers V p. 32); Customary of Farfa (Albers I p. 48).
had remained extinguished since Tenebrae. For between the conclusion of Matins/Lauds and the commencement of Mass in the late afternoon or evening of Maundy Thursday, no liturgical light would have been required in church.¹ Once lit the lights remained burning throughout the remainder of Maundy Thursday,² until they were once again extinguished at Tenebrae of Good Friday. This pattern was repeated after the liturgy of Good Friday afternoon in readiness for the final extinguishing of the lights at Tenebrae of Holy Saturday. Long after the seven sanctuary lamps ceased to be used at Tenebrae, this arrangement for the triple provision of fire obtained in those churches and monasteries where the new fire was brought into church on three successive days.³

In churches in which the kindling of new fire was confined to Holy Saturday, the lighting of the candles for the ceremonies of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday would have been effected by means of a flame already in commission within the precincts of the church: either a brazier or some other device for providing heat; or the fire of a kitchen near a monastic church; or very likely, one suspects, the perpetual flame that burned before the reserved sacrament.

Our sources provide few details regarding the lighting of the lamps and candles for Tenebrae. At Poitiers in the tenth century, the thirty lamps were lit by the sacristan using a candle. This done, he took up a position in the doorway of the church where he extinguished the candle as a signal to mark the start of Matins.⁴ The Ordinal of Barking records that the candles for Matins on Maundy Thursday were lit by an official called the secretaria, but for the corresponding office on Good Friday it was the duty of the sacristan.⁵ The Ordinal of Exeter merely states that the candles were lit (just) before Matins.⁶

1 As noted elsewhere (p.102), in churches where either of the primitive Masses were still celebrated, liturgical light would have been obtained from the lamp reserved for that purpose at the conclusion of Tenebrae. The statement in Poitiers (p.138) that the clergy enter church 'for all the Masses' (ad missas omnes) after the new fire ceremonies relates to the one Mass of Maundy Thursday celebrated in the several churches of Poitiers, and not to the celebration of more than one Eucharist on that day.
2 'Usque ad vigilias'. Thus OR 26.10; OR 27.11; OR 31.31; Poitiers p.138; PRG II p.58 § 221.
3 For example, at Barking and Canterbury (HBS 65 pp.91 ff. and HBS 23 pp.379 ff. respectively).
4 Poitiers p.193, but only recorded for Good Friday.
5 HBS 65 p.91 and p.97.
6 HBS 37 p.132.
(ii) The Disposition of Lights

Scheme 1. Nave and choir lights extinguished during Matins; the seven lamps before the altar extinguished during Lauds.

(a) The Seven Lamps. The disposition and arrangement of these sanctu­ary lights is discussed in Appendix 3.

(b) The Nave and Choir Lights. It is not clear whether the twenty-four lights mentioned by Amalarius, by PRG, and by Alcuin, the twenty-seven of Ordo 32, and the thirty-nine of Ordo 29 were originally different from the functional illuminations of the churches in question; but the relatively large numbers of lamps involved, and the positioning of them both in the choir and in the nave would suggest that these were the normal church lights, even though in some churches they may have been realigned in a more symmetrical arrangement to suit the liturgical require­ments of Tenebrae. However, the very act of extinguishing them one by one during the course of divine service, and the fact that from at least the time of Amalarius the number of lights featuring in the ritual was given a symbolic interpretation, endowed the lamps, perhaps inev­itably, with a liturgical significance.

The display and arrangement of the lights in the five sources men­tioned in the previous paragraph is unknown. However, a careful study of the description of Tenebrae in the Pontifical of Poitiers makes it possible for us to reconstruct with some confidence the actual disposition of lights not only at Poitiers, but in other Gallican churches where the office of Tenebrae was held. On page 139 of this pontifical is the following instruction:

On these three nights at the night office let thirty lamps be lit which must be arranged in three rows of equal spacing.¹

The silence of the source in respect of the direction in which the rows of lamps ran presents us with the possibility that they may have run parallel to the main axis of the church in an east to west direction. Alternatively the lamps may have been placed in rows which ran from one side of the church to the other. Arguments may be advanced in favour of either orientation.

¹ (The writer's italics.) Aequo spacio trino ordine aptandae sunt. The phrase aequo spacio must refer to the distances or intervals between each of the rows, and not between the individual lamps.
The possibility that the rows of lamps ran in this direction raises a number of points. (i) If the length of the church was greater than its width, as was usual, rows of lamps running in an east-to-west direction would be more in keeping with the design and general appearance of the building. (ii) In such an arrangement the intervals between the lamps would provide a more satisfactory form of illumination; for three rows of lamps extending across the church and parallel to the altar would necessitate smaller intervals between each lamp and could result in concentrations of light over the areas immediately beneath those rows. (iii) If the rows of lamps ran from north to south, were all three located in the nave, or was one row positioned in the choir? The former possibility should not be dismissed on the grounds that there would have been insufficient light in the choir for the lectors, since a certain amount of light for reading is likely to have emanated from the seven sanctuary lamps during the whole of Matins. 1

It is not clear whether the thirty lamps extinguished during Tenebrae at Poitiers were also used as the normal church lights; nor is it known if any other functional lights, not lit on this occasion, existed elsewhere in the church. However, the gerundive in the above-quoted rubric, aptandae, 'fitted out' or 'arranged', may well indicate that these thirty lights were set out in this order especially for the night offices of the Triduum. This in turn raises the interesting question of whether the lights were pendant lamps or candles in free-standing candlesticks. It is almost certain that the lamps in question would have been oil-lamps and not candles, though the use of candles for functional illumination should not be completely ruled out. However, the difficulty of suspending a single candle from a beam, and the even greater problem of placing a candle upon a lofty roof beam seem to preclude the use of this genre of light at Poitiers. The objection might also be raised that the limited and restricted use of these lamps hung in abnormal positions within the church would hardly justify the possibly lengthy preparations involved in the fixing and suspending of thirty lamp-chains. The objection, however, largely disappears if one supposes that in the beams were hooks for the chains, which remained permanently in position from year to year.

1 There is no reason to believe that these lamps were of the hooded variety similar to those which hang before St Peter's tomb in Rome, and which provide little illumination.
In support of the view that the lights for Tenebrae comprised three rows of candles in their holders, which extended from the west end of the church to the sanctuary, it may be said that the portability of the candelabra would permit a rapid disposition of the lights, and allow the lamps in the same row to be spaced with whatever intervals were required in a church unencumbered in those days by lines of chairs or pews. The objection that the use of candleholders was impracticable amid the jostling of the congregation cannot really be sustained; for the night office was probably never attended anywhere by hordes of the faithful. A much more serious objection arises over the height the candleholders would need to have been. Both from the point of view of safety and to ensure that the lights provided maximum illumination, it would have been necessary for the candlesticks to stand at least six feet from the ground. Although it is not entirely beyond belief, it does seem very unlikely that a church such as that at Poitiers should have possessed a set of thirty very large candelabra for use at only three relatively short services each year. Moreover, it is most unlikely that such candleholders would have been used for the church's functional illuminations. Oil-lamps almost certainly were used. It is, therefore, difficult to escape the conclusion that the functional oil-lamps of the church at Poitiers were used liturgically at Tenebrae either in situ or temporarily repositioned during the latter part of Holy Week.

North-South Orientation

The possibility of an arrangement of lights in rows running parallel to the north-south axis of the church invites two comments. (i) Rows of lights arranged according to this orientation are actually attested in Scheme 2; but they were confined to one part of the church. The position occupied by the sacristan before the start of the service1 shows that some of the lights at least were burning in the nave. An arrangement of one line of lights in the choir and two in the nave seems unlikely; three rows in the nave would provide illumination in that part of the church, but would leave the choir in gloom. (ii) A later rubric from the same description of Tenebrae in Poitiers would, on first reading, appear to favour a north-to-south orientation:

lucernarum quae ab occidentali parte ecclesiae incipientur extingui.2

1 See p.65.
2 'The lamps which begin to be put out on the western side of the church.' (Page 137.)
and to indicate that the sacristan proceeded to move along the western row of lamps until all were extinguished, and then to put out next those in the middle row. However, the evidence of this rubric is inconclusive, since the instruction is qualified by the words begin to be extinguished, and gives no indication either of the direction in which the sacristan then proceeded, or of the direction in which the rows of lamps ran.

Evidence to confirm that the rows of lamps ran in an east-to-west direction is supplied by Alcuin and will be considered in Chapter 8.

The arrangement of the church lights in three rows for the service of Tenebrae, as attested above by Poitiers, was probably typical of many Gallican churches in the period prior to AD 1000, regardless of the number of lamps lit before the start of Matins. However, an interesting but intriguingly concise statement by Martène reveals that the display of lights in some churches was perhaps not as orderly as that at Poitiers. For he records¹ that at Corbie² and at Monte Cassino² in the ninth and tenth centuries the lamps to be extinguished at the night office were dispersely arranged throughout the church. This does not imply a random disposition of lights. It suggests that the normal church illuminations were used rather than specially arranged rows of lamps.

Scheme 2. Lights lit only in the choir and extinguished during Matins and Lauds.

Writing in the first half of the eighteenth century Jean Grancolas records³ that in some churches candles were placed upon⁴ or lamps were suspended from beams which spanned the entire width of the choir. It is unfortunate for our enquiry that Grancolas does not specify any churches where this arrangement obtained or the period when these beams were used; nor does he mention the number of candles or lamps or even beams that were involved. His vagueness about these beams with their lights is perhaps indicative of his own ignorance in this matter, and

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1 DAMR 3.13 p.122. 2 M 1145 and M 1139 respectively.
3 Commentarius p.296.
4 The notion of a temporary beam or beams transversely placed at a height across the choir, from the top of which protruded metal spikes to secure the candles, is not so incredible as it might at first seem. We shall see that the wooden plank and the hearse with its spikes may have developed from the choir beam(s). See Chapter 7.
may suggest that he is only recording the half-remembered facts of an informant about former practice. However, the use at Tenebrae of candles placed upon or lamps hanging from beams in the choir does represent a significant transitional stage in the development of the ceremonial between the earliest recorded arrangement whereby the lights of the whole church were extinguished (Scheme 1) and the practice of extinguishing gradually only those candles which were placed on a candelabrum or hearse near the altar (Scheme 5). It is significant that Grancolas employs the term hirpices when referring to the wooden beams with their iron spikes for impaling wax-candles or for hanging lamps therefrom. The same word in the singular, hirpex, is also used to describe the hearse of candles which stood in the sanctuary during Tenebrae.

Three factors may have contributed to the abandonment of extinguishing the nave lights during Tenebrae and to the restriction of their use to the choir. (i) In those cathedrals and monastic churches where those attending the night office could comfortably be accommodated within the choir, the extinguishing of lights in an unused part of the building may have seemed unnecessary, and may even have gone unnoticed especially if a large choir-screen effectively isolated the choir from the nave. One of two developments may then have occurred. Either the lights in the nave ceased to be lit so that most of the church remained in darkness; or, in churches such as Salisbury where the nave lights continued to burn in the background, their presence was disregarded until almost the end of Lauds when it was necessary to have the building in total darkness. (ii) When Tenebrae became an anticipated service held in the late afternoon, the illumination of the nave would in some places have been perhaps unnecessary, and may have gone unnoticed especially if the building was flooded with strong vernal sunshine towards the close of the day. (iii) The lighting of the lamps in the choir only and the concentration of light in one particular area heighten the effect of the proceedings both for those in the choir itself who are aware of the darkness in the rest of the building, which is symbolic of the darkness of the world, and especially for those in the darkness of the nave who

1 See also Chapter 6.
2 Augustus Hare quotes the vivid description from Anderson's Improvisatore of Tenebrae on Wednesday afternoon in the Sistine Chapel. The service, it seems, was timed to end when 'the descending sun.... threw his last beams in through the uppermost window' and strongly illuminated Christ and the Apostles. The sun set just as the last psalm was ended. (Vol.2 p.297 of Walks in Rome.)
observe the lights and their extinction at a distance. The drama in
the presentation of the passion and death of Jesus was after all an
important element in the funereal content of Tenebrae.

Unless the supports for the lamps were the permanent tie-beams of
the roof itself, one can only speculate about the number and position
of temporary horizontal bars. It seems reasonable to conjecture that
they were placed at the sanctuary end of the choir so as to allow the
whole of the beam to be used, thereby allowing greater intervals be-
tween each light, especially if twenty-four or twenty-five were placed
on each beam; and also to give the sacristan ready access to the lights.

**Scheme 3.** Candles lit on a stand near the altar and extinguished
during Matins and Lauds.

The next stage in the development of the use of light would find
the choir lamps of Scheme 2 replaced by a row or cluster of lights,
usually candles, placed and extinguished in the vicinity of the altar.
The display of lights in this position represents the final stage in
the transition from the use of functional lamps with symbolic associa-
tions to the use of liturgical lights with a minimal functional purpose.
It was perhaps inevitable that functional lights, once put to liturgi-
cal use and interpreted symbolically, should subsequently be placed
in close proximity to the altar and mounted on a stand or on a candel-
abrum to underline their importance and to give them visual prominence.
In Chapter 7 we have shown how the desirability of concentrating the
lights in one place so as to enable those participating in Tenebrae to
observe better the decrease in the loss of light was the principal
factor in contributing to the location of these cultic lights within
the sanctuary.

**Schemes 2 and 3** represent two successive increases in the concen-
tration of light, progressively in the direction of the altar: first in
the choir, then in the sanctuary. The area where the light ultimately
became concentrated viz. the vicinity of the altar, was also partly de-
termined by the need to have illumination for reading close by. It was
also perhaps inevitable that the last light to be extinguished should
be placed within the sanctuary; for this was usually identified with

1 It should be borne in mind that lofty ceilings and stone vaultings
belong to later medieval churches. Earlier cathedrals and monastic
churches were buildings of considerably more modest dimensions.
Christ. Within this scheme should be included most of the documents which attest the use at Tenebrae of twenty-four or twenty-five lights; scant information concerning the use of other numbers, apart from fifteen, prevents our inclusion of them also within this scheme. Most of our sources do not mention the use or even the presence of lights either in the choir or nave *vis-à-vis* those extinguished on the stand by the altar. However, the evidence from Norwich, Bouen, Salisbury, and a number of other churches suggests that background illumination existed within the cathedral tradition at least.¹

**Scheme 4**  Hearse-lights and lights in front of the altar.

(i) At the Monastery of Farfa in the eleventh century we encounter the somewhat puzzling statements that thirty candles were lit before the high altar and that fifteen candles were extinguished at Tenebrae.² In Chapter 7 we shall examine this information in greater detail, and offer our own solution as to the manner in which the lights at Farfa and other monasteries were displayed.

(ii) In the former cathedral church at Laon c.1090 eighteen lights were placed on either side of the sanctuary.³ We are not told at what stage these additional lights were extinguished or what the purpose was in placing them in these positions. The number too is strange; thirty-six (or 18 + 18) seems to have no special liturgical or symbolic significance. Moreover, unlike the fifteen hearse-candles which burned before the altar and which were liturgically integrated into the office of Tenebrae, these additional lights were presumably at some distance from the altar. Their purpose may have been to provide light for the readers; but it is not at all clear at what stage in the ceremony they were extinguished. There may have been a similar disposition of lights at Coutances where forty-four candles were lit for Tenebrae.⁴ If a hearse of twenty-four candles was used, the number mentioned by John of Avranches,⁵ the remaining twenty lights may have been placed in two groups of ten on either side of the altar or sanctuary. At Chartres-en-Vallée⁶ in the twelfth century it is possible that twenty-four of the thirty-four lights that were kindled at the night office burned on the

1 The use of lights in the nave and choir at Tenebrae is treated at greater length in Chapter 8.
2 Albers I p.46 (= PL 150.1197B.)
３ Martene, DAER 4.22.2 p.81 (M 156).
4 Heuser p.228. Unfortunately he gives no other details.
5 Lib.de Off.Eccl. 52 (PL 147.48C). The dioceses of Coutances and Avranches were coterminal. Their rituals may have been similar.
6 Martene, DAER 4.22.2 p.81 (M 76). This relates to the Church of St-Jean.
hearses, while the remaining ten were perhaps disposed as at Coutances. On the other hand it is possible that the additional lights both at Coutances and Chartres-en-Vallée may have been placed in the choir to provide functional illumination. Alternatively, the possibility of candelabra holding forty-four or thirty-four candles respectively should not be completely ruled out. However, the frequency of twenty-four-candle and fifteen-candle hearses, and the silence of Sicardus and Durandus and the lack of attestation from any other source make the existence of candelabra, designed to hold large numbers of lights, seem very doubtful. Mention should here be made of the continued use of the seven sanctuary lamps at the Monastery of Monte Cassino and at Chartres Cathedral.

Scheme 5(a). Hearse-lights and lights upon the altar.

The disposition of lights according to this scheme differs from that of Scheme 5(b) only in the number of candles used. At Soissons in the late twelfth century twenty-four candles burned on a candelabrum in front of the altar and an unspecified number stood on the altar itself. This is the first recorded instance of the use of altar-candles in connection with Tenebrae, and, incidentally, one of the earliest references to candles placed upon the altar. Martène's silence concerning these candles suggests that the original ritual did not specify a number. The six candles attested at Tongres in the fifteenth century are almost certain to have been placed on the altar. There only seven other candles were lit on the hearse.

Scheme 5(b). Hearse-lights and lights upon the altar.

This is the disposition of lights officially prescribed by the Church of Rome for those parts of the Western Church which owed allegiance to her and which were required to adopt the new Roman service-books in the sixteenth century.

(i) 1568 - 1955. As at Soissons the Roman rite involved a tripartite

3 Martène, DAER 4.23 p.137 (M 305). 4 Ordinary p.150.
5 The papal regulations, added to the decisions of the Council of Trent whereby episcopal independence in liturgical matters was in principle terminated, laid down that the Roman Missal and Roman Breviary were to be adopted everywhere except in those dioceses which had used their own service-books for more than 200 years. The directions for Tenebrae are contained in the Roman Breviary of 1568 and in the Caeremoniale Episcoporum (II.22) of 1600.
use of light viz. altar-candles, hearse-lights, and the functional lamps of the church; but it appears to have been unique in its use of the six altar-candles in that they were extinguished during the singing of the Benedictus at Lauds, and not at intervals during the course of the whole office as the seven sanctuary lamps had been. The origin of this feature is obscure. The use of the six candles in this way did not form part of the old Dominican rite\(^1\) which was based on the Roman rite of the late twelfth century. In the liturgical revisions of 1255-6 Dominican Tenebrae remained unaffected and survived unchanged until twentieth century.\(^2\) Neither do the Franciscan ordines\(^3\) of 1243-4, which were closely based on the Roman practice of the papal court, mention the six candles within this context; and Durandus writing c.1280 does not refer to them.\(^4\) There are two likely periods when the practice of extinguishing the six altar-candles during the Benedictus may have been introduced into the Roman liturgy. (a) During the residence of the Popes at Avignon from 1309 to 1377 the papal liturgy was in direct contact with the influences of the Gallican Church. We have noted elsewhere that Gallican ceremonial was somewhat less restrained than the austere and sombre Roman ritual. If the use of the six candles was introduced into Tenebrae during this period, it was very likely via the papal court at Avignon, though it must be added that there is no contemporary direct evidence from the liturgy of that church to corroborate this theory. In the chaotic state of the city of Rome at this time, liturgical innovations there appear most unlikely. (b) The second period to be considered is the reign of Pope Martin V (1417-31). This pontiff inaugurated the restoration of the Roman Church after the Great Schism, and was responsible for the refurbishment of many of Rome's churches and the improvement of liturgical worship within that city.

According to Roman practice up to 1955 the six altar-candles were lit for Tenebrae on each day of the Triduum. Under the former dispensation each of these days was a Double Feast of the First Class; and though it was not usual to have six altar-candles lit at Matins/Lauds, the funereal character of Tenebrae placed this office on a par with a Requiem. Since it was customary to light the six candles at this latter service, they were therefore kindled for Tenebrae.

(ii) 1955 to date. As a result of the reforms of 1955, which affected

1 Office of Holy Week p.82.
2 King, LRO p.337.
3 HBS 85 p.76; Van Dijk II p.84.
4 Rationale VI.72 p.331.
many of the services of the Triduum, whilst the six altar-candles remained in use at Tenebrae on Maundy Thursday, alterations to the ceremonial of Maundy Thursday itself and of Good Friday involved changes which affected Tenebrae on both of those days. After the stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday, the altar remained bare until the Veneration of the Cross on the following day. As a result there were no candles on the altar during Tenebrae of Good Friday. During the Veneration of the Cross, the cross to be venerated was brought into church along with two candles; and after the Veneration these candles were placed on the altar. Then the Sacrament was brought in accompanied by two more candles; and these were also placed upon the altar. Thus at Tenebrae of Holy Saturday four candles were lit, and then extinguished during the Benedicts.¹

Interestingly and somewhat paradoxically, the Dominican Order, which before 1955 had not used the six candles at Tenebrae, borrowed from the Roman rite the practice of lighting the six candles at about the same time that the hearse ceased to be used in the Roman rite. These candles continue to be featured at Dominican Matins/Lauds in those houses which still observe Tenebrae on all three days of the Triduum.

¹ Wuest p.263.
THE NUMBER OF LIGHTS AT TENEABAE

(i) The Early Period

In view of the evidence of Poitiers and Alcuin\(^1\), it is our contention that in the period up to \(c\). 1000 the lamps and candles extinguished during the course of Matins comprised the functional lights of the church. There were two factors that determined the exact number of lights to be used. As early as the time of Amalarius symbolic interpretations were given to some numbers especially if they suggested a biblical precedent. It was more important, however, that the number of lights to be extinguished should be divisible by three in order to maintain liturgical symmetry within each of the three nocturns of Matins. Thus we encounter in this period thirty-nine,\(^2\) thirty,\(^3\) twenty-seven,\(^4\) and twenty-four\(^5\) lights lit at the start of the night office. The silence of Ordo \(26\) suggests that any suitable number could be used.

According to the ceremonial of the church with which Amalarius was familiar twenty-four candles or lamps were lit on each day of the Triduum. His mention of seventy-two lights represents the total for the three days; and though he dwells on the significance of seventy-two rather than twenty-four, twice he states that only twenty-four lights were lit for each of the three celebrations of Tenebrae.\(^6\) Amalarius' commentary on the various features of the service is reminiscent of the symbolic and allegorical interpretations of ceremonial and vestments by later medieval writers such as Rupert of Deutz, John Beleth, and Sicardus. His twofold and sometimes threefold interpretation of the symbolism which he finds in the ceremonial is not always consistent; but it does reveal the belief of that age that the ceremonial of the Church reflected the teaching and theology of the Bible, and was therefore both of divine inspiration and of divine approbation.

For Amalarius each of the twenty-four lights represents an hour, or

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1 See Chapters 2 p.24 and 7 p.65.
2 OR 29.12; but see pp.68-72. 3 Poitiers p.137. 4 OR32.5.
5 Amalarius, Lib.Off. 4.22.1; PRR II p.56 8213; Alcuin, PL 101.1203B.
6 Amalarius, ibidem: Accenduntur per singulas noctes XXIII lumina and again in the same chapter per singulas noctes memoratarum feriarum viginti quattuor lumina accenduntur ... hoc enim fit ter. ('Twenty-four lights are lit each night' and 'on each night of the said days twenty-four lights are lit ... for this happens three times.')
more precisely an hour of daylight; and collectively they symbolise Christ 'who illuminates his Church by day and by night, and who as verus sol rests in the tomb during the Triduum, mourned by his Church and hidden from view in the same way that the sun is not visible during an eclipse. For that reason and as a sign of sorrow the lights are extinguished.' Over the three-day period the seventy-two lights signify the seventy-two hours which Jesus lay in the tomb. In addition to the temporal aspect of the symbolism, the extinguishing of seventy-two lights over three days is interpreted somewhat freely as the desertion of the seventy-two disciples. Similar comparisons and analogies are to be found in Alcuin.

Evidence from the Romano-Germanic Pontifical shows that even by the tenth century Tenebrae was not universally observed throughout northern Gaul and northern Germany in spite of its attestation 200 years earlier:

accenduntur in quibusdam locis in hac nocte viginti quattuor lumina.

The alternative interpretation that 'in some places' numbers of lights other than twenty-four were lit is unlikely.

The importance of the symbolism attached to numbers may have been responsible for the disappearance of, or at least the lack of evidence for the use of twenty-seven, thirty, and thirty-nine lights at Tenebrae in subsequent centuries; the evidence for the use of twenty-four lights is plentiful and persists well into the twentieth century. For none of the three former figures have obvious associations with biblical numbers or situations.

(ii) The later diversity of numbers

(a) 72 lights. Both John Beleth and Sicardus, but not Durandus, attest the practice of lighting seventy-two candles at Tenebrae. Beleth, who like Sicardus states that the service of Tenebrae represents the darkness of Christ's three hours on the cross, repeats Amalarius' analogy with the seventy-two disciples. Sicardus also refers to their

1 Lib. Off. 4.22.1.
2 The phrases on the third day and after three days in reference to Jesus' resurrection were frequently thought of as embracing three whole days. This was a result of the inclusive system of reckoning.
5 'During this night 24 lights are lit in some places.' PRG II p.56
6 See Table 1. 7 PL 202.105A.
Beleth, echoing Amalarius, also likens the number of candles to the hours Christ lay in the tomb, to the number of nations, and by extension to the number of languages. Since both commentators record that Tenebrae took place on each day of the Triduum and that it was possible to light different numbers of candles at this service, of which one was twenty-four, it seems almost certain that they are both attesting the use of seventy-two candles on each of the three nights and not referring to the total for the three services, as Amalarius did. The arrangement in which they were disposed is unknown; the very large number would suggest a fairly concentrated display in the region of the altar rather than a sporadic disposition throughout the whole of the church. Moreover, one can only conjecture that these lights were extinguished in groups of three at the same points in the service at which twenty-four candles were put out. Durand’s silence at the end of the thirteenth century concerning this number may suggest that the practice of lighting seventy-two candles at Tenebrae had everywhere fallen into desuetude.

(b) 44 lights. On page 30 we referred to the forty-four candles at Coutances and suggested a possible disposition for these lights. The 1499 Breviary of Coutances does not record the number of lights that were lit for Tenebrae. Its silence on this score may indicate that a not unusual number of candles were placed on the hearse. John of Avranches, whose own diocese was adjacent to that of Coutances, clearly states that twenty-four lights were to be lit for the night office. The occurrence of four as the second digit both at Coutances and at Chartres-en-Vallée, where thirty-four lights were lit, may suggest the presence of a twenty-four-candle hearse within the total number of lights.

(c) 39 lights. Dom Edmond Martène records that in an ordo Romanus the monks at Monte Cassino lit thirty-nine lights for Tenebrae which they extinguished in more or less the same way as that described in Ordo 26 or PRG. Elsewhere he mentions that the lights were dispersedly arranged throughout the church. To a point Dendy is correct in stating that 'the lights appear to be those of the whole church'; but he is wrong to assert that Martène has 'misunderstood a MS. in giving the number thirty-nine'. Dendy, one suspects, has noticed that when Martène...

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3 DAMR 3.12.3 p.123. The ordo Romanus which Martène is here referring to is either OR 28 or OR 31. See Appendix 11.
4 DAMR 3.12.2 p.122.
referred to the position of the lamps, he stated that at Monte Cassino there were fifteen; and, perhaps understandably, Dendy has come to the conclusion that Martene was in error in respect of the thirty-nine lights. However, on reflection it would appear from what Martene informs us that it is not that he has misread or misunderstood his sources, but that he has been puzzled by seemingly contradictory evidence from the same monastery, and possibly also by some confusion in his original notes. This would account for a further statement that the number of candles used at Monte Cassino is not clear.

A plausible explanation for the conflicting information emerges from a closer examination of the sources which Martene consulted. Two documents, separated by several centuries and attesting the practice of two different periods, were examined by Martene. (i) We suggested above that the ordo Romanus, which Martene inspected for information relating to Monte Cassino, had its provenance within the same liturgical tradition as Ordo 28 and Ordo 31. It also had elements in common with Ordo 29. For instance, it attested the use of thirty-nine lights at Tenebrae. Moreover, at Monte Cassino seven small lamps hung in front of the apse; and, unlike other early ordines and pontificals, Ordo 29 was compiled primarily for use in a monastery. (ii) The second document relating to Monte Cassino, which Martene consulted, was an ordinary of c.1100. This probably did not specify the number of lights to be used at Tenebrae - hence his statement about the number not being clear. Moreover, Martene did not know how many candles were lit for Tenebrae during this period at Rome. Therefore, since he knew that the monks at Monte Cassino followed the Roman rite at Tenebrae, he contented himself by giving elsewhere the number which he knew the Roman Church subsequently used and which was correct at the time he was writing: fifteen.

Amongst the liturgical features shared by the monasteries of Corbie and Monte Cassino was the 'scattering' of lights for Tenebrae throughout the church building. The linking of the two monasteries in this way and the affinity between Martene's ordo Romanus and Ordines 28, 29, and 31 increase the likelihood that thirty-nine lights were also used

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1 DAMR 3.12.2 p.122. 2 The Use of Lights p.146. 3 DAMR 3.12.3 p.123. 4 See especially Appendix 11. 5 Ordo Casinensis p.101. These lamps are almost certainly a survival of the seven primitive sanctuary lamps. 6 OR 29.29 and .45. Compare OR 26.19 and .20; OR 28.26; OR 30B.37; OR 31.65; PRO II p.59 §221; and Poitiere p.139. 7 M 1139.
at Corbie especially in view of Grancolas' testimony. Admittedly, he records that thirty-eight lights were lit at this monastery in northern France;¹ but this figure is otherwise unrecorded within the context of Tenebrae; it has no relevant biblical significance; and it cannot be divided by three into equal parts. A likely explanation for the occurrence of this number is to assume that Grancolas or the copyist whose manuscript Grancolas read mistook XXXVIII for XXXV. If, however, this figure is correct, it would suggest that at Corbie for an unknown reason only twelve lights were extinguished during one of the nocturnes.

(d) 34 lights. We have suggested on page 30 how the thirty-four candles at Chartres-en-Vallée may have been displayed. No other instance is known of the use of thirty-four lights at Tenebrae.

(e) 30 lights. Poitiers attests the use of thirty lights at the night office. Their arrangement is discussed in Chapter 7.² The disposition of the thirty candles at Farfa is described in Chapter 6.³

(f) 27 lights. Our only evidence for the presence of twenty-seven lights at Tenebrae comes from Ordo 32.⁴ Although the information relating to the night office and to the Easter candles is assembled from two different manuscripts, there is nothing to suggest that both do not refer to the same ordo. The Cambridge manuscript records the number of lights; whilst the seven sanctuary lamps are mentioned by the Paris manuscript. It was the opinion of Michel Andrieu that the ordo originated in northern France and possibly at Corbie. If, however, thirty-nine lights were used at this monastery, the Cambridge manuscript may well have had its provenance in a neighbouring church in view of the discrepancy in the numbers.

The fact that the numbers twenty-seven, thirty, and thirty-nine had no obvious biblical associations may only be one of the reasons why they did not survive in use at Tenebrae in the succeeding centuries. Perhaps a more weighty factor was the influence of the Gallican liturgical commentator Amalarius, the author of Alcuin, and later, John of Avranches, for all of whom twenty-four lights was the norm; and this number is known to have been used in the influential churches of Mainz, Rouen, and York in the tenth and eleventh centuries. (See Tables 1 and 2.)

¹ Commentarius p.296. ² Pages 64-66. ³ Pages 52-54. ⁴ OR 32.5.
(g) 26 lights. It is not known why twenty-six candles were lit at Amiens and Fontanellas, and possibly at Exeter at one time. Since this figure was not suggested by a precedent from Scripture, its existence may be accounted for in one of three ways. (i) In Paris and Reims there are instances of the use of thirteen candles. There may possibly be a connection with the ceremonial of these two churches if it could be shown that two candles were extinguished at a time as at Tongres. On the other hand two separate hearse may once have been used as we have suggested elsewhere. This number may have been one of the results of combining two hearse into one. (ii) The twenty-sixth candle may originally have been the sacristan's light which provided light for those entering a darkened church and was subsequently placed on or near a hearse designed to hold twenty-five candles. (iii) It is just possible that the lamp which burned in front of the Sacrament was included in the twenty-six.

(h) 24 and 25 lights. The use of twenty-five lights at Tenebrae is a variant or development of the twenty-four lights prescribed by Amalarius and PRG. This is clear from the Breviary of York which states that twenty-four candles are lit at Tenebrae with an additional one in the middle (of the hearse) higher than the rest (p.375). Moreover, the use of twenty-four or twenty-five candles is not confined exclusively to either the cathedral or monastic traditions (Tables 1 and 2). However, though the two numbers are found in both traditions, the additional candle almost certainly had its origin in monastic practice. For in the later days of medieval monasticism, it was the practice in monasteries at the beginning of the day, as the bell was tolling summoning the monks to Matins, for a junior brother to carry a lantern to show them the way. Alternatively the use of twenty-five candles may have been a survival from the earlier period when the seven lamps were extinguished during Lauds. The possible substitution of seven hearse-candles for the seven sanctuary lamps presupposes that six candles were extinguished during each of the three nocturns of Matins. Although the

1 Heuser p.228.
2 Spicilegium Fontanellense, MS., 394, in Dendy p.146.
3 Feasey (1897) does not give his source for his reference to the twenty-six hearse-candles mentioned at the Synod of Exeter in 1289 (p.394). No figure is given in the Statutes of Exeter, edited by Bradshaw and Wordsworth; but we know from the Ordinal of Exeter that in 1337 twenty-four lights were used in that cathedral (HBS 37 p.132.)
4 See p.79 and p.82.
5 See pp.56-7.
6 Crossley p.83.
<table>
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<th>Church/Commentator</th>
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<td>c.950</td>
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<td>Rouen</td>
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<td>PL 147.168D</td>
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<td>Alcuin</td>
<td>c.1000</td>
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<td>c.1070</td>
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<td>Nidaros</td>
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Table 1. The Use of Twenty-four Lights at Tenebrae.

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<td>c.1080</td>
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<td>Norwich</td>
<td>c.1265</td>
<td>HBS 82 p.79</td>
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<td>Hereford</td>
<td>13 C</td>
<td>HBS 26 p.308</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fleury</td>
<td>13 C</td>
<td>DAMR 3.12 p.123, M1186</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bec</td>
<td>c.1200</td>
<td>DAMR 3.12 p.123, M1153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>c.1440</td>
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Table 2. The Use of Twenty-five Lights at Tenebrae.
Use of eighteen candles at Matins is attested in later practice, there is no evidence for this number in the earlier period.

Another possibility to be considered is that the increase from twenty-four to twenty-five was the result of the symbolic association attached to the latter number. For at Hereford,¹ where the candles were identified with the prophets and the apostles, the twenty-fifth candle represented Christ, an identification presumably also made at York. This accounted for the candle's elevated position.

At Salisbury² and Exeter³ the twenty-four candles also symbolised the Old Testament prophets and the twelve apostles. The ordinal from Exeter adds that the extinguishing of them signifies the cruelty of the Jews who persecuted or murdered them. Dendy claims that the number twenty-four was 'generally taken to stand for the apostles and the prophets',⁴ although only three of our twenty-three sources actually mention this symbolism. However, there is no evidence at all for his assertion that the twenty-four candles could include Christ, if Judas was not reckoned in the number. Durandus, regarding the number in a wholly New Testament context, substitutes apostolic men for prophets and elaborates the idea by declaring that for twenty-four hours the apostles and apostolic men serve Christ by day and the Church by night.⁵ Durandus also states that the twenty-four candles are extinguished because the apostles hid for twenty-four hours; and he reiterates the analogy drawn by Amalarius that Christ is the sun who gives light to the world for twenty-four hours. On a different level Honorius of Autun writes⁶ that the candles indicate the number of Gloria's which are omitted during the whole of Tenebrae. This negative kind of symbolism is echoed by both Beleth⁷ and Durandus.⁵ The latter adds that the Gloria's are not said because Christ is lying in the tomb.⁸

(i) 23 lights. The twenty-three candles lit at Worcester⁹ may have been placed on a hearse designed for twenty-four lights. A twenty-fourth candle may have been the light which guided the monks into the cathedral for the night office. If the twenty-three candles did stand

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¹ HBS 26 p.308.  
² HBS 37 p.132.  
³ The Use of Lights p.145. (The writer's italics.)  
⁴ Rationale VI.72 p.331.  
⁵ PL 202.105D.  
⁶ Gemma Animae (PL 172.665).  
⁷ See also Appendix 1.  
⁸ Antiphonary p.62.
for the twelve prophets and the apostles without Judas, that fact has not been recorded.

(j) 15 lights. The use of the fifteen-candle hearse mainly in religious houses strongly suggests that this number emerged from a monastic milieu. The earliest evidence for this candelabrum comes from the Monastery of St Benigne at Dijon in the eleventh century; but the use of fifteen candles at Tenebrae is almost certainly much older. The number is attested in the Customary of Cluny which was compiled by Ulric who died in 1086. Cluny had been founded in AD 910 to counteract the 'temporary relaxation of Benedictine discipline'; and the great emphasis which Cluny placed on the choir office and on elaborate and well-executed liturgical observance created an ambiance conducive to changes in ritual. From such a milieu the fifteen-candle hearse may first have emerged.

The success and rapid spread of Cluny's liturgical influence as well as her political power were in part the result of her reforming zeal, and in part the result of the number of monasteries which owed allegiance to the mother house. The Monastery of Farfa was influenced by Cluniac ideals during the time of Abbot Hugh (AD 997-1038); and the long-established Benedictine houses, Corbie and Chezal-Benoit in France, Monte Cassino, and St Paul's in Rome were all affected by Cluniac practice and all adopted the use of fifteen candles at Tenebrae. The Grammontines with their sixty houses in France seem to have been influenced by Cluny in this respect. It would therefore appear that the three French cathedrals of Chalon-sur-Saône, Laon, and Uzès had adopted monastic usage in the Middle Ages (Table 3). At Paris where Gallican-influenced service-books continued to be used after the sixteenth century, the use of fifteen candles may well antedate the Council of Trent.

There is some uncertainty as to when the use of fifteen candles first entered the Roman rite. Cluniac influence in this respect during the pontificate of Pope Gregory VII at the end of the eleventh century may be discounted; for we know that in the Cathedral of St John Lateran in the middle of the twelfth century only twelve candles were extinguished at Tenebrae. Medieval Roman breviaries did not specify the

1 At the zenith of Cluny's influence in the mid-twelfth century there were 314 dependent houses.
2 Cluniac reforms were also introduced at Subiaco and at Sta Maria on the Aventine.
3 OEL pp. 45-6.
* Roman influence, however, does seem more likely.
number of candles to be used, possibly because ritual variants existed within the Roman Church before a semblance of uniformity was achieved largely through the labours of the Franciscan friars. They popularised the ceremonial of the papal court, which they both admired and adopted as their own rite. Since Haymo's Ordo Breviarium of the mid-thirteenth century does not prescribe a specific number of candles, it is likely that none was mentioned in the breviary of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216), upon which Haymo's service-book was based.¹ The earliest documentary evidence for the use of fifteen candles at Rome is in fact the definitive Breviarium Romanum of 1568, although the practice of lighting that number of candles at Tenebrae was probably by then well-established.

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<td>c.1000</td>
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<td>Verdun</td>
<td>1832</td>
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Table 3. The Use of Fifteen Lights at Tenebrae

(k) 14 lights. Martène merely mentions that this number was used; but he gives no details of time or place.²

¹ Van Dijk II p.41. On page 37 above we referred to the fact that Martène was somewhat nonplussed as regards the number of lights that were used in the Roman rite.
² DAER 4.22.2 p.81.
(l) 13 lights. Evidence for this number comes from Tongres, Paris, Angers, Seville, and Reims. De Molèon also mentions the use of thirteen candles, but does not identify any churches. This number almost certainly would have suggested Christ and the Apostles, or Mary and the Apostles as at Seville. At Tongres the six altar-candles were included in the thirteen, no distinction being made, apparently, between them and the remaining seven within the context of Tenebrae.

(m) 12 lights. The testimony of Beleth, Sicardus, and Durandus would suggest that the use of twelve candles at Tenebrae was more widespread than the three known instances would allow us to believe. These were at Rome, at Le Mans, and at St Vedast's Abbey, Arras. How they were arranged is unknown. At Rome they burned before the Image. The possibility that at Arras there were originally twenty-four candles on two hearse, as at Farfa, and that the one referred to in the ordinal is the survivor that continued to be used at Tenebrae, are interesting and likely suggestions, but ones which in our present state of knowledge cannot be substantiated. Beleth states simply that the twelve candles symbolise the twelve apostles; whilst Sicardus likens the extinguishing of the twelve candles to the scattering of the apostles; as opposed to Durandus who refers to the apostles' loss of faith. St Bruno of Segni's reference to the twelve apostles quorum doctrina fugatae sunt tenebrae and to the twelve candles which represent them may be a reference to Tenebrae in the eleventh century. The context is certainly in favour of this.

(n) 11 lights. The only known instance of this number occurs at St James' Monastery in Liège. Here the extinguishing of the candles would seem to symbolise the desertion of the apostles after the arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane.

(o) 9 lights. The lighting of nine candles for Tenebrae is attested only at Nevers, though its mention by Beleth may well suggest that

1 Ordinary pp. 150-51.
2 1662 Cerem. p.337.
3 1731 Cerem. p.223.
4 Doblado p.284.
5 Heuser p.228.
6 Voyages p.298.
7 For the hearse, see p.61.
8 PL 202.106A.
9 HBS 86 p.156.
10 Rationale VI.72 p.331.
11 Mitrale (PL 213.298D).
12 PL 165.1108B.
13 'By whose teaching the darkness has been dispelled.' PL 165.1108B.
14 Ordinary p.20.
* These burned before the maior image.
this number was used in other churches as well. According to him the number nine symbolised the human race, cut off by sin from the nine orders of angels and excluded from the true light. One candle may have been put out at the conclusion of each nocturn, and six during Lauds.

(p) 7 lights. The use of seven lights at Tenebrae is attested by Beleth, who compares the putting out of the lights to the gifts of the Spirit which were almost extinguished in the hearts of the disciples, and by Martone. Both writers may well be referring to churches which either had formerly used seven sanctuary lamps at Tenebrae in addition to other lights, or continued to do so. Presumably all seven lights were extinguished during Lauds, as in the Carmelite rite.

(q) 5 lights. In the Carmelite rite until 1955 five candles were lit at the beginning of the night office. This practice had remained unchanged since the fourteenth century.

In some churches the number of candles to be lit was not specified and could in theory be limitless. Rupert of Deutz, writing c.1111, refers to 'numerose luminaria' at the start of the night office. These, he declares, are the saints who foretold the coming of Christ and who were murdered. Beleth and Durandus both mention that in some places there is no fixed number. This, says Beleth, allows any man or woman to make an offering of a candle to be lit at Tenebrae. These candles are the prophets and the saints.

It would seem that from the establishment of their order, the Cistercians neither used a hearse at Tenebrae nor extinguished the lights one by one. Instead a single lighted candle was placed on the first step of the choir. This was in keeping with their strict form of monasticism and the austere character of their liturgy. The lighting of the single candle recalls the period when only one lamp was lit for reading at the night office of Holy Saturday.

1 In another context Honorius of Autun identifies two separate groups of those who comprise the human race: (i) patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, monks, virgins, widows, marrieds; (ii) lay, doorkeepers, readers, exorcists, acolytes, subdeacons, deacons, priests, bishops. (Speculum, PL 172.1182.)
2 PL 202.106A.
3 Ordinary p.162.
4 The 1492 Ordinary of Liège refers to plures (np).
6 PL 202.106D and Rationale VI.72 p.331 respectively.
7 See pp.11-13.
Chapter Six

THE TENEBRAE HEARSE

(i) The Origin of the Hearse

The evidence for the earliest form of hearse is monastic. In the eleventh century at Fruttuaria and Gembloux we find that twenty-five candles were placed on a wooden stand (lignum) behind the altar; whilst at Cluniac Farfa and St Paul's Monastery in Rome fifteen candles were lit in instrumentum lignorum and placed in front of the altar. It is not wrong to translate both lignum and instrumentum lignorum as 'wooden stand' as Dendy does (p.146); but it is unwise to overlook the possibility that the two terms refer to stands of differing construction. The singularity of lignum and the plurality of lignorum do suggest that a difference existed. Moreover, it is wrong to suppose that continental monastic practice was everywhere uniform and to ignore variations in three important aspects of the hearse viz. the type or shape of the device, its position, and the number of candles it held. Let us consider whether any differences can be detected.

(a) Lignum. The singular form of the word may give us some clue about the design of the device. The Customary of Sigibert informs us that the lignum was especially made for use at Tenebrae. Whilst more than one piece of timber may have been used as supporting members in its construction, the section that held the candles was probably one length of wood and almost certainly horizontal. Contemporary evidence from York seems to confirm this supposition. For we read that the middle candle of the twenty-five lit for Tenebrae stood higher than the others. This suggests that the bases of all the candles including the central one rested on the same level. If we accept that the candles were displayed in a line on a length of wood, it would give further credence to our theory that the lignum was a development of the choir beam (or beams) on which the lights had once been placed. At Fruttuaria and Gembloux the lignum was placed behind the altar. If the altar stood next to the east wall, the device must have rested on a retable, and of

1 Albers IV p.49  2 Albers II p.90  3 Albers I p.46  4 Martin, DABER 4.22.8 p.124  5 Breviary p.375  6 See Scheme 2, p.28.
necessity must have been elongated,¹ as in Figure 1.

(b) Instrumentum lignorum. It must be admitted that this phrase could equally refer to the wooden device for holding twenty-four or twenty-five candles which we referred to in the preceding paragraph, if the use of the plural noun lignorum denotes both the supporting timbers and the horizontal length of wood that held the candles. If, however, the meaning of lignum is restricted to the one plank or length of timber on which the candles rested, it would follow that the occurrence of the noun in the plural number denoted two or more such lengths of wood. The twenty-four candles may have been mounted on three (or four²) separate and parallel lengths of wood on the same plane (Figure 2) or constructed in tiers (Figure 3), as in contemporary frames for votive lights, with a twenty-fifth candle somehow incorporated into the arrangement. Their three-dimensional shape, as it were, would have required them to be placed in front of or to one side of the altar. Regrettably for our enquiry the existence of these twenty-four-light candelabra, though likely, must remain suppositional, since the two recorded instances of the instrumentum lignorum attest the use of fifteen candles.³

¹ Altars began to be placed against the east wall of the church from the sixth century onwards (Klauser p.100). Even if the altar had stood forward of the east wall at Fruttuaria and Gembloux, the candelabrum used at Tenebrae would almost certainly have comprised a single length of timber (Figure 1). Twenty-four candles behind the altar, arranged in three parallel rows, seems less likely (Figure 2).
² Depending upon whether a third of the candles were extinguished during the three nocturns of Matins, or whether a quarter of them were extinguished during Lauds.
³ For a discussion of the fifteen-candle hearse, see pp.52-57.
(ii) The Development of the Hearse

It is fortunate that there has survived from the lost Customary of St Bonigne, Dijon, which was compiled in the eleventh century, a reference not only to a fifteen-light Tenebrae candelabrum but also to its shape and appearance:

\[ XV \text{ candelae in modum Pyramidis ante sanctum altare accenduntur.} \]

The date of its attestation (11th century), the number of lights, and its position in relation to the altar strongly suggest that the device upon which these candles were placed merited the description of \textit{instrumentum lignorum}. This in turn raises the interesting possibility that the candelabra at Farfa and St Paul's in Rome, which we referred to in the previous section, were also triangular in shape. Exactly what is meant by \textit{in modum Pyramidis} is not immediately clear; Martène does not elaborate the phrase from the passage he has quoted. Given that the frame was of triangular shape, the candles must have been displayed in one of three ways in order to give the on-looker the impression of a pyramidal arrangement (Figures 4, 5, and 6).

Though the candles in all three figures could be said to be disposed in the form of a pyramid, one could claim with confidence that the successive decrease in the number of candles in an upward direction, as exemplified in Figure 4, corresponds more closely to the usual interpretation of the phrase \textit{in modum Pyramidis}, if one were to observe the candles by standing immediately in front of the candelabrum. However, practical problems arise in the use of a two-dimensional candelabrum of triangular construction. In the arrangement, depicted in Figure 4, where six internal candles are mounted on the three lower cross-bars, there is a danger that the flames of these candles will set alight the cross-bars immediately above them, unless the frame is large enough to provide

\[ \text{Fig. 4} \quad \text{Fig. 5} \quad \text{Fig. 6} \]

1 Martène, \textit{DAMR} 3.12.2 p.122 (M 1150): 'Fifteen candles are lit before the sacred altar, arranged in the manner of a pyramid.'
sufficient clearance between the flame and the underside of the cross-bar, or unless the horizontal sections are made of metal. The practicability of the latter, however, is doubtful; cross-bars made of metal make unsuitable supports for candles if they are subjected to the heat from naked flames directly below. We have no indication of the size of these candelabra in the eleventh century; but we have noted that the frames were made of wood. However, if the candles were mounted on a three-dimensional frame (Figure 7) or a triangular-shaped device studded with nails to hold the candles and sloping in a backward direction (Figure 8), then not only is the problem of damage to the frame by the candles overcome, but the very structure of the candelabrum takes on more of the shape and appearance of a pyramid.

The arrangement of lights, as shown in Figure 6, is illustrated on page 265 of the first edition (1600) of the Caeremoniale Episcoporum, which contains the official procedure for Tenebrae according to the Roman rite. We believe that this disposition of lights represents both a development and a simplification of the hearse which was used at Dijon in the eleventh century, so modified that the device of three dimensions has been reduced to two, and the candles have been placed on the two angled sides, because a display, as shown in the hypothetical Figure 5, would almost certainly have caused damage to both frame and candles, as we have already suggested. The mounting of the candles on the outside edges of the frame (Figure 6) was obviously done for reasons of safety and to facilitate their arrangement. For if iron spikes, rather than cups or candle-sockets, were used to affix the candles to the frame, a straight vertical nail on the outside edge of the hearse would provide a simpler candle-spike than a nail protruding horizontally from the face of the hearse to clear the frame and then bent upwards like a right-angled cup-hook to hold the candle.

It is not known when the triangular hearse was first used in the
Roman rite. On page 42 we stated that there was some uncertainty about the introduction of the fifteen-candle hearse into Rome. Little can be added to that statement other than that its use may have entered the papal ceremonial either through the influence or because of the proximity of St Paul's Monastery in Rome.

We have so far argued in favour of the development of the triangular hearse from the pyramidal device as typified by that used at Dijon. Two other possibilities, however, remain to be considered; though it must be added that the lack of corroborative evidence prevents us from drawing firm conclusions about either. (i) In view of the limited nature of the evidence upon which we have based our theory, the converse of our supposition may equally be true viz. that the pyramid-shaped candelabrum, like that at Dijon, is an elaboration of the triangle; and it could be argued that the pyramidal device did not survive, partly because of the additional effort and workmanship required in its construction, and partly because the sombre aspect of Tenebrae discouraged liturgical extravagance. Alternatively, both types of hearse may have evolved in semi-isolated liturgical milieux from a common ancestor. Figures 9-11 illustrate how the development of the triangular or pyramidal candelabrum from the horizontal hearse may have been induced by the superior elevation of the central candle.

![Fig.9](image1.png) ![Fig.10](image2.png) ![Fig.11](image3.png)

(ii) It is just possible that the great seven-branched candlesticks which were popular in the cathedrals of Europe during the Middle Ages may have provided inspiration for the shape of the much smaller Tenebrae hearse on account of their quasi-triangular display of lights.

(iii) **The Hearse of Twenty-four Lights**

The use of the twenty-four-light hearse at Tenebrae derives from the liturgical tradition known to and recorded by Amalarius. We have already noted that the hearse of twenty-five candles was a simple

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1 Zarnecki p.134. 
2 See p.39.
variation of the other candelabrum with an additional candle included for practical or symbolic reasons. We have already suggested\(^1\) that they were displayed in linear formation and stood on one frame.\(^2\) Grancolas refers to the great candlestick with many branches which stood near the altar in some churches and associates its use with the extinguishing of lights at Tenebrae.\(^3\) Artistically-wrought metal candelabra were to be found in the cathedrals and more prosperous monasteries; and the evidence suggests that they were usually of the seven- branched variety, the \textit{menorah}.\(^4\) However, there is no reason to believe that these ornate artefacts were designed to hold as many as twenty-four candles, though their position to the right of the altar (as you face it) may have influenced the siting of the twenty-four-light hearse; and at Tongres the wooden hearse was even superimposed upon a bronze candelabrum.\(^5\) The possibility should also be considered that twenty-five candles were mounted upon a triangular candelabrum in the same way as fifteen: one at the apex and twelve down either side. Such a frame would have been considerably larger than its fifteen-light counterpart. With twenty-four lights there are problems of presentation. Either there are two candles at the apex, or there is an asymmetrical display. Neither arrangement would have been visually satisfactory. Nevertheless, according to the \textit{Gilbertine Ordinal}\(^6\) the last of the twenty-four candles, which was to be no larger than the rest, was placed 'at the top'.

However, there are two reasons for believing that the twenty-four candles may not always have been displayed in this way. (i) In Chapter 5 we saw that it was important for the number of lights to be extinguished to be divisible by three;\(^7\) and in Chapter 4 we stated that at Poitiers these lights were arranged in three rows.\(^7\) The suggestion is worthy of consideration that when the Tenebrae-lights became confined to the sanctuary, the triple line of lamps was retained in the form of a frame, similar to those depicted in \textit{Figures 2 and 3}, which stood in front or to one side of the altar. If such a frame was used, it is more likely to have been of the type shown in \textit{Figure 3}, since this device provides a better view of all the candles especially if it stands on the dais for the altar. The variation from church to church in the number of candles

\(^1\) See pp. 46-7.  
\(^2\) In some churches they may have stood in individual candlesticks, or have been set upon a circular candelabrum of the kind similar to the two candelabra in Great Budworth Church, Cheshire.  
\(^3\) \textit{Commentarius} p.296. \(^4\) Zarnecki pp. 134-5.  
\(^5\) Ordinary p.151. \(^6\) HBS 59 p.31.  
\(^7\) Pages 34 and 24 respectively.
used meant that the three rows might each contain eight, nine, thirteen, or as many as twenty-four lights. In churches where the full complement of lights was extinguished during Lauds as well as Matins, the division of candles into three groups was no longer relevant.

(ii) According to the thirteenth-century Customary of Fleury the candles were arranged super pronas.¹ The phrase is otherwise unknown. One possible interpretation involves regarding pronas as the accusative of the otherwise-unrecorded plural noun pronae, formed from the adjective pronus -a -um, 'inclined' or 'leaning forwards', and used as the technical term for the banks or tiers of candles on a frame such as that illustrated in Figure 3. For in a way the candles do incline and lean forward from the altar. The existence of a stepped frame of this type could easily have suggested the idea for the pyramid at Dijon; and, if so, a frame of this construction would antedate the pyramidal device. For the use of twenty-four lights at Tenebrae is anterior to that of fifteen by a century and a half.² It would, therefore, be not unreasonable to conclude that the construction of the pronae at Fleury was similar in appearance and shape to the pyramid used at Dijon.

(iv) The Origin of the Fifteen-candle Hearse

We have no clear evidence to explain why the fifteen-candle hearse emerged in the tenth century from a monastic milieu, at a time when the use of twenty-four lights was recommended by the influential Liber Officialis of Amalarius, and prescribed by PRG, which was used widely in Gaul and Germany. A clue to its possible origin is to be found in the eleventh-century Customary of Farfa, which gives these directives:

Coena domini quinta feria, ante Nocturnos quindecim in instrumento lignorum, ante maius altare XXX sint accensae candelae quot psalmi sunt (sic) imponendi. Et remanentibus triginta psalmis, ante nocturnas dicatur quindecim sub silentio post ternas orationes facta. Signa sonet secretarius sicut solitus est. Quibus dictis sonetis signis, postquam dimissis fuerint aedomadarius incipiat antiphonam Zelus domus tuae. Et statim extinguatur una candela huic, alia inde, sicque fit omnibus psalmis incipientibus.³

1 It is not clear how many lights were used at Fleury. In the passage in question (DAMR 3.13 p.123), Martène mentions fifteen; elsewhere (DAMR 3.12.3 p.123), twenty-five. He is either referring to two documents relating to different periods; or he has made a mistake. The discrepancy, however, does not alter the fact the candles were arranged super pronas.
2 Amalarius, AD 832: 24; Farfa, c.1000 and Cluny, 11th C.: 15.
3 'On Maundy Thursday before Nocturns (Matins) let thirty (Cont.p.53.)
At the beginning of Psalm 148 all the candles have been extinguished except one. When the antiphon of the Benedictus, the Traditor, begins, the last candle is put out.

These rubrics from the above-mentioned customary may be summarised as follows:

i. Thirty candles are lit, and fifteen are placed on a wooden stand in front of the altar.

ii. Thirty psalms are said, fifteen silently, fifteen aloud.

iii. A candle is extinguished before each of the psalms of Matins.

iv. At the beginning of the twenty-ninth psalm, twenty-nine candles have been put out.

v. After the Traditor has been sung for the first time, there is darkness in the church.

The rubrics also tell us that the sacristan, who presumably calculated the length of time sufficient for the silent repetition of each psalm, informed the monks by means of a noise at the conclusion of each period that they should commence the next psalm. The sacristan, however, did not indicate which that psalm was. The fifteen psalms said silently after the triple prayer were the gradual psalms (Psalms 119-134) which

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1 *Quibus dictis sonantibus signis*. The somewhat ambiguous Latin indicates that a single noise was made at the end of each psalm rather than several repeated sounds at the conclusion of all fifteen psalms. The nature of the noise is not specified.

2 Martène records an alternative method of regulating the silent repetition of the gradual psalms. According to the now-lost Customary of St Benigne, Dijon, after the saying of the triple prayer, the fifteen gradual psalms were said in silence; and as each monk finished his psalm, he leaned forward across his stall. When all the monks had assumed this position, it was time to proceed with the next psalm. (DAMR 3.12.2 p.122,M 1150.)

3 *Graduales psalmi* or *cantica graduum*. They are mentioned in Lanfranc's Decrees, an ordinal of Corbie, the Use of Bec, and in the Customaries of Cluny, St Benigne, Fleury, St Denis, Laon, St-Germain-des-Prés, Lyre, and the Compendienses (Martène, DAMR 3.12.2 p.122); and also in the *Ordinal of St Mary's*, York (HBS 75 p.271.).

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Continued from p.52.

candles be lit in front of the high altar, one for each of the psalms to be said - fifteen on a wooden frame. There being thirty psalms to say, let fifteen be said in silence after the three prayers and before the start of Matins. Let the sacristan make an audible signal in the usual way after each psalm is said. When all fifteen have been said, let the priest who is on duty for the week begin the antiphon The zeal for your house. Let a candle be immediately extinguished on one side, and a second (at the beginning of the next antiphon) on the other side, and so on alternately at the beginning of all the psalms.' (Albers I p.46.)
formed an introductory period of meditation between the entry of the monks into church and the start of Matins. The above-quoted extract from the Customary of Farfa leaves us with the impression that the candles began to be extinguished only when the second group of fifteen psalms, that is, those set for Matins and Lauds, began to be sung. Yet at the Benedictus all thirty lights have been extinguished; and, as only one candle is put out at the beginning of each psalm, the other fifteen in the first group must have been extinguished at some point between the beginning and the end of the gradual psalms. However, there is no indication from the text as to when this occurred.

Writing nearly a hundred years ago Hartmann Grisar, followed by other commentators, suggested that the extinguishing of lights at Tenebrae was a way of keeping track of the number of psalms which had been sung. Ludwig Eisenhöfer drew attention to the practice in the Circus Maximus of indicating to the spectators the number of laps which had been completed by the chariots. Later research has shown that the method of counting the number of laps in that stadium approximated more closely than Eisenhöfer realised to the way the progression of psalms was noted at Farfa and almost certainly in other monasteries. Whilst this method of counting at Farfa was obviously not borrowed directly from the Circus Maximus, the notion of using a decreasing number of markers for reckoning seems to have survived from the ancient world into the Middle Ages. We therefore believe that the gradual extinguishing of lights as a way of counting psalms was used, not at Matins and Lauds as Grisar and others believed, but during the silent repetition of the gradual psalms. For, whereas at Matins the antiphons, lections, and divisions into nocturne marked the progress of the night office and the various stages which had been reached, in the period of silence before the service there was nothing to indicate which psalm was intended to be repeated during a given period of silence in the event of a lapse in concentration on the part of a monk through tiredness or inattentiveness; for the sound produced by the sacristan merely marked the conclusion of such a period. The number of candles that remained burning would therefore indicate at a glance the correct psalm to be said at

1 Nine at Matins, and six at Lauds including the OT canticle.
2 Bugnini and Braga p.123.
3 'Wie man bei den Zirkusrennen, um dem Volke die Zahl der Umläufe der Wagen anzusehen, grosse hölzerne Eier an der Spitze der Spina nach jedem Umlauf aufstellte.' (Handbuch I p.514.)
4 At one end of the central spine or barrier were seven marble eggs, at the other a line of seven dolphins. At the end of each lap or half lap an egg or a dolphin was removed. (Mannix p.12.)
that time. The gradual loss of light during this period of preparation adequately accounts for the extinguishing of the first group of candles prior to the start of Matins.

Additional support for our argument can be gleaned from a closer examination of that part of the text which states that fifteen candles were placed upon a wooden stand (in instrumento lignorum) and that thirty were lit before the high altar. A superficial reading gives us the impression that the candles on the wooden stand were intended for Tenebrae and that the rest were placed somehow in front of the altar, possibly in separate candleholders. On the other hand, if our theory is correct that the first group of fifteen candles were extinguished one by one as each of the gradual psalms was said, it would be necessary for the candles to be arranged in such a way as to indicate to the monks at a glance which psalm they should be repeating. It is obvious that the candles would not be scattered at random in front of the altar; and one might suppose that the instrumentum lignorum was used for this purpose. However we have the impression that this device held the Tenebrae-candles. If, on the other hand, the wooden stand was used during the saying of the gradual psalms, we must ask how the candles put out at Tenebrae were then arranged. Crucial to the solution of this difficulty is the correct interpretation of in instrumento lignorum. If the phrase is translated 'on the wooden stand', it follows that only one stand was used and that the other candles were arranged in an unknown way on free-standing candlesticks. However, if the phrase means 'on a wooden stand', the entire sentence becomes capable of quite a different interpretation. For, bearing in mind that the Latin of the whole passage is at times both grammatically and orthographically incorrect, it is possible that 'fifteen candles are lit on a wooden stand' should be interpreted 'a wooden stand is used for lighting groups of fifteen candles' or, expressed in another way, 'fifteen candles are lit on each wooden stand'. It would then be reasonable to assume, in view of the uncertainty regarding the exact function of the wooden stand, that two wooden stands were used, one for the gradual psalms, and one for the psalms of the night office.¹

¹ It is not for us to suggest how the compiler of the customary should have expressed more clearly the existence and use of two stands. For the passage contains a number of linguistic errors, so that a careless turn of phrase should not come as a surprise to us. Nor can we be sure that the writer would have used either the phrase in utroque instrumento or in quoque instrumento, either of which we maintain is what the context demands. XXX candelae in duobus instrumentis could imply uneven distribution; XXX candelae in instrumentis lignorum might suggest more than two stands.
It is our belief that at the beginning of the monastic day at Farfa two candelabra, each of fifteen lights, stood in front of the altar. That to the right of the altar may have held the candles extinguished during Matins and Lauds.¹ The desirability of positioning the lights in a convenient and visible place for the purpose of keeping a tally of the number of psalms said silently must surely have been an important factor in locating the candelabrum near to the altar. For not all of the church lights may have been in full view of those positioned in the choir-stalls, if the lights had been used for this purpose; and the necessity of an upward glance in the event of the use of lights displayed on choir-beams was likely to have caused inconvenient distraction. In the interest of a symmetrical display of light both candelabra are likely to have been identical. Since one of these served to indicate what stage the silent repetition of the gradual psalms had reached, an arrowhead or pyramidal-shaped stand had obvious advantages over a frame on which the lights were arranged horizontally in a row.

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We will show in Chapter 7 that in the period before AD 1000 the candles were extinguished at Matins in sympathy with the singing of the psalms and the reading of the lessons. The greater the number of lights extinguished, the greater was the scope for elaboration of ceremonial. It is, therefore, somewhat surprising to find that in the ritual of Cluny, with its emphasis on ceremonial splendour, there was a certain austerity in the number and use of lights at Tenebrae. If, however, we accept that at Cluny, where we believe the fifteen-candle hearse originated, thirty lights were formerly used at Matins, as indeed they were at Farfa and Poitiers, it is not difficult to see how, with the recognised centrality of the psalms at the night office and the importance also of the gradual psalms, one light may have come to symbolise and be assigned to each psalm. With the convenient coincidence of fifteen gradual and fifteen Tenebrae psalms, it is likely that the thirty lights were divided into two equal groups and placed on two separate candelabra. These would almost certainly be identical since liturgy generally favours a symmetrical arrangement.

A number of reasons may be advanced to explain why the arrangement

¹ This may partly explain why in subsequent centuries the Tenebrae-hearse was often located on the Epistle side of the altar.
we have suggested is not attested either in other rites or in subsequent centuries. (a) Not all monasteries employed this method of counting the gradual psalms; and perhaps some that did found it distracting. (b) The extinguishing of the two groups of candles in close succession would tend to attribute the same importance to the gradual psalms as that which the office psalms held. Within the liturgical context in question both groups served different functions, and were clearly of unequal status. (c) The repetition of the ritual act of extinguishing fifteen lights would inevitably detract from the significance of that act during Tenebrae. (d) There is no evidence to show that the gradual psalms were said prior to the start of Matins in the cathedral tradition or in a number of other religious rituals in which Tenebrae was observed as an anticipated office. In this situation the use of two hearse would have fallen into desuetude once the gradual psalms ceased to be said, the candelabrum used at Tenebrae alone surviving.

(v) The Significance of Fifteen Candles

In more recent times the fifteen candles have been understood to represent the wisdom of the centuries which was lost progressively from the time of Moses onwards.¹ In the Middle Ages they symbolised the twelve apostles and the three Mary's.² Durandus adds that the extinguishing of the lights symbolises the flight of the apostles and the fear of the Mary's.³ The same writer gives an alternative explanation according to which fourteen of the candles signify the fourteen articles of faith which were extinguished by the flight of the apostles, and the fifteenth stands for the death of Christ. The Ordinal of St Mary's, York, whilst identifying twelve of the candles with the apostles, equates the remaining three with the Law, the Prophets, and Christ.⁴

It is somewhat strange why Sicardus, on whom Durandus drew for much of his information, and who records the use of seventy-two, twenty-four, and twelve lights at Tenebrae, does not mention the use of fifteen, when, at the time that he was writing (c.1200), this number was well established. Beleth writing some years before knew of it. Discounting the unlikely possibility that Sicardus omitted any reference to it

¹ Heuser p.227.
² Beleth, PL 202,106A. It could be argued that this forced symbolism is further evidence of the late and almost fortuitous origin of the fifteen-candle hearse.
³ Rationale VI.72 p.331.
⁴ HBS 75 p.271.
because of personal disapproval, one can only guess either that he was interested in Tenebrae primarily according to the cathedral tradition (fifteen at this time being mainly a monastic number), or that he omitted the information through carelessness, or that the omission is an error on the part of a copyist.

(vi) The Position of the Hearse

(a) To the right of the altar.  

According to the Roman rite the hearse was supposed to stand to the south of the altar on the Epistle side. This is the position prescribed by the Caeremoniale Episcoporum of 1600; and the various editions of Fortescue and O'Connell contain this regulation. It is claimed that the hearse stood to the south of the altar in imitation of the menorah in the Temple at Jerusalem. However, the analogy was not strictly accurate in that the menorah stood in the south-west corner of the hekal rather than to the south of the altar. Surprisingly, there is no firm evidence before the end of the sixteenth century for the placing of the hearse in this position; but it is difficult to believe that on the publication of the Breviarium Romanum in 1568 the south-end position was a recent innovation. It may have been placed there for centuries in some churches. However, with the doubtful exception of St Vedast's Abbey at Arras, and the ambiguous testimony from St Mary's, York, all the surviving evidence refers to the position of the hearse behind, on top of, or in front of the altar; and all three positions occur in France up to the eve of the Revolution.

The Ordinal of St Vedast's Abbey gives the following directions:

Post completorium velum tollitur quod est inter duo altaria et hercia ponitur cum duodecim candelas.

It is not clear whether this veil served the same purpose as that at St Mary's, York (p. 62); or whether it separated the altars from the rest of the building, as was the custom in medieval churches in Lent.

1 From the point of view of the congregation.
2 P.264. However, the line-drawing on the opposite page shows the hearse on top of the altar apparently in a central position. It is just possible that because of the perspective the hearse only appears to be perfectly central, but is actually slightly to the right of centre.
4 Heuser p.229. He does not enlarge upon the analogy.
5 HBS 86 p.156.
6 'After Compline the veil which is (hung) between the two altars is raised and a hearse with twelve candles is put in position.'
Since both altars were exposed to view for the performance of the office, it seems reasonable to suppose from the limited information available to us that the rubric prescribes that the hearse should stand either close to one altar or between the two altars.

The Ordinal of St Mary's, York states that the hearse was placed *coram altari*. It is true that the English translation 'in the presence of' could be understood to mean *in the vicinity of*, and, therefore, it would be possible to argue in this instance in favour of a position to the right of the altar. On the other hand this interpretation is perhaps forced, and a more likely rendering of *coram* would be 'in front of' which conveys the usual meaning of the word 'face to face'.

(b) To the rear of the altar. The wooden stand (*lignum*) for the twenty-five candles at Fruttuaria and Gembloux was placed behind the altar (p.46). Credence is given to our theory that the hearse at these two monasteries was a wooden bar with one row of candles when it is realised that from about the year 1000 it became the general rule for the altar to be placed against the east wall of the church so that the priest with his back to the congregation could celebrate Mass facing the East. Any device placed on the gradine or retable would of necessity be elongated in design because of the restricted space. The placing of the candles behind the altar is first firmly attested by John of Avranches, and the placing of them in this position survived in parts of France until the Revolution, as is evidenced by the 1778 Breviary of Paris which allows the choice of placing the hearse in front or to the rear of the altar. The presence of candles on a gradine behind the altar or on the altar itself virtually precludes the use or even the presence of the six altar-candles. Even when the hearse stood before the altar, the six altar-candles, even if set out, were not lit. For in two Parisian breviaries of the eighteenth century and in the Romanised manual for the Royal Chapel in Paris, the altar-candles are not mentioned.

(c) Upon the altar. Evidence for the placing of the hearse upon the altar is slender and vague. The above-mentioned illustration on page 265 in the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* would suggest that, in spite of the directive to place the hearse on the Epistle side (p.264), the practice of placing it upon the altar was not unknown. The statement

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1 HBS 75 p.271.  
2 Klauser pp.100-1.  
3 *Lib. de Off. Eccl.* 52 (PL 147.48C).  
4 *Pars Verna* p.280.  
5 Of 1763 and 1778.  
6 *OSS* p.211.
also by Grancolas that hearse were still placed super altaria in some churches shows that the practice survived into the first half of the eighteenth century.  

(d) In front of the altar. The earliest recorded instance of the placing of the Tenebrae-candles in front of the altar occurs in the eleventh-century Acta of the Cathedral Church of Rouen. The frontal position also featured in the monasteries at Dijon and Farfa in the eleventh century, in Soissons Cathedral and probably at St Mary's, York in the twelfth century, and in the Gilbertine rite. Sieur de Moleçon, writing at the beginning of the eighteenth century, specifically mentions the hearse at Rouen Cathedral as though its position was unusual. On the other hand he may simply be stating a fact about the ritual of the cathedral; for Grancolas, writing several years later, observes that the placing of the triangular candelabrum in front of the altar was contemporary practice. Earlier De Grassis had referred to this central position; but Bisso, writing a hundred years later, stated that the hearse should not stand in front of the altar. The choice of positions allowed at Paris (p.59) suggests that local usage in this respect probably survived in other French dioceses which retained their traditional Gallican ritual.

(vii) The Construction of the Hearse

No Tenebrae hearse in England is known to have survived from the Middle Ages. Most of those used in parish churches would have been constructed of timber to a simple design, as in more recent times. Even without the iconoclasm of the Reformation, the vast majority of these wooden candelabra would almost certainly have not survived. Those made for the cathedrals and more opulent monastic churches would almost certainly have been of a more intricate and elaborate design, and very likely fashioned of metal. Those in England in more recent times were usually made of wood; and whilst the detail and ornamentation varied,

1 Commentarius p. 296.  
2 PL 147.1680.  
3 Martene, DAMR 5.12.2 p.122.  
4 Albers I p.46.  
5 Martene, DABR 4.23 p.137.  
6 See p.62.  
7 The Ordinal states that it should stand on the altar steps (HBS 59 Voyages p.298.  
8 & Ceremonis II fol.123/p.30).  
9 De Ceremonis II fol.123/p.30.  
10 Hierurgia I p.148.  
11 The writer is indebted to Mr D.Searle of Trowbridge for the description of the wooden hearse with its metal candle-holders and drip-pans which was made by his father for use in his parish church in the early years of the present century.  
12 For the destruction of church furniture, see Peacock pp. 106,163,164.  

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the basic shape remained a triangular frame of timber supported on a tall staff and having fifteen spikes or sockets for the candles, as was officially proscribed. A triangular hearse is also attested at Auxerre and in a Capuchin ceremonial. Commenting on the shape Coltì observed that the hearse symbolised the Trinity and the single foot upon which it rested expressed the unity of God. The reference by Dendy to the hearse at Stanford-in-the-Vale, which was suspended by means of a rope, is surely inapposite. The entry in the churchwardens' accounts relates to a rope for the hearse. It is much more likely that it is the funeral hearse (the wooden or iron frame holding the tapers, which was placed on a coffin in church) that is here intended and, like the font covers in some churches, could be raised by means of a rope attached to a pulley in the roof. Moreover, the movement and sway of a Tenebrae-hearse, suspended by a rope, not only might prove an unwanted distraction for worshippers at this solemn service, but might make difficult the extinguishing of the candles, an action which required careful synchronisation.

The hearse at the Birmingham Oratory is heavily baroque and ornately carved with the emblems of the Oratory. Perhaps the most elegantly-designed hearse in England is that at Downside Abbey. It is fashioned of wrought iron and stands about nine feet on a tripod base. It has a profusion of leafy and grape-like ornamentation around the central shaft to which the seven pairs of corresponding candle-holders are linked by curved strips of iron reminiscent in a way of the threads in a spider's web. From the outstretched arms there are suspended by chains, on the left, the nails of the Crucifixion and, on the right, a crown of thorns in iron. 'Its fine and yet sombre design is most appropriate to the occasions on which it is used. It is large but well proportioned to the height of the Abbey Church.' At Seville a brass candlestick, 15' to 20' high, stood between the altar and the choir. Triangular in shape it had twelve candle-sockets, six on either arm of the candelabrum, next to each of which was a figurine of an apostle. The Virgin Mary was represented at its apex, adjoining the holder for the thirteenth candle.

2 1736 Breviary p.243.
3 1775 Ceremonial p.93.
4 Dictionarium II p.97.
7 Doblado p.284.

From page 60

- It stood in this position at Trier (Ordinary p.486), at Auxerre (1736 Breviary p.243), and at Alès (1758 Breviary p.272).
ornately-executed candelabra is also attested by Bauldry in the eighteenth century.¹

In some monasteries in the Middle Ages the hearse acquired embellishments. It may have been in imitation of the drapery which surrounded the chapelle ardente or candle-bearing funeral hearse that tapestries or embroidered cloths covered the lower part of the candelabrum at St Mary's, York² and at Worcester;³ or it may have been done to match the altar-frontal, especially if the hearse stood in front of the altar. Whatever the reason for its presence elsewhere, at St Mary's, York this cloth was used as a screen to hide from view the acolyte or sacristan whose duty it was to extinguish the candles.

At Tongres seven candles were affixed to the top of a spear.⁴ This may have been the same device that held the triple candle; for this shaft with its three lights was at times known as a hearse. (See p.63.)

(viii) The name hearse⁵

Further support for our theory that the Tenebrae-candles were at one time arranged on wooden frames similar to those depicted in Figures 1, 2, and 3 on page 47 comes from the traditional name for the candelabrum, the hearse, a word derived, like the French herse, from the late Latin hercia ⁶ which itself is a corruption of the classical Latin (h)irpex, (h)irpicis meaning 'large rake' or 'harrow'. In addition to the occurrences mentioned below (note 6), the word is also found in the Ordinal of St Vedast's Abbey c.1300;⁷ and it is to be supposed that where the device is not referred to by name, it was generally known by this term.⁸ It is generally held⁹ that the Tenebrae-hearse received its name because of the similarity of the device, in both shape and appearance, to the instrument of tillage which bears the same name; and we noted above on page 28 that the beams (harplices), referred to by Grancolas, received

1 Manuale p.167. 2 HBS 75 p.271. 3 Antiphonary p.62. 4 Ordinary pp.150-1. 5 Officially it was known as the candelabrum triangulare (Sacrarum Caeremoniarum fol.155; Bisso I p. 148; Grancolas p.296). 6 The first recorded use of the word in England occurs in the statutes of the Second Synod of Exeter in 1287 (Powicke and Cheney Vol.II Pt 2 p.1008), unless the reference in the thirteenth-century Customary of St Augustine's Monastery, Canterbury (HBS 28 p.274) is older. 7 HBS 86 p.156. 8 However, in the Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral (Bradshaw and Wordsworth II p.131) it is called cratis tenebrarum, 'a harrow for Tenebrae'. 9 Fortescue and O'Connell (11th edition) p.281.
their names from the protruding spikes which caused the spars of wood to resemble harrows. The three-sided candolabrum, familiar from the Roman rite, was also referred to as a hearse, since harrows of triangular shape were also used in former times. In Italy those hearse were known by the clergy and sacristans as saette, 'bolts', from the representation of lightning by artists.

In English the word hearse formerly had three other applications, all within the context of the provision of light in church. (i) It referred to the wooden or iron frame placed over a corpse or coffin to hold the funeral candles. Within the same context the word is now applied to the vehicle which bears the deceased person. (ii) In an inventory of Christ Church, Canterbury dated 1563, mention is made of a hearse of three lights for the carrying of the new fire on Holy Saturday. Here it signifies the triple candle. (iii) The English antiquarian Edward Peacock describes a triangular frame of wood, called a hearse, which was suspended from the roof by a cord or chain. Across the frame ran three bars; and at the points where the bars crossed there were sockets for holding candles. Its purpose, apart from providing light, is unknown. It is unlikely to have been a Tenebrae-hearse, since in such a device the bars intersect each other only at three points.

1 That is, a harrow comprising a single wooden board with protruding spikes.
2 In heraldry harrows are represented as triangular objects, having three transverse bars into which tines are fixed.
3 Armellini p.354. Saetta also signifies 'arrow'.
4 OED under hearse.
5 See Part III Chapter 3.
Chapter Seven

THE EXTINGUISHING OF LIGHTS

(i) The order in which the lights were put out

(a) Before AD 1000. Seven of our ten sources for Tenebrae in the earlier period stipulate that, regardless of the number used, a third of the lights of the church should be extinguished during the course of each nocturn of Matins—hence, as we have seen, the numbers that have come down to us are all divisible by three (p.34). Grisar cites Durandus' statement that in some churches the lights were put out in three stages and understands 'three stages' to signify three groups of lights. He believes that this method of extinguishing the lamps preceded that of quenching them gradually one by one. Durandus gives no instance of a church where the former method obtained; and three early sources, including the earliest, Ordo 26, record that they were extinguished 'paulatim'; whilst Poitiers states that it was done 'singulatim'. Amalarius also attests the decrease of light by degrees. We have noted elsewhere that Poitiers records that the lights begin to be extinguished at the western end of the church so that, with the lights arranged in three rows running in an east-to-west direction, the last remaining lamps will be still burning in the choir, while the last lessons of Matins are being read. We believe that the lights attested in other ordines, and especially in Ordo 29, were arranged in a similar way, so as to provide illumination for the lector at the end of Matins.

Poitiers also provides us with the valuable information that at Matins on Good Friday, because of the cessation of bells which would have been used to signal the start of the night office, the sacristan stood in the doorway of the church holding a lighted candle in his hand, which he extinguished to mark the start of Matins. We do not know for certain whether the compiler of this pontifical envisaged at which door the sacristan would stand. It would almost certainly be the south or

1 Das Missale pp.100 ff. 2 Rationale VI.72 p.331.
3 OR 26.13; OR 31.13; PRG II pp.56-7 8 213.
4 Pontifical p.137. 5 Lib.Off. 4.22.1.
6 Pages 26-27.
7 'Ilico antiphona primae nocturnae incipiatur a cantore, stante custode in ostio ecclesiae et illuminatam candelam tenente, quam primam extinguere debet.' (Page 193.)
8 The north door was opened for funerals, and to allow the departure of exorcised devils during Baptism.
west door; for the pontifical states that 'the lamps...begin to be put out on the western side of the church' (p.137). If the practice observed at Poitiers corresponded to that described by Alcuin — see below — the sacristan would have stood at the south door. The above-mentioned rubric would appear to allow the possibility of the sacristan moving in either an easterly or a northerly direction along a row of lamps, were it not for the qualification of a subsequent rubric:

lucerna cuiusque ordinis...extinguatur.¹

This makes it quite clear that the three lights at the west end of the church were put out first; but we cannot be sure of the order in which the three lights (1, 2, and 3) were extinguished (Figure 12). The evidence of Alcuin, however, leaves us in no doubt about this order:

In initio primi psalmi, est custos paratus cum canna in loco dexterae partis ecclesiae, et mox ut primam antiphonam audierit, extinguit primam lucernam. In fine vero sequentis psalmi ex parte sinistra, tutat aliam, in medio tertiam. Hoc ordine de aliis prosequitur.²

Although we are not told where the sacristan initially took up his position, it is safe to assume that this was near the south door.³ That the practice of extinguishing first the lamp nearest the door of the building, also obtained in other churches is clear from the evidence of Ordines 26, 27, 28, and PRG, that the lights began to be extinguished 'at the entrance to the church'.⁴ Martène's statement⁵ that 'the monks of Monte Cassino used to begin to extinguish the lights at the entrance to the church' shows that the practice was also observed at that monastery in the tenth century.

Figures 12-14 represent the amount of illumination in three different churches at the conclusion of each nocturn of Matins. According to the scheme attested by Alcuin the central light at the eastern end of the lamps (shaded in Figure 13), would have been extinguished last. The sacristan would then have moved to the sanctuary, causing a minimum

¹ 'Let a lamp from each row be extinguished.' (Ibidem p.137).
² 'At the start of the first psalm, the sacristan is ready with a reed on the right-hand side of the church; and when he hears the first antiphon, he extinguishes the first light. At the end of the following psalm, a lamp is put out on the left, and then one in the middle is extinguished. This order is repeated for the rest.' (Lib.de Div.Off. PL 101.1203C.)
³ Liturgical commentators traditionally referred to the sides of the church, sanctuary, altar and so forth, from the point of view of a priest facing the congregation.
⁴ Either the west or the south door. OR 26.13; OR 27.13; OR 28.30; PRG II
⁵ DAMR 3.12.3 p.123.

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amount of distraction, in order to attend to the seven lamps. Visually
the display of thirty lamps at Poitiers (Figure 12) and the twenty-four
of Alcuin (Figure 13) would not have been as satisfactory at the end of
the first and second nocturns as the twenty-seven lights of Ordo 32,
assuming that the lights of that ordo were arranged in a similar way
(Figure 14). On the other hand the intervals between the nocturns
would not have been of such lengthy duration as to allow protracted
periods of asymmetrical presentation.

![Fig.12](image)

**Fig.12**

A : section of lights extinguished after first nocturn.
B : section of lights extinguished after second nocturn.
C : section of lights extinguished after third nocturn.

The extinguishing last of those lamps nearest to the altar meant that
there was a sufficient light for the lectors, who would be standing in
the vicinity of those lamps, even at the conclusion of Matins.¹

Alcuin records that the seven sanctuary lamps were extinguished at
Lauds in the same order as the church lights at Matins.² Presumably
the outer lamp on the Gospel side of the altar was the first to be put
out, then the furthest on the Epistle side. Since it clearly states,
however, that the middle lamp was removed for reservation, it would
seem that the third light to be extinguished was another lamp on the
Gospel side, almost certainly that next to the lamp which had first
been extinguished. Interestingly, this order for extinguishing the
altar lights survived in the Roman rite. (See page 67.)

(b) After AD 1000.

(i) The hearse-lights. The only known description of the order in

1 See Section (ii) : The extinction-points, pp. 68 ff.
which the hearse-lights were extinguished relates to the Roman rite. The first candle to be extinguished on the triangular candolabrum was the lowest on the Gospel side; then the lowest on the Epistle side, and so forth alternately in an upward direction. After the changes in 1955 the candle at the apex was not removed but continued to burn.  

(ii) The altar lights. A distinctive feature of Tenebrae according to the Roman rite was the extinguishing of the six altar-candles during the *Benedictus*. The relationship between their use and the extinguishing of the seven sanctuary lamps at Lauds in the period before AD 1000 is not clear. It is likely that the use of the latter fell into desuetude in many churches; though that they continued to feature at Tenebrae after AD 1000 is attested at Monte Cassino in the twelfth century and at Chartres in the thirteenth century. On the other hand in some places the number of lights known to have been used may have included the seven lamps; for the thirteen candles at Tongres included the six altar lights which were used without distinction from the rest. Neither the seven lamps nor the hearse-candles were used at Rome in the twelfth century, and Righetti is probably correct in concluding that the custom at Rome of extinguishing the altar-candles during the *Benedictus* is 'somewhat recent'.

According to the Roman rite prior to 1955 the six altar-candles were put out during the last six verses of the *Benedictus*, beginning with the outer candle on the Gospel side. Then the furthest on the Epistle side was extinguished, and so on alternately. In practice, however, in most places it was usual to extinguish them after every second verse of the Song. The routine was carried out on all three days. As a result of the reforms of 1955 this could only be performed at Lauds of Maundy Thursday. On Good Friday there were now no candles on the altar during Matins/Lauds, and on Holy Saturday only four.

3 Ordinary p.108.
4 Ordinary p.150.
5 ORL p.45. See also pp.44-45.
6 *Manuale II* p.158.
7 *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* II xxii 11.
8 In the Camaldolese rite the first candle to be extinguished was the furthest on the Epistle side. (*Ceremonial p.57.*)
9 During the Good Friday liturgy two had accompanied the venerated cross; and two had been brought in with the Blessed Sacrament.
(ii) The extinction-points

(a) Poitiers and Ordo 29. Of all our sources for the period up to AD 1000 only Poitiers and Ordo 29 contain firm evidence for the points during Matins at which the lights were extinguished. Poitiers states:

Et singulatim a custode ecclesiae per singulas antiphonas, lectiones et responsoria sod et versus trium nocturnarum, qui ante lectiones proferuntur, cum harundine latenter quasi raptando extinguntur. Qui custos summopere observare debet quatinua nox ut praecentoris vox elata in antiphona, responsorio, seu versus nec non et lectoris in lectione fuerit, continuo aut in prima aut in secunda syllaba. 2

The provision of light for the lector was important. Hence at the beginning of the first lesson of the third nocturn, six lights were still burning. It is important to bear in mind that these were the functional lights of the church. In later Roman practice the gradual loss of light affected the liturgical lights primarily, whilst the church lights provided background illumination.

There might be some uncertainty about the precise moment when the lamps were extinguished, particularly those put out at the antiphons, were Poitiers the only document from this period which specified the extinction-points. For it is not completely clear whether a light is put out at the first antiphon before the psalm or at its repetition after the psalm; though it must be admitted that the sense of the passage and the absence of reference to the repetition of the antiphon make the latter place most unlikely. However, if we examine the slightly earlier Ordo 29, which we believe envisaged a similar arrangement of lights and contains similar ceremonial details, we see clearly that the first lamp was extinguished before the first psalm. But not only are we informed of the point at which the first light is extinguished; Ordo 29 is by far the most important and valuable document for our research, since we learn from it the precise moment at which all thirteen lights were extinguished during any nocturn (8 12).

1 Throughout this section the reader is referred to Tables 4 and 5 on pages 80 and 81, which summarise the evidence for the extinguishing of lights in different churches at Matins and at Lauds.

2 'They are put out stealthily by the sacristan with a reed one by one during the lessons, the antiphone, and the responsories, and also the versicles of the three nocturns before the lessons. The sacristan should be particularly alert for the moment the precentor's voice is raised for the antiphon, the responsory, and the versicle, and for when the reader begins a lesson. (The lamps are extinguished) straightaway at the first or second syllable.' (s 196 p.137.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Light No.</th>
<th>Point in Nocturn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>start of the first antiphon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>end of the first psalm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>start of the second antiphon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>end of the second psalm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>start of the third antiphon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>end of the third psalm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>'while they pray'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>after the first reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>start of the first responsory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>during the second reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>at the second responsory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>start of the third reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>start of the third responsory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prayer being said when the seventh lamp was extinguished must be the *Pater noster*. No other prayers are said during this part of a nocturn. The *ordo* then states that after the thirteenth light has been put out, a third of the lamps of the church have been extinguished. The second nocturn follows the form of the first at the end of which, though the *ordo* does not actually state it, two thirds of the lights have now been extinguished. Ordo 29 then informs us somewhat to our surprise that during the third nocturn only six lamps are extinguished; and the extinction-points are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Light No.</th>
<th>Point in Nocturn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>at the first antiphon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>at the second antiphon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>at the third antiphon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>at the first reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>at the second reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>at the third reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The *ordo* concludes that all the lights have now been put out except the seven lamps in front of the altar.

The use of only six lights during the third nocturn is very puzzling especially as thirteen were used in each of the other two nocturns; and, since two thirds of the church lights had been extinguished by the end of the second nocturn, there should have been a third set of thirteen lights mentioned in the final nocturn, making a total of thirty-nine lights in all. Instead only thirty-two seem to have been used.¹

¹ 13 + 13 + 6 at the three nocturns respectively.
If these figures are correct, we must conclude that to the writer the concept of a third did not signify even in a mathematical sense a strict numerical division into three equal parts; rather it would seem to imply any one of three divisions of a group, none of which necessarily contained two identical numbers. However, again somewhat surprisingly, we were informed in Section 11 of the *ordo*:

> et tunc ecclesia omni lumine sit decorata, id est XXVIII luminaribus.

If this figure is correct, it follows that nine lights were extinguished during the second nocturn; for we already know from the *ordo* that thirteen and six lights were extinguished at the first and third nocturns respectively. Christian liturgy and ceremonial has always been characterised by balance and symmetry, as the structure of Matins clearly demonstrates. The combination of 13—9—6 seems most unlikely. Clearly something is wrong.

Since we know that the structure, though not the content, of each nocturn was similar, let us re-examine the nocturns of Ordo 29. The detailed analysis of the first nocturn and the clarity of the information it contains leave us with little doubt that the information is genuine and authentic. Nor is there any justification for doubting that the structure of the second nocturn was identical with that of the first. Therefore, in view of the statement of the *ordo* that the second nocturn was like the first, it follows that thirteen lights were extinguished during the second nocturn. Although we are told that there were only six lamps extinguished during the third nocturn, it is difficult to believe that this information is correct and that there were not thirteen lights as in the other two nocturns. We therefore believe that at the start of the service thirty-nine and not twenty-eight lamps were lit, even though to question the authenticity of the number twenty-eight on the grounds that it is an embarrassment and a potential stumbling block to the argument may be viewed as an act of desperation. However, in this instance we believe that there are very good reasons why this figure should not be accepted as genuine. (i) The numbers specified in the other documents viz. twenty-four (*PHG*), twenty-seven (Ordo 32), and thirty (Poitiers) are all divisible by three; twenty-eight is not. (ii) If the figure of twenty-eight is correct and six lights were extinguished during the third nocturn, we have to assume that nine lamps were put out during the second nocturn. However, not only does the compiler of Ordo 29 inform us that the lights in the second nocturn
were extinguished in the same manner as those in the first nocturn; but he omits any mention of the number of lamps used during the second nocturn. He assumes that we will take it for granted that the number of lamps extinguished in both nocturns was the same. (iii) It is difficult to believe that the compiler regarded the concept of a third so imprecisely and in a way different to our understanding of the notion. If thirteen lights were extinguished during the first nocturn - the evidence leaves us in no doubt that this was so -- and they comprised one third of the total number, we can say with some confidence that a total of thirty-nine lights were extinguished at Matins according to Ordo 29; and that the figures which the ordo gives for the total viz. twenty-eight, and for the third nocturn viz. six, are both incorrect.

From the table below we can see how the arrangement for the extinguishing of lights during the third nocturn compares with that for the first and second nocturns according to the information given in Ordo 29.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nocturns 1 and 2</th>
<th>Nocturn 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>start of first antiphon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>start of second antiphon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>start of third antiphon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>at the first reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>start of second reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>start of third reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lights 1, 2 and 3 of Nocturn 3 correspond to Lights 1, 3, and 5 of Nocturns 1 and 2 in that they are extinguished at the first singing of the antiphons. Lights 4 and 5 come between the seventh and eighth, and ninth and tenth lights respectively of Nocturns 1 and 2; and Light 6 of the third nocturn corresponds exactly with Light 12 of the first two nocturns. The extinction-points in Nocturn 3 appear to be part of a deliberate attempt on the part of the compiler of the ordo or a copyist to harmonise them with the extinction-points in the first and second nocturns in order to rectify a mistake which he wrongly believed to
exist. It is our belief that where the order for the extinguishing of lights in the third nocturn now stands, the text originally stated that the last nocturn was similar to the first and the second; that a copyist, knowing that it stated that thirty-nine lights were lit for Matins (§ 11), mistakenly assumed that this figure referred to the whole of the combined office of Matins/Lauds, and thought that the seven lamps extinguished at Lauds were to be included in the thirty-nine; ¹ and that, realising that the total number of lights extinguished at Tenebrae was forty-six (13+13+13+7), deliberately reduced the number of lights in the third nocturn to six in order to make what he believed to be the total number of lights for the entire service add up to thirty-nine. A possible objection to our theory has been dealt with above. For we have already shown that the figure of twenty-eight, which this ordo records for the number of lights lit at Matins (§ 11), is incorrect; and that thirty-nine lamps were lit. It must be admitted that the alteration of thirty-nine into twenty-eight cannot readily be explained. However, we may well have here an instance of a copyist's double haplographic error in which XXVIII has been read for XXXVIII.

(b) The evidence of other documents. The three remaining documentary sources which specify the number of lights lit for the night office during this period are the Liber Officialis of Amalarius, Ordo 32, and PRG. We have already noted that Ordo 29 is the only document from this period which explicitly states that the first lamp was extinguished at the antiphon before the first psalm. However, there is nothing in any of the other sources to suggest that this was not the general practice. Indeed Ordo 26, our earliest source, and Ordo 27, both from the eighth century, state that the lights began to be extinguished ab initio cantus nocturnae, ² 'from the beginning of the night song', which almost certainly indicates 'at the first antiphon'. The phrase is also found two centuries later in PRG. ³ There is no reason to believe that in the service of Tenebrae described by Amalarius and set out in Ordo 32, practice differed in this respect.

Having established that the antiphon before the first psalm was the starting point for extinguishing the lights in this period, we are now able to reconstruct with some confidence, using the three above-mentioned sources, the points in the service at which the rest of the lights were put out. (i) According to Amalarius' twenty-four lights are extinguished at the antiphons and responsories of Matins, eight during

1 The extinguishing of the seven lamps at Matins is unrecorded elsewhere. 2 §13 in both ordines. 3 II p.56 §213. 4 Lib.Off. 4.22.1.
each nocturn. If the first light was extinguished at the antiphon which introduced the first psalm, it seems reasonable to place the extinguishing of the second and third lamps at the antiphons which preceded the second and third psalms respectively. The remaining five lights clearly belong to the points in the nocturn where the five responsories are said. The extinguishing of the two lamps at the responsories after the third reading may seem strange; but it need not be questioned. For it is found in PRG, at Norwich, and possibly at Tongres. Admittedly, the evidence of these later instances should not be adduced in corroboration of the practice familiar to Amalarius; but it is important to remember that during the reading of the ninth lesson two lights still burning, as opposed to one, would provide additional illumination for the reader at the end of Matins.

(ii) According to PRG the twenty-four lights should be extinguished 'after each reading and responsory', and begin to be put out 'ab initio cantus nocturnae'.\(^1\) Taken literally, the instructions for extinguishing the lamps present us with a very unusual scheme; for one light is put out at the very start of each nocturn, and seven in the latter part of the nocturn after the psalms have been sung. PRG would appear to be alone amongst all the documents in not featuring the loss of a light at the antiphons (either before or after) of all the psalms; and it is strange that a lamp should be put out before the first psalm but not before the second or third. It is true that Ordo 29 attests the extinguishing of seven lights at the readings and responsories in the latter part of the nocturn; but this was done of necessity since thirteen lamps were required to be extinguished during each nocturn, and only sixteen points were available for the accommodation of each light.\(^2\) Moreover, since PRG also states that the lights should be put out gradually\(^3\) - a statement at variance with the literal interpretation of the rubrics, we suspect either that a phrase relating to the antiphons has been accidentally omitted from the text, or that the compiler of the pontifical assumed that the reader would understand and take for granted a phrase such as 'at each antiphon'. Nevertheless the possibility must remain that the prima facie interpretation of the text of PRG is correct; and in Table 4 we have given a scheme for the loss of light according to the literal evidence of the pontifical, as well as an arrangement suggested by our interpretation of the text in conjunction

1 II p.56 § 213.
2 The psalms alone of the nineteen constituent elements of Matins were never used as extinction-points. See Tables 4 and 5.
3 Lumen....incipiat paulatim tutari (ibidem).
with other documentary evidence from this period.

(iii) Ordo 32 gives no indication of the extinction-points at which nine lamps were put out during each nocturn. It is tempting to reconstruct the scheme based on the detailed description in Ordo 29, which we looked at above, especially as both ordines are of Gallican provenance and are more or less contemporaneous. However, the details concerning the Triduum in Ordo 32 generally show little correspondence with those in Ordo 29. Even at Tenebrae, where the structure of the office and the ceremonial were similar, affinity in respect of lights should not be taken for granted. On the other hand the similarities between Ordo 32 and PRG show that the latter document, compiled some fifty or so years later, almost certainly derives from the same liturgical milieu. The suggested scheme for the loss of light, therefore, is based on the information contained in Ordo 29 and in PRG.

As in Poitiers it is not immediately clear from Alcuin at which of the two antiphons each light is extinguished. In view of the dependence of this document on PRG, we have suggested a scheme similar to the latter.

Two of our nine principal sources for Tenebrae in the period before AD 1000 do not refer to the points at which the seven sanctuary lamps were extinguished during Lauds. They are Amalarius and Ordo 32. Ordo 31 and PRG mention only the first two lamps and the last. However, Ordo 29 and Poitiers concur that six were extinguished at the antiphons preceding and following the first three psalms of Lauds, and that the seventh was put out at the Traditor, the antiphon before the Benedictus. The extinguishing of the sixth lamp at the repeated antiphon of Psalm 66, thus reducing illumination in the church for the chanting of the Canticle and the Laudate Dominum to one light, would have made more urgent the plea of the Deus miseretur for God to show the light of his countenance; and in a way anticipated the total loss of light before the Benedictus.

It is almost certain that this arrangement regarding the extinguishing of the seven lamps at Lauds also obtained in Alcuin in spite of the

1 That is, at the first chanting of the sentence or at its repetition.
2 OR 26; OR 28; OR 29; OR 31; OR 32; Amalarius; Poitiers; PRG; and Alcuin.
3 Although Amalarius does not refer to Lauds, there is no reason to believe that the lamps were not extinguished during the course of the service that was familiar to him.
interest that the document shows in the order in which the lamps were extinguished rather than in the extinction-points. Alcuin's reference to the use of the last of the seven lamps on Maundy Thursday is not entirely clear. For at the conclusion of Lauds on that day we are informed that the central lamp is removed and reserved for the lighting of the Easter candle on Holy Saturday; yet later that same day we learn that the sacristans prepare the seven lamps in front of the altar in readiness for the evening liturgy. The difficulty is by no means insuperable. Either the last lamp was returned extinguished to its customary place, once its flame had been used to kindle another lamp in the place of reservation; or that lamp remained in the same place whither it had been taken, and an eighth or spare sanctuary lamp was subsequently placed with the other six.

(c) Extinction-points after AD 1000. In the period after AD 1000 the fact that the seven sanctuary lamps are rarely known to have been extinguished at Lauds strongly suggests that their use at this office had generally fallen into desuetude. Their demise at Tenebrae seems to have coincided with the emergence of the fifteen-candle hearse, and to have been a consequence of the innovatory practice of extinguishing all the lights, formerly lit for Matins, during Matins and Lauds. The spread of the loss of the light from the same set of candles thus imposed a uniformity on the whole service in respect of the use of illumination. This is borne out at Tongres where the candles which formed two different sets of lights were regarded without discrimination for the purpose of Tenebrae.

A distinctive characteristic of Tenebrae before AD 1000 was the practice of extinguishing a light at the antiphon preceding the psalm. In the later period, however, it became customary to extinguish each light at the repetition of the antiphon. The adoption of the latter practice, which is probably linked with the introduction of the hearse at Tenebrae, is first attested at York in the eleventh century, and became a feature of the Roman rite. The extinguishing of a candle at the antiphon preceding the psalm at Cluny and Farfa, where a hearse of

1 Lib. de Div. Off. 16 : PL 101.1203D.
2 Ordinary p.150. See also p.44 above.
3 Breviary p.376.
4 Caeremoniale Episcoporum II.22 p.26. It is not known when this change took place. In the Dominican rite, which was modelled on the Roman, the candles were extinguished before the psalms in actual practice, even though the Office of Holy Week prescribed 'at the close of each psalm' (p.82).
fifteen lights was used, represents a transitional stage between the practices of both periods. Tables 4 and 5 show that a number of different schemes for extinguishing the candles at Tenebrae are known to have existed.

1. Fifteen candles extinguished before the psalms.

At Cluny and presumably at most of her 314 dependent houses the fifteen candles were put out at the antiphons before the psalms of Matins and Lauds. Further possible support is added to our theory that at Farfa two hearse stands in front of the altar 1 since at this monastery also the candles were extinguished before the psalms. For if the candelabrum on the Gospel side of the altar was used to keep a tally of the fifteen gradual psalms, the extinguishing of the first light on the other candelabrum may have acted as the signal for the start of Matins and for the singing of the antiphon before the first psalm. With the first candle extinguished before the first psalm, the pattern was set; and the remaining lights would also be put out before the psalms. At St Mary's, York the candles may have been extinguished before the psalms, but the phrase from its ordinal's rubric 'ad inceptionem unius-cuiusque antiphone' is ambiguous and could equally refer to the antiphon or to its repetition. 2

2. Fifteen candles extinguished after the psalms.

It is not clear why the practice arose of extinguishing the lights at the antiphons following the psalms. It might be thought that the uttering of only the opening words of the antiphon which preceded the psalm was too short a period of time to allow each candle to be extinguished with decorum; and that, in consequence of this, the candles came to be extinguished after the psalm, as occurred in the Dominican rite. However, in the Roman rite, in which the candles were put out at the conclusion of a psalm, the antiphons were doubled, 3 since each of the three days of the Triduum was a Double Feast. Moreover, as we have observed above, the Dominicans in practice extinguished the candles at the abbreviated antiphon before the psalm. The evidence of local rites such as Besançon, 4 Coutances, 5 and Verdun 6 would suggest that by the eighteenth century Roman practice had become the norm.

1 See above, pp.52-56. 2 HBS 75 p.271.
3 i.e. said (or sung) in full before and after the psalm.
4 1707 Ceremonial p.235. 5 1825 Ceremonial p.311.
5 1832 Ceremonial p.294.
3. Twenty-four lights extinguished at the antiphons and responsories.

The use of twenty-four lights at Tenebrae was not only determined by the symbolism readily suggested by that number, but also by the very structure of the combined office of Matins and Lauds. For the three psalms and the three lessons of each nocturn of Matins, and the four psalms, OT canticle, and Benedictus of Lauds provided twenty-four convenient points at which to extinguish the candles; and though variations are found at Norwich and Trier, these points are specified by the majority of service-books and liturgical commentators.

From a number of our sources, however, it is not clear whether the candles were extinguished at the antiphon preceding or following each psalm. The Ordinals of Barking, Exeter, and of the Gilbertines refer only to the antiphons and responsories, as does Lanfranc; and John of Avranches mentions only that the lights were put out 'secundum psalmos ac lectiones'. However, Rupert of Deutz and Honorius of Autun both state that the lights were extinguished after the psalms; and this is borne out by evidence from York. In instances where the antiphon is not specified, it would seem reasonable to assume that the light was extinguished at its repetition. This not only accords well with the firm evidence for the practice; it balances the loss of light after the reading of a lesson.

It is necessary to record a few observations about several churches:

Salisbury. The rubrics of the various Sarum breviaries state that a candle should be extinguished 'at the beginning of each antiphon'. It is almost certain that the repetition of the antiphon is here intended. Immediately following Psalm 148 is the rubric: 'While this psalm is being sung, let a light be hidden where it cannot be seen.' This relates to the twenty-third candle which was reproduced at the end of the service. The twenty-fourth and last candle continued to burn, and was extinguished at the conclusion of the Benedictus.

Nidaros. The Ordo of Nidaros prescribes twenty-four candles and informs

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1 See above p.35.  
2 HBS 37 p.132.  
3 HBS 65 p.91.  
4 HBS 59 p.30.  
5 Decreta, PL 137.458A.  
6 Lib. de Off. Eccl., PL 147.48C.  
7 De Div. Off., PL 170.148C.  
8 Gemma Animae, PL 172.665D.  
9 Breviary I p.376  
10 Procter & Wordsworth col. dcclxxiii.  
11 Ad Inceptionem uniuscuiusque Antiphonae.  
12 Dum iste Psalmus canitur, lumen ubi videri nequent abscondatur. (Ibidem col. dcclxxxii.)

77
us that as the service is about to start the sacristan is ready on the right-hand side of the church. It continues:

At the first antiphon he puts out the first candle; then (the others) at the other antiphon or at the end of the psalm itself. At Lauds they are extinguished in a similar way, one on one side, one on the other, until the start of the Benedictus.¹

A superficial reading of the above rubric leaves us with the impression that a choice exists of extinguishing the candles before or after each psalm; and that the first antiphon and the other antiphons mentioned are those which preceded the psalms, in view of the alternative point seemingly offered: at the end of the psalm. A more careful reading of the rubric, however, reveals that another interpretation exists regarding the choice of points. For if, as the present writer believes, the antiphons mentioned in the rubric are those which follow the psalms, the choice lies in extinguishing the candle either at the conclusion of the psalm itself or during the antiphon which follows the psalm. Either point accords with the above-mentioned testimony of Rupert of Deutz and Honorius of Autun.

Norwich. From the Benedictine Customary of Norwich² we learn that six candles were extinguished during each nocturn in the following way:

- three at the antiphons (almost certainly after the psalms)
- one at the versicle
- one at the third responsory
- one at the repetition of the third responsory

At the start of Lauds, of the seven candles that were still alight

- five were put out at the antiphons of each psalm
- one was put out at the Deus misereatur (Psalm 66)
- one was put out at the Laudate Dominum (Psalm 150)

On the first reading it might appear that the antiphons at which the candles were extinguished were those sung after the five psalms of Lauds (including the OT canticle). However the extinguishing of the sixth candle 'at the Deus misereatur' rules out this interpretation, and indicates that the first five lights were put out before the start of Psalm 62. In other words one candle was extinguished at each

¹ ONE p.223. The rubrics have much in common with the directions for conducting Tenebrae as prescribed by Alcuin. ONE adds the words italicised by the present writer.
² HBS 82 p.79.
antiphon and at its repetition as far as Psalm 62. Since the extinguishing of the sixth candle would not take place during the singing of Psalm 66, it must be placed at the antiphon following that psalm. The arrangement so far corresponds exactly with that found in Poitiers.

The information that 'one is put out at Psalm 150' (i.e. the seventh and last candle is put out at the repetition of the antiphon) is followed by a further statement that, when the sacristan has taken a light in a lantern outside the choir, 'there will now be no light in the choir'. The description then ceases to be lucid when we are subsequently informed that the last of the twenty-five candles is put out at the Traditor, the antiphon of the Benedictus; for we were previously told that the last light was extinguished at Psalm 150. Since the last candle could only be extinguished at one point, perhaps the most satisfactory explanation is to assume that this seventh light at Lauds was extinguished at the very end of the repeated antiphon of Psalm 150, and that a later hand added the statement that it was put out at the Traditor in view of the fact that the Traditor immediately followed the quenching of the flame. Alternatively the mention of the two points may be viewed as evidence of a choice, even though such a choice is not specified.

**Trier.** The imprecise rubrics of the cathedral's thirteenth-century ordinal allows two possible interpretations. Of the twenty-four candles to be extinguished, the first is put out at the first antiphon, the second after the first psalm, and the rest after the subsequent psalms of Matins and Lauds. All are extinguished by the Traditor preceding the Benedictus. These directions, however, taken literally account for only sixteen candles. One solution is to assume that two lights were extinguished after each psalm of Lauds; but this would still leave two candles to be accounted for. Alternatively we must assume that a light was also extinguished at each of the antiphons which preceded the psalms, as we have suggested in Tables 4 and 5.

**Tongres.** The scheme at Tongres was unusual in two respects. The lights were extinguished two at a time, and apart from two at the end of Matins they were extinguished during the course of Lauds. (Table 5.)

1 The Traditor (or Traditor autem) was the antiphon of the Benedictus on Maundy Thursday only. However, as the structure of Lauds was the same for each day, the name Traditor has been used to indicate this antiphon on the other two days of the Triduum.

2 Table 2: Points 16 and 17. 3 13th century Ordinal p.486.

4 See Tongres below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of lights per nocturn</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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Table 4. Extinction-points at each nocturn of Matins.

+ York is identical.
* 3rd nocturn only.
19. a Choice with Point 19.
20. x Disputed.
(For references, see page 84)

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+ York is identical.  X = Benedictus sung in darkness.

Table 5. Extinction-points at Lauds.
The latter feature was reminiscent of Carmelite practice. Moreover, the thirteen candles comprised the six altar lights and the seven atop a spear.¹

**Seville.** At Seville, where a thirteen-light hearse was used, during Lauds the candles were extinguished only after the first three psalms. This matched the scheme for extinguishing the candles in each of the three nocturna of Matins.

It is clear from the earlier evidence that the person responsible for extinguishing the lights was the sacristan.² In more recent times the duty fell to a server or the master of ceremonies.³ At St Mary's, York a server was concealed for this purpose behind the veil or curtain which was suspended from the base of the hearse.⁴

In addition to a snuffer, three different implements are known to have been used for extinguishing the lights. (i) According to Poitiers, PRG, and Alcuin⁵ the sacristan employed a reed. How it was used is clear from the first of these documents which states that a lamp from each row 'should be blown out with one puff of breath, if possible'.⁶ The exhortation to emit only one blast of air from the reed was no doubt intended to avoid embarrassment. The use of a reed would suggest that the lamps were positioned above the height of a man. (ii) Writing about the churches of Italy John England records that in some places a moist sponge was used to extinguish the candles.⁷ (iii) Possibly of greater antiquity than the preceding extinguisher was the use of a wax hand, known as a 'Judas hand'. It is first attested by Beleth, who comments that it may represent the hand described in Daniel 5:5; but he does not elaborate.⁸ Presumably the Judas hand at Tenebrae is associated with the loss of light in the same way that the hand that wrote upon the wall heralded the loss of Belshazzar's life. However, Beleth admits that the wax hand is more likely to recall Jesus' prediction.

¹ See above, p.44. The spear for bearing the new fire in the Gilbertine rite had five candles. (HBS 59 p.39.)
² Poitiers p.137; OR 29.12; Alcuin (PL 101.1203B); PRG II p.57 § 214; and York Breviary I p.376.
⁵ Page 137; II p.57 § 214; PL 101.1203B, respectively. A reed is also mentioned in OR 28.7 (1.33) and .30.
⁶ Uno, si potest fieri, extinguatur fiatu.
⁷ Ceremonies of Holy Week p.50. ⁸ Rationale, PL 202.106B.
in Matthew 26:23, an opinion shared by Durandus who adds that the hand is made of wax because it 'bends towards evil'.

(iii) The Candles

The practice of using yellow or unbleached candles for both the hearse-lights and those on the altar is probably of a venerable antiquity. The use of sombre-coloured wax signifies the funerary aspect of Tenobreo. In many places the custom arose of placing a white candle at the apex of the hearse to indicate that that light symbolised Christ. Thurston would appear to regard this practice as the norm. However, Fortescue and O'Connell stated, 'There is no authority for using a white candle in the centre'; and in the Sistine Chapel all fifteen candles were yellow.

It was recommended that each candle should consist of one pound of wax, a weight attested at Lincoln in the late Middle Ages. At Canterbury each of the twenty-four candles weighed three quarters of a pound.

(iv) The Light before the Blessed Sacrament

Although an altar-lamp is attested in Bergamo Cathedral as early as AD 922, and although the presence of a light before the Blessed Sacrament was common in parish churches by the thirteenth century, there is little reference to this perpetual lamp at Tenebrae before 1600, largely, one suspects, because it remained unlit on Good Friday and Holy Saturday with the removal of the Sanctissimum on Maundy Thursday to a place of reservation. As regards most churches it must remain a matter of speculation whether or not the sanctuary-lamps were extinguished at any point during Tenebrae of Maundy Thursday. However, it is recorded at Canterbury in the thirteenth century that the lamp (bacinus) before the high altar and those lights (bacini) which honoured the bodies of the saints should be extinguished at Lauds during the singing of the last psalm (Laudea).

1 'He who has dipped his hand into the dish with me will betray me.' 2 'Ad malum flexibilis' : Rationale VI.72 p.331.
3 Candles of unbleached wax are recommended for funerals.
4 England p.50. If the highest candle was identified with Judas, presumably it remained unbleached.
5 Heuser p.229.
6 Lent and Holy Week pp.243ff.
8 England p.50.
9 Caeremoniale Episcoporum II.22 p.264; Le Vavasseur p.363.
10 Bradshaw & Wordsworth II p.303.
11 HBS 23 p.380.
12 Ughelli IV pp.616-21.
13 King, Eucharistic Reservation p.129.
According to the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* the sanctuary-light was not to be extinguished at Tonebrae.¹ This direction is also enjoined by Le Vavasseur,² and Fortescue and O'Connell.³ The Camaldolese Ceremonial states that the *Sanctissimum* should be transferred to another tabernacle whose light was, presumably, unobtrusive (p.56). However, Grancolas mentions that the last hearse-candle was hidden rather than extinguished, and that the sanctuary-light was kindled from it as soon as possible (tam cito).⁴

There is no need to see at Tonebrae of Maundy Thursday a paradox in the concealing or extinguishing of the last candle, which represented Christ, whilst the sanctuary-lamp continued to burn in the darkness which commemorated His passion and death. The celebration of Tonebrae on Maundy Thursday was an anticipation or foreshadowing of the events of the following day, so that the use of light during that office was in a sense detached from and did not relate to the events of Maundy Thursday. Seen from a different perspective, on the other hand, the removal of the last candle symbolised the presence, and specifically the death, of Christ within an historical context; and the continuing flame of the sanctuary-lamp represented his universality. At a higher theological level the two lights visually portrayed within the liturgy respectively His human and His divine natures.

¹ I.xii.17 (typ.ed. 1886).  
² *Cérimonial* (1859) p.365.  
⁴ *Commentarius* p.296.

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**Table 4 references**: (1) OR 26.13; (2) OR 28.30, 49; (3) *Lib.Off.* 4.22.1; (4) OR 29.12; (5) OR 31.13; (6) OR 32.5; (7) Page 137; (8) II p.56 § 213; (9) PL 101.1203C; (10) Albers II p.16; (11) Albers I p.46; (12) Albers II p.91; (13) Ordinary p.486; (14) ONE p.223; (15) Breviary col.dcclxxxii. (York:Breviary p.376); (16) HBS 82 pp.79-80; (17) Ordinary pp.150-1; (18) Breviary I p.445; (19) Ceremonial p.253; (20) 1731 Ceremonial p.224; (21) Breviary p.243; (22) Doblado p.284; (23) Ceremonial p.311; (24) Ceremonial p.294.

**Table 5 references**: (1) OR 26.13; (2) OR 28.7 (1.33 MS T); (3) OR 28.30; (4) OR 29.12; (5) OR 31.13; (6) Page 137; (7) II p.57 § 214; (8) PL 101.1203C; (9) Albers II p.16; (10) Albers I p.47; (11) Ordinary p.162; (12) Ordinary p.486; (13) ONE p.223; (14) Breviary col.dcclxxxii. (York:Breviary II pp.376 and 382); (15) HBS 82 pp.79-80; (16) Ordinary pp.150-1; (17) Breviary I p.445; *Caer. Episc.* II.xxii p.265; (18) Ceremonial p.253; (19) 1734 Ceremonial p.260; (20) 1731 Ceremonial pp.224-26; (21) Breviary p.243; (22) Doblado p.284; (23) Ceremonial p.311; (24) Ceremonial p.294.
Chapter Eight

THE CONCLUSION OF TENEBRAE

(i) The Tradition of the Benedictus without light

The practice of singing the Benedictus in darkness is well-attested in the period before AD 1000. According to most of the documents the seventh sanctuary lamp was extinguished at the Traditor before the Benedictus. However, according to Pro the choice was allowed of either extinguishing the light at this point, or of withdrawing and reserving it for use on Holy Saturday, a practice we have already encountered in Alcuin. The custom of singing the Benedictus without light was perpetuated in both the cathedral and monastic traditions. At Exeter it was hidden during the chanting of the last psalm and extinguished, as at Cluny and presumably at most Cluniac houses, at its repeated antiphon. At Worcester it was extinguished, but at Rouen and Salisbury only hidden, at Psalm 148. According to the thirteenth-century Franciscan ordo the penultimate candle was hidden either at the last psalm or its antiphon, and the last candle was extinguished at the Traditor. The Regularis Concordia merely states 'at the Benedictus', whilst at Nidaros and at Trier it is recorded that the Benedictus was sung in the dark. Elsewhere the final candle was put out at the first rendering of the Traditor.

It is not difficult to see why the practice had developed of singing the Benedictus in darkness. The Hymn of Thanksgiving related primarily to the events that occurred prior to the birth of Jesus. In the same way that the ministry of John the Baptist was preparatory to the

1 OR 26.13; OR 28.30; OR 29.12; OR 31.13; OR 32.5; Poitiers p.137.
2 OR 3OB.28, which attests Tenebrae only on Good Friday, offers the choice of extinguishing either at the last psalm or at the Benedictus.
3 II p.57 #214 : tutatur media lampada, vel subtrahitur et servatur.
4 See above, p.75.
5 HBS 37 p.132. 6 Albers II p.16. 7 Antiphonary p.62.
8 1480 Breviary np. 9 Breviary col. dclxxxi.
10 HBS 85 p.76 and Van Dijk II p.84.
11 The Carmelites extinguished it at this point. (Ordinary p.163.)
12 PL 137.490A.
13 Breviary fol.lviii and Ordinary p.486, respectively.
14 At Farfa (PL 150.1197D); Gembloux, Fruttuaria, Chester (Albers: II p.91; IV p.49; IV p.245 respectively); St Mary's, York (HBS 75 p.273); St Paul's, Rome (Martene, DAMR 4.22.8 p.124); Norwich (see pp.78-79). Canterbury (HBS 23 p.380); among the Gilbertines (HBS 59 p.31). It is mentioned by John of Avranches (PL 147.48C).
advent of the Light of the World, so the three days of the Triduum recalled the temporary absence of that Light. As early as the ninth century Amalarius saw in the extinguishing of candles a commemoration of Jesus' resting in the Tomb:

Quod lumen ecclesiae extinguitur in his noctibus, videtur nobis aptari ipai soli iustitiae, qui extinctus est et sepultus tribus diebus et tribus noctibus.¹

The reference in the final verse of the Song to 'those that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death' was therefore particularly appropriate to those who were chanting these verses from the Gospel in total darkness.

(ii) The Tradition of the Benedictus with light

1. A single candle. In view of the above-quoted reference from the Benedictus to the gift of light to those who exist in darkness, it is perhaps not surprising that the practice arose of allowing the final lamp or candle to remain lit until the conclusion of the Benedictus so as to portray that Light emphatically in a symbolic way. The practice is first attested at York in the eleventh century,² and was subsequently incorporated into the Roman rite.³ The practice is also found at Seville,⁴ and in a number of French dioceses, such as Besançon,⁵ Coutances,⁶ Paris,⁷ and Verdun,⁸ and in the Premonstratensian⁹ and Camaldolese¹⁰ rites.

2. Altar lights. The extinguishing of the six altar-candles during the Benedictus in the Roman rite has been discussed above on page 67. The six candles were also put out in like manner at Paris,¹¹ Besançon,⁵ and Seville.⁴ Somewhat surprisingly two manuals from Angers, separated by only a three-year interval, record different schemes for extinguishing the hearse-candles, not the altar lights, during the Benedictus. According to the earlier one¹² nine of the candles were extinguished.

1 'The extinguishing of the church lights during these nights seems to me to relate to the very Sun of Justice whose light was extinguished and buried for three days.' (Lib. Off. 4.22.)
2 Breviary Vol.1 p.382. It is assigned to this century by J.M. Neale (Christian Remembrancer XX (Oct.1850) p.285) cited in Breviary,
3 Caeremoniale Episcoporum II.22 p.266. /ibidem.
4 Doblado p.284.
5 1682 Ceremonial p.265.
6 1825 Ceremonial p.318.
7 1778 Breviary, Pars Venae. p.289.
8 1832 Ceremonial p.294.
9 1930 Breviary p.402.
10 1634 Ceremonial pp.56-58.
12 1731 Ceremonial p.223.
during Matins, the remaining lights during the last four verses of the Benedictus. The other manual,\(^7\) however, prescribes that one candle should be extinguished at each of the twelve verses of the Benedictus, the last one being removed at the repeated Traditor. (See also Table 5.) In the late fifteenth century the six lights above the chancel in the Sistine Chapel were also extinguished simultaneously with the six altar-candles.\(^2\)

(iii) The Last Candle

Writing in the later part of the thirteenth century Durandus states\(^3\) that the last candle at Tenebrae was extinguished at the Benedictus; but gives no indication of whether this was done at the antiphon before or after the Gospel.\(^4\) Since he makes no reference to the Benedictus being sung in darkness, it is possible that his statement was deliberately imprecise so as to allow a choice of points for extinguishing the final candle. It is perhaps surprising that he makes no overt reference to the practice, which had existed since the eighth century\(^5\) and which was widespread in his day, of removing rather than extinguishing the last candle, and subsequently restoring it before the end of the service.\(^6\)

Regardless of whether the last candle had been removed before or after the Benedictus, the service always ended in darkness. The general practice then appears to have been to reproduce a light at the conclusion of the office, originally to provide illumination for those leaving a church in complete darkness. Thus, in those places where the last candle had actually been extinguished, another light was produced.\(^7\) At Gembloux the last candle was relit.\(^8\) In the Dominican rite the sacristan's lamp, hidden during the fifth psalm, was reproduced.\(^9\) Where the last candle had only been hidden, it was customary to bring it forth at the end of the service.\(^10\) At St Agnan's, Orléans, where Lauds even in the eighteenth century appears to have been held in darkness, several

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1 Diurnale p.260. 2 Dykmans II p.366. 3 Rationale VI.72 p.322. 4 The Benedictus was formerly referred to as the Evangelium. 5 Ordo 30B.28. 6 The possibility should be considered that Durandus, who wrote 'extinguitur' of the last candle, was using the verb in the sense of 'remove from view' in addition to 'extinguish'. 7 St Mary's, York (HBS 75 p.273); Haymo's Ordo Breviarii (Van Dijk II p.84); Worcester (Antiphonary p.63); York (Breviary I p.382). 8 Albers II p.91. 9 Blikfriers correspondence. 10 Rouen Breviary np; Premonstratensian Breviary p.402; Beleth PL 202. /106D.
candles were relit at the very end of the officio.¹

According to the Roman rite official practice until 1955 was to remove the last candle at the repetition of the Traditor, to place it momentarily on the altar, and then to hide it under the altar at the Epistle corner; thence to bring it forth once more at the very end of the service before extinguishing it after the departure of the congregation.² An alternative (unofficial) practice was to leave the candle burning until the conclusion of the service, and then to hide it.³ After the reforms of 1955 this alternative practice was officially adopted,⁴ except that the candle was not hidden but simply extinguished when the church was empty.

The custom of bringing back the last candle arose for practical reasons; and had its origin in the days when Tenebrae ended before dawn in those churches where the Benedictus was sung by the light of the candle which was subsequently hidden but not extinguished. Before a symbolic interpretation became attached to this candle, its function⁵ was similar to the sacristan's lamp before the start of the service: to provide illumination for the faithful as they left the church. Evidence for this lamp is to be found in a number of places. At Norwich,⁶ Farfa,⁷ and St Paul's, Rome⁸ a candle was lit in a lantern before the last light had been extinguished, and at Norwich it was removed from the choir. At Worcester⁹ it had already been lit outside the church before the start of the service. After a signal from the under-sacristan it was brought into the building to guide the monks back to their dormitory. At St Mary's, York, where the last candle was put out at the Benedictus, the sacristan, on hearing the knocks made by the abbot at the end of the service, produced a candle lit from the copiosum lumen which he had kept hidden away in a lantern (sconsa). This was then placed on the chancel step.¹⁰ In the Cistercian rite a candle was lit in a lantern (sconsa) before the last light was extinguished, and brought into the choir when the abbot began the Pater noster.¹¹

¹ De Moleon p.206.
³ Thurston, Lent and Holy Week p.243.
⁴ Fortescue and O'Connell, 11th ed., p.282; Wuest p.263.
⁵ Crossley p.83.
⁶ HBS 82 p.79.
⁷ Albers I p.46.
⁸ Martène, DAEB 4.22.8 p.124.
⁹ Antiphonary p.62.
¹⁰ HBS 75 p.273.
¹¹ Nomasticon Cisterciense p.99.

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(iv) The Last Candle : Symbolism and Size

In the same way that the medieval mind attached a symbolic interpretation to other liturgical features of Tenebrae, the last candle especially came to be regarded with great importance, and to be understood in a number of different ways. This was to a large extent due to the darkness which was to follow the extinction of its flame. According to Hugh of St Victor the last candle stood for Christ who was the last prophet to be killed. However, since he was regarded as a prophet while he was proclaiming the Gospel during his ministry, the candle was to be of the same size as the rest. 1 Hugh obviously understood this light to represent only the human nature of Jesus. The same rationale probably lies behind the stipulation in the Gilbertine Ordinal that the candle at the top of the hearse should be no larger than the rest. 2 On the other hand the central candle of the twenty-five at York Minster appears to have been larger than the rest, 3 an opinion shared by Dom André Mocquereau. 4 The identification of Christ with the last candle is also found in the Ordinal of St Mary's, York, where Christ is compared to the candela preeminens on the hearse. 5 Durandus, aware of the two traditions regarding the size of the last candle, commented that 'according to some it is larger than the others because Christ was greater than men. According to others it is the same size - Christ was one of the prophets. 6

John Beleth also compares the concealing of the last candle to the physical death of Christ. Its reappearance at the conclusion of the office for the kindling of the church lights anticipates the Resurrection. 7 Pope Benedict XIV also likens the concealing of the last candle behind the altar to the burial of Jesus. For him the fact that the candle remains lit whilst hidden signifies the activity of the Lord in the Underworld; and the restoration of the candle to its original place on the hearse symbolises the coming Resurrection. 8 At Angers the significance and symbolism attached to the reappearance of the light at the conclusion of Tenebrae was dramatically enacted by the senior choir boy. He produced a lighted torch, which had been hidden behind the choir stalls prior to the start of the service, and chanted 'Lumen Christi'. 9

It is Durandus who records the wide range of symbolic interpretations which the last candle had acquired by the end of the thirteenth century.¹ For it could represent

(i) the Blessed Virgin Mary in whom alone the faith remained.  
(ii) Christ who was dead according to the flesh.  
(iii) the faith which was hidden in the apostles.  
(iv) the apostles' faith after their infidelity.  
(v) the fire of the Holy Spirit which seemed extinct.  
(vi) the renewal of Christ's light.  
(vii) the commemoration of the Resurrection after the deaths of the prophets.

It is not difficult to see why the light of the last candle came to be identified with Christ or some aspect of the Godhead for those who sang the last verse of the Benedictus in almost total darkness.

Christopher Wordsworth records² a different symbolism which in England became attached to the last candle on the hearse. This light was sometimes known as the 'Judas candle' because the antiphon at which that light was extinguished or hidden began 'He that betrayed Him....' (Traditor autem).³

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¹ Rationale VI.72 p.331.  
² Medieval Services p.168.  
Chapter Nine

THE NAME AND ORIGIN OF TENEBRAE

(i) The name Tenebrae

The name by which the combined office of Matins and Lauds was popularly known is first recorded by Peter Abelard in the first half of the twelfth century. John Beleth also uses the term a little later. But the name is almost certainly much older. In the eighth-century Ordo we read: *septima...tenebratur candelae* and the *Regularis Concordia* of 970 states that the service is a commemoration of Jesus' three hours on the Cross, and of the 'tenebrarum terror' which prevailed because of the Crucifixion. However, in addition to the content of the service, the time at which the office was sung and its conclusion in darkness almost certainly contributed towards the name.

(ii) The Origin of Tenebrae

(a) The traditional theories. It was formerly believed that Tenebrae recalled the time when services were held in the catacombs or in the darkness of a church building because of the fear of persecution; or even that it commemorated the apostles' hiding in the upper room.  

(b) The utilitarian theory. According to this theory, which was first propounded by Claude de Vert at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the practice of extinguishing the lights gradually at Tenebrae emerged in the period when Matins and Lauds were sung in the very early hours of the morning. With the gradual increase in daylight at dawn, the church lights were put out one by one until, by the time the last lamp was extinguished, there was sufficient natural light for the needs of those at worship. The theory seems to have been accepted by the reformers of the Holy Week liturgy in the 1950s; for, commenting on the Decree of *Maxima Redemptionis* of 16 November 1955 which authorised the liturgical changes, P. Jounel observed that Tenebrae had now been restored

1 *Letter 10* (PL 178,340A): *Atque hinc vulgo horum dierum Vigiliae nun-cupantur Tenebrae. (And so for this reason the night office of these days is called Tenebrae.*)
2 PL 202,105B.
3 'The seventh lamp is extinguished.' (OR 28,30.)
4 PL 137,490B.
6 Houssaye p.460.
7 *Explication I* p.49 and p.292.
to the correct time of day, so that the gradual extinguishing of the lights coincided with the rising of the sun.¹

The theory, which is based largely on assumptions unsupported by documentary evidence, must be challenged and exposed to further scrutiny. Dendy doubted the genuineness of the explanation; but, apart from drawing attention to the phrase media nocte surgendum est which occurs in four of the earlier ordines,² he offered no theory of his own.³ Any vindication of this theory depends on two major factors: (i) the time or times at which the office is known to have commenced and (ii) the duration of the combined office of Matins and Lauds. We propose to consider the length of the service first, and then to look at the time at which it began, so as to calculate the hour at which the office ended.

1. The Duration of Tenebrae. Possibly the only reference in medieval literature to the duration of Matins/Lauds is to be found in the Gemma Animae of Honorius of Autun.⁴ According to that writer Tenebrae lasts three hours, the time that Jesus was on the Cross. A glance at the contents of Matins and Lauds shows that the whole of the combined service with its fifteen psalms, nine lessons, Benedictus, Miserere, as well as antiphons, responsories, versicles, kyrie's, and prayers can be performed in much less time than three hours. It is true that during the last century in the Sistine Chapel in Rome Tenebrae, with its renowned singing of the Miserere and musical accompaniment,⁵ was known to last upwards of two hours;⁶ but in a medieval monastery without the same protracted musical accompaniment and the contrived effects which made use of the late afternoon sun and the frescos of Michelangelo, the entire office must have been performed in rather less time. C. Butler was of the opinion that the average length of time for Matins in the winter was an hour and a half, and for Lauds between a half and three quarters of an hour.⁷ Honorius' three hours should be reckoned inclusively in much the same way as Jesus' three days in the tomb, so that the service probably began at the end of one hour and ended shortly after the start of the third hour. Ninety minutes seems to be a more realistic figure for the duration of Tenebrae, and at the same time does not contradict Honorius' statement. At Seville Cathedral in the last century the service lasted

¹ Le nouvel ordo p.25. ² Ordines 28.29; 30A.1; 30B.1; 31.11. ³ The Use of Lights p.147. ⁴ PL 172.665. ⁵ Hare II p.297. ⁶ Newman p.14. ⁷ Benedictine Monachism pp.278-9. The present writer has in his possession a 1927 Dominican Office of Holy Week, in which a previous owner of the book has inscribed in 1971 next to the rubric for Tenebrae on Maundy Thursday, 'Tenebrae 9.30 am. Finish 10.15 am.'
one hour. When we come to examining the time at which Tenebrae ended, we shall allow an upper limit of about two and a quarter hours duration for the purposes of our calculations.

2. The Time at which Tenebrae began. We have already observed that in the earlier period when Tenebrae was sung at the start of the monastic day, the office began either at midnight or at the eighth hour of the night (p.20). The practice of gradually extinguishing the lights at Tenebrae emerged from a monastic milieu long after St Benedict had changed the hour of rising for the monks from midnight to the eighth hour of the night. Although there is evidence that the earlier time continued to be observed in some monasteries, we may discount it for our purposes with some justification. For it is inconceivable that Tenebrae could have been such a protracted and prolonged office that it lasted from midnight until dawn. Services in the West have never been noted for their seemingly interminable duration. We must therefore concern ourselves with the later time of the eighth hour.

The Benedictine injunction relating to the time of rising was observed from the first day of November until Easter, regardless of the date when that festival occurred. Lauds, originally a separate office, used to be sung at dawn, incipiente luce; but long before AD 700 it had become customary to sing Lauds immediately after Matins in the early hours of the morning. We hope to show that by the eighth century, when the service of Tenebrae is first attested, the office of Matins/Lauds ended in darkness before sunrise; and that the utilitarian theory for the gradual extinguishing of lights at that service cannot be upheld.

St Benedict adopted the traditional ecclesiastical system of dividing the day and the night each into twelve hours of equal length in so far as this was possible, given the chronometrical devices available at the time - hence the qualification 'at whatever shall be calculated to be the eighth hour'. Table 6 on the following page shows the earliest

1 Doblado p.284.  2 PL 103.872A.  3 PL 103.873A.  4 By the time of the compilation of Ordo 26 c.AD 750, the union of Matins and Lauds had already taken place. (See above, p.2 Note 3.) The Regularis Concordia, which mentions that Lauds finished before dawn and that Prime took place manu facto (PL 137.490C), is too late a document (c. AD 970) to be of much relevance for practices of the eighth century, when the custom of extinguishing gradually the lights at Tenebrae first became established. (Since Vatican II Matins and Lauds have been separated.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Sunset</th>
<th>Sunrise</th>
<th>Minutes in one hour</th>
<th>8th hour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>40°</td>
<td>18.10</td>
<td>06.08</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>01.09-02.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 March</td>
<td>50°</td>
<td>18.09</td>
<td>06.08</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>01.09-02.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 March</td>
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<td>18.08</td>
<td>06.09</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>01.09-02.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>40°</td>
<td>18.28</td>
<td>05.38</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>00.59-01.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 April</td>
<td>50°</td>
<td>18.38</td>
<td>05.29</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>00.59-01.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>60°</td>
<td>18.52</td>
<td>05.14</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>00.57-01.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 April</td>
<td>40°</td>
<td>18.45</td>
<td>05.13</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>00.51-01.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 April</td>
<td>50°</td>
<td>19.04</td>
<td>04.54</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>00.47-01.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 April</td>
<td>60°</td>
<td>19.35</td>
<td>04.24</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>00.43-01.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+ The times given in this column are *ante meridiem*, and correspond to the hours approximately calculated in the Early Middle Ages.

### Latitudes of various liturgical centres:

- Palermo: 38°*
- Rome: 42°*
- Poitiers: 46°30'*
- Paris: 49°*
- Rouen: 49°30'*
- Mainz: 50°
- Salisbury: 51°
- York: 54°*

* approximate

**Table 6. The 8th hour by modern reckoning.**

Date (18 March) on which Maundy Thursday can fall, and also the latest (22 April). The fifth day of April represents the mid-point between the two extremes. It is quite clear that at the earliest date for Maundy Thursday, one twelfth of the period of darkness (i.e. from sunset to sunrise) is, depending on the latitude, either one hour or almost sixty minutes according to the modern system of measuring time; so that everywhere between Rome and York on the 18 March a hour of darkness is of virtually the same duration according to the former method of reckoning time. After the vernal equinox the time differential begins to increase in accordance with the degrees of latitude. The amount of daylight increases in the northern hemisphere with a corresponding decrease in darkness; so that the length of each hour of darkness grows smaller more noticeably the further north one travels.
The tablo also shows the modern corresponding time for the eighth hour. This is arrived at by dividing the total period of darkness by twelve and then calculating to what period during the night the eighth division would correspond by modern reckoning. C. Butler was right to point out that at the eighth hour referred to the completion of the hour and not to its inception; but when instancing the city of Rome, where on 25 March the sun rises and sets at six o'clock and there are exactly twelve hours of darkness, he is incorrect in stating that the eighth hour of the night lasted from 2.00 a.m. to 3.00 a.m., and that at the eighth hour indicates 3.00 a.m. \(^1\) For the first hour extends from 6.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m., the second from 7.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m., and so forth. The eighth hour would therefore last from 1.00 a.m. to 2.00 a.m., and this latter time would be the modern equivalent of at the eighth hour. \(^2\)

We are now in a position to calculate the varying times at which Tenebrae finished, both geographical and seasonal differences being taken into consideration. We have already indicated that we shall use the longer time of two and a quarter hours for the duration of Tenebrae.

(i) 18 March. All three latitudes can be grouped together in view of the almost-identical times of sunrise. Tenebrae starting at 2.09 a.m. or thereabouts and lasting for two and a quarter hours would finish at 4.24 a.m. This is over one and a half hours before sunrise.

(ii) 5 April. Tenebrae would end:
- at 40° one and a half hours before sunrise
- at 50° one hour twenty minutes before sunrise
- at 60° one hour and ten minutes before sunrise.

(iii) 22 April. Tenebrae would end:
- at 40° an hour and a quarter before sunrise
- at 50° just over an hour before sunrise
- at 60° about forty minutes before sunrise.

Both the time allowed for Tenebrae and the figures given for 40° and 60° represent extremes. For the times relating to places on or near the 50° line of latitude are of more relevance to our study in view of the fact that this service with its gradual extinguishing of lights had its origins in Northern Gaul or in Northern Germany through both of which passes the fiftieth parallel.

1 Benedictine Monachism p.275.
2 It is known that the length of the hours was adjusted in N. Germany throughout the year. The variation and adjustment is referred to in the rubrics for the new fire ceremony in PRG (II p.57). See p. 133.
We have shown that on 18 March, the earliest possible date for Tenebrae, the entire office of Matins/Lauds terminated (at places in Central Germany and Northern France) over an hour and a half before dawn, and that even at the latest date of 22 April there was still over an hour to pass before sunrise. The theory, therefore, that the lights of Tenebrae were put out gradually as the amount of daylight increased and the need for artificial illumination diminished cannot be upheld. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that even on a cloudless spring morning in March or April the interiors of some churches in the period under discussion would continue to have remained badly illuminated in view of their architectural design and system of fenestration.

An explanation to account for the loss of light at the night office must be sought elsewhere. Herbert Thurston in an uncharacteristic lapse of scholarship wrongly thought that it grew lighter more quickly in southern latitudes in late March and April, and supposed that northern monks found it hard to get through the office of Matins without better light. For more serious consideration is the possibility that because of the funereal aspect of Tenebrae the practice of extinguishing lights was inherited from a corresponding pagan custom according to which a gradual decrease in the number of lights was regarded as a mark of respect or honour for a deceased person. In view of the absence of corroborative evidence, however, such a theory must remain conjectural. Moreover, universal practice throughout Europe and the Near East involved the lighting of a lamp or candle in honour of the dead rather than the extinguishing of it. The theory, referred to above, which explained the Tenebrae-hearse as a device for counting the number of psalms sung at the night office must also be discounted. For whilst the extinguishing of candles may subsequently have been used for monitoring the progress of the gradual psalms, as we have argued, there is no reason why this practice should originally have been adopted at Lauds any more than at the other offices of the day when the psalms were sung aloud.

The most likely explanation for the emergence of this liturgical feature at the night office is, in the opinion of the present writer, to be found in the Maundy Thursday rites in Jerusalem which were held in and around the Garden of Gethsemane. Since the ceremonies held in the original and historic locations could hardly be transferred out of their Jerusalem milieu, it seems likely that in the gradual loss of light at the night office an attempt has been made to commemorate the

1 Lent and Holy Week p.262. 2 See above, pp.54-55.
events of that late Thursday evening within the context of a service in church. Ferdinand Cabrol was the first to hint at the derivation of Tenebrae from the Jerusalem rites; but he did not attempt to elaborate the connection between the western night office and the historical events in Gethsemane. ¹ He merely noted that the offices of Tenebrae on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday may have been influenced by the localised Jerusalem rite of Maundy Thursday evening. Cabrol was possibly closer to the truth than he realised. For in searching for the origin of Tenebrae's gradual loss of light, it is significant to find that the first recorded instance of this liturgical phenomenon occurs during Lauds on Good Friday ² which was sung at the corresponding time, or not long after the time, that Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane. Since the lights, extinguished at Lauds and subsequently at Matins and Lauds, are unlikely to represent the torches which we are told the chief priests' soldiers carried (Jn 18:3), it is likely that they symbolise a non-luminary element in the story. Later medieval commentators may have been preserving an ancient tradition when they compared the extinguishing of the lights with the flight and desertion of the apostles.³ Alternatively, the quenching of the lamps may have symbolised the heaviness of the eyes of the disciples who were unable to stay awake and keep watch with Jesus.⁴

¹ Les Origines p.181. ² Stage 3 of Tenebrae pp.13-16. ³ See p.36 and p.41. ⁴ The commemoration of the three hours of darkness on Good Friday is much more likely to be associated with Tenebrae of Holy Saturday which follows the Crucifixion.
PART II

The New Fire Ceremony
In order to observe the changes which occurred within the new fire ceremony and to trace more easily the influences which contributed to these changes, we have classified the different known forms of the ceremony as stages of development which we have entitled modes.

(i) The older Roman tradition

Mode A1

Elsewhere we have discussed the provision of new fire in mid-eighth century Rome, attested in the letter of Pope Zachary to Boniface. We suggested that the three large lamps were reserved during the consecration of the Host at Mass on Maundy Thursday. These remained in the Cathedral of St John Lateran and continued to burn in loco secretiore, until the fire was hallowed for use on Holy Saturday and used to light the two Vigil-candles and kindle the other lamps of St John's.

Mode A2

In the eighty or so years which separate the pontificate of Zachary from the visit of Amalarius to Rome in AD 832, a development occurred within the Roman Church in the procedure for the provision of new fire during the Triduum. It had been the practice at Rome in the time of Zachary to obtain new fire on Holy Saturday from the flame of one of the three lamps which had been hidden from view on Maundy Thursday.\(^1\) However, according to the subsequent testimony of Archdeacon Theodore new fire was kindled on Good Friday for use at the night office of Holy Saturday.\(^2\) The clarity of this statement is matched by the resulting uncertainty regarding the provision of fire at other times during the Triduum. For it raises two important and closely-connected questions:

(a) Did the new fire for the ceremonies of Holy Saturday continue to be taken from the three lamps reserved on Maundy Thursday? (b) Was the new fire, kindled on Good Friday, destined only for use on Good Friday night and subsequently extinguished at the conclusion of the night office of Holy Saturday? Since Theodore is silent on this matter, there are two possibilities to be considered. (i) If the practice of reserving

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1 See pp.9-10, and especially Part II Chapter 7(a) pp.170-77.
2 'In ipsa die (i.e. Good Friday) novus ignis accenditur, de quo reservetur usque ad nocturnale officium.' (Amalarius, Lib de Off.Ant. XLIV.2)
the three large lamps on Maundy Thursday had been discontinued, it
would follow that the new fire, kindled on Good Friday, was reserved
not only for the night office at the end of that day, but also for the
Vigil during the evening of Holy Saturday. (ii) On the other hand the
continuing reservation of Maundy Thursday’s fire would have restricted
the use of Friday’s newly-kindled fire to the night office of Holy Sat-
urday, since a second reserved source of fire would have been super-
fluous. Theodore’s silence, however, regarding the three lamps is not
decisive; for the conversation between the archdeacon and Amalarius
had revolved around the loss of illumination at the night office, not
the provision of light for the Vigil of Holy Saturday.

The external evidence, which it is possible to adduce in support of
both the above views, is necessarily inconclusive. For the practice of
reserving fire on Maundy Thursday was well-established in the Gallican
Church;¹ and featured in the Pontificale Romano-Germanicum, the service-
book which the Roman Church adopted in the tenth century. On the other
hand the Pontifical of Poitiers, which bears the marks of Roman influ-
ence,² records that the Easter candle was lit with a flame kindled anew
on Good Friday (p.215); whilst the reservation of fire on Good Friday
is attested in three ordines and four sacramentaries.³

It is safe to assume, from the evidence of Amalarius, that at Rome
the new fire was kindled shortly after the conclusion of the liturgy
on Good Friday afternoon:

In the Roman Church all fire is extinguished and (subsequently)
rekindled on Good Friday. By this action fire, which is fuelled
and maintained by stocks of firewood, imitates the principal
source of fire, that is, the sun in the sky, which hid itself from
human eyes from the sixth to the ninth hour at the time of our
Lord’s passion; so that those who wickedly rejoiced at the shame
of their Lord and Creator might not enjoy its light. For this rea-
son that fire, which is obtained for our use, may be extinguished
on Good Friday at about the sixth hour and renewed at about the
ninth hour of the day.⁴

However, we can only surmise that it took place somewhere in the vicinity

1 See below, Mode B2. 2 See especially Pt IV Chap.16 pp.327-8.
3 For these references see below, p.101.
4 'In Romana ecclesia extinguitur totus ignis in sexta feria et reacc-
enditur. In hac facto imitatur ignis, futas et conservatus per con-
gesta lignorum, principalem ignem, id est solem corporeum, qui ab hu-
manis obtutibus se ascondit tempore passionis Domini a sexta ora usque
ad oram nonam, ne suo lumine fruerentur qui male gaudebant de ignom-
inia domini sui et creatoris. Hac ratione ignis iste, qui nostris
usibus procuratur, poteat extingui in sexta feria circa sextam oram
diei et renovari circa nonam horam diei.' (Lib.Off.4.22.2.)
of St John Lateran wherein the night office of Holy Saturday would be held. Similarly we can but guess at the means employed in the production of that fire. (This evidence is treated more fully on p. 178.)

(ii) The Gallican traditions

Mode B1

The use of fire, reserved on Good Friday, with which to light the Easter candle is attested in three *ordines* and four sacramentaries. According to Ordo 23 it is used to light the two Vigil-candles which were a feature of the old Roman tradition (§ 24). This light is to be identified with that, described in Ordo 30B, which was reserved at the conclusion of Lauds on Good Friday and which was also used for the provision of illumination at the night office of Holy Saturday. The practice of reserving Good Friday's fire must be of considerable antiquity, and suggests a period when the liturgical situation was characterised by a complete absence of light between the end of the night office of Good Friday and the Vigil of Holy Saturday. It also dates from a time anterior to that in which Tenebrae had reached its final stage of development, since the loss of light at Maundy Thursday's night office caused the need for a fresh supply of fire the same day. The reservation of old fire is possibly a Gallican development of the Roman practice attested by Zachary (Mode A1), and took place at the conclusion of the night office of Good Friday because of the necessity of illumination at that service; whereas, in the circumstances familiar to Zachary, the singing of Matins/Lauds of Good Friday in the Church of Sta Croce in Gerusalemme, followed by the celebration of that day's liturgy in the same church, enabled the fire to be reserved at St John Lateran in circumstances undisturbed by any liturgical activity.

Mode B2

According to this alternative Gallican tradition the flame for lighting the Easter candle was obtained from newly-kindled fire, and not from an already-existing source of hallowed fire which had been reserved for that purpose (Mode B1). The earliest evidence for the kindling of new fire, as opposed to the reservation of old fire, comes from Ordo 26 (§ 3). The ceremony takes place on Maundy Thursday; and it is not difficult to see why it occurs on that day. For within this Gallican

1 Viz. OR 17.103; OR 30A.15; OR 30B.28; GeW (p.68); GePr (p.55); GeAg (p.52); GeG (pp.92-3).
2 Stage 6, pp.18-19.
tradition the production of new fire is closely linked to the performance of Tenebrae on all three days of the Triduum—a situation attested by this ordo. In churches in which the development of Tenebrae had reached one of Stages 3, 4, or 5, the supply of fire for the night office and Vigil of Holy Saturday was obtained from the lamp hidden and reserved at the conclusion of Lauds on Good Friday. With the loss of fire at the end of the night office of Maundy Thursday, however, it was now necessary to ensure that a supply of fire was available not only for the night office of Good Friday, but also to kindle the liturgical lights for the Mass or Masses of Maundy Thursday. There is one recorded instance of the reservation of old fire on Maundy Thursday; but according to the majority of our sources the fire was kindled anew on that day.

The early ordines and Alcuin state that the fire was then reserved for lighting the Easter candle on Holy Saturday; but they omit any reference to the blessing of the fire on Maundy Thursday. However, according to PRG, which attests the same ceremonial, the fire was first blessed before being reserved. Although the difficulty arising from the subsequent hallowing of the fire on Holy Saturday precludes this document from being regarded with complete confidence as corroborative evidence—see Mode B—it is very likely, in view of other similarities of ritual between PRG and the above-mentioned ordines, that a blessing of the new fire prior to its reservation should be understood. According to this arrangement fire, required for any of the subsequent services during the remainder of the Triduum, could be taken from the reserved flame without the requirement of a preliminary act of benediction.

However, according to PRG the Mass of the Chrism was celebrated at the third hour of the day. Since the new fire was kindled no earlier

1 The Gradual of St Gregory, cited by Macri in Hierolexicon (pp.141-2) : Deinde venit Archidiaconus ante altare accipiens lumen, quod quinta feria absconditum fuit, faciensque crucem super cereum et illuminans eum, ac benedicens, dicente ipso Lumen Christi, respondent omnes Deo Gratias. (The writer's italics.) 'Then the Archdeacon comes in front of the altar. He takes the light which was hidden away on Maundy Thursday, and making the sign of the cross over the candle, he lights the candle and blesses it. Then he acclaims "The Light of Christ" and all reply "Thanks be to God".

The form of words used recalls the corresponding rubrics in the ordines and sacramentaries referred to above (p. 101). However, the occurrence of quinta and the reference to Lumen Christi suggest that the Gradual is a later document.

2 OR 26.3; OR 27.6; OR 28.25; OR 31.29.
4 II p. 57 8 216.
5 II p. 59.
than the fifth hour according to the same pontifical, the flame for the lights at this Mass clearly could not be taken from the new fire. The rubric for the conclusion of Lauds on Maundy Thursday, however, states that, before the _Benedictus_ is sung, the last lamp is either extinguished, or withdrawn and reserved. The writer believes that the purpose in reserving the lamp at this service was to provide light for the above-mentioned Mass in those churches where it was still celebrated. By the tenth century the Mass of the Chrism was no longer celebrated in many churches; so that it was no longer necessary to reserve a flame at the conclusion of the night office of Maundy Thursday. The kindling of the new fire later that same day took place before the late afternoon Mass which commemorated the institution of the Lord's Supper.

**Mode B3**

The new fire ceremonial attested in _PRG_ bears a close similarity to that described in the _ordines_ of _Mode B2_. _PRG_ differs from these documents, however, in that in the ritual of Holy Saturday there is a seemingly-superfluous hallowing of the new fire which had previously been blessed on Maundy Thursday. It must be admitted that a second act of benediction is not unknown in the ceremonies relating to the new fire; but it is certainly unusual. This second blessing contained in _PRG_ may be a survival of an older Gallican tradition in which the new fire was kindled and hallowed on Holy Saturday. Its continuing presence in the tenth-century _PRG_ reveals the composite character of that document, and is in all likelihood the result of a synthesis of different traditions relating to the new fire. This is particularly borne out by the benediction-formulas used on Holy Saturday and especially in the use of the _Deus mundi Conditor_. This prayer constitutes the formula for the blessing of the Easter candle attested in the Gelasian sacramentaries, and is not strictly a blessing for the new fire. _PRG_ also includes Formula H for the blessing of Holy Saturday's fire. This prayer differs from the other formulas in that both the fire and the candle which is lit from the fire are included in the words of sanctification.

This twofold blessing of the new fire is also found at Salzburg.

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1 See below, Chapter 4 p.133.  
2 II p.57 § 214.  
3 II p.58 § 220.  
4 For instance, the so-called double blessing of the lamp and of the candle in the Mozarabic rite. See p.291.  
5 See below, Chapter 3 p.126. and Part IV Chapter 10 pp.289-90.  
6 Appendix 5 : The Benediction-Formulas.  
7 1507 Missal fol.lxxxv (MT) and fol.xciii (HS).
There the new fire was blessed on Maundy Thursday with Formulas A, B, and C, and on Holy Saturday with the *Deus mundi Conditor* and Formula H, as in *PRG* on both days. From other rubrical similarities there can be little doubt that the Missal of Salzburg derives directly from *PRG*. For even after the lapse of five and a half centuries the new fire ceremonial of Salzburg is still recognisably the ritual prescribed by *PRG*. (Mode B3 is alluded to in the twelfth-century *Pontificale Romanum*.)

There is no evidence to suggest that the new fire, once kindled, was reserved in an unhallowed state for the duration of the Triduum; and that only fire taken from this source was blessed on each of these three last days of Holy Week.

**Mode B4**

In Mode B2 we observed that the loss of fire occasioned by the extinguishing of the lights at each of the three performances of Tenebrae was made good by the kindling of the new fire on Maundy Thursday and by its subsequent reservation for use during the remainder of the Triduum. Within the same liturgical milieu, in what could be argued was an obvious and logical development in the ritual for the provision of new fire, there emerged the practice of kindling fire on each of the days of the Triduum. It is first attested in *Ordo 29* and became widespread throughout the Western Church through its adoption by a very large number of monasteries.

It might have been expected that with a fresh supply of fire on each of the three days the need to reserve Maundy Thursday's fire would disappear. However, according to *Ordo 29* there is not only a production

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1 These two formulas for blessing the fire on Holy Saturday were also used at Mainz, Ratisbon, and Abo. (See Table 20).
2 For instance, the choice of times for kindling the new fire on Maundy Thursday. (*PRG* II p.56 § 215 and 1507 Missal fol.1xxxv.)
3 *PR XII* § xxxii.i.
4 *OR* 29.14, 28, and 45. H.A.P. Schmidt wrongly supposes that *PRG* records the kindling of new fire on the three days (*Hebdomada Sancta* II pp.820-21). The pontifical actually states that on Good Friday: *lumen deportatur, 'a light (= fire) is brought'*(II p.86 § 304); and on Holy Saturday: *deportatur lumen quod quinta feria fuerat excussum, 'fire is brought which had been kindled on Maundy Thursday'*(II p.94 § 342). There is no mention of a production of new fire on either of the last two days of Holy Week.
of new fire on each day of the Triduum; Maundy Thursday's fire is also reserved for lighting the Easter candle on Holy Saturday. Since the candle could have been lit with the fire kindled on Holy Saturday, the reservation of Thursday's fire would appear to be a superfluous survival of a former practice. Ordo 29 is in fact a composite document. The ceremonial of Holy Saturday is unique; for it combines the Roman practice of lighting the two Vigil-candles prior to the reading of the prophecies with the Gallican ritual of kindling the Easter candle. So that the Vigil-candles are lit with the fire struck on Holy Saturday, whilst the Easter candle is lit with the fire reserved from Maundy Thursday. In the Holy Saturday liturgy of Ordo 29 we have a synthesis of both the Roman and the Gallican traditions.

Mode B5

As in Ordo 29 we find in the Pontifical of Poitiers elements deriving from both the Roman and the Gallican Vigil traditions. There is a triple kindling of fire during the Triduum and the two Vigil-candles are a feature of the liturgy of Holy Saturday. It differs from Ordo 29 in that the fire for lighting both the Easter candle and the Vigil-candles is that kindled and reserved on Good Friday. It is possible that this practice is derived from the Gallican tradition, attested in Mode B1, of lighting the Easter candle with fire reserved on Good Friday. However, in view of the presence of Roman elements in other aspects of Poitiers' Holy Saturday liturgy, it is more likely that the fire is kindled on Good Friday and subsequently reserved, in imitation of the Roman practice described by Archdeacon Theodore and discussed in Mode A2.

(iii) The Spanish and Italian traditions

Mode C1. The Mozarabic, Ambrosian, and Beneventan rites.

In the three above-named traditions the absence of light during Good Friday or the loss of light at the Passion on that day necessitated the provision of newly-kindled fire on Holy Saturday for the lighting of the Easter candle, since in none of these three traditions

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2 For instance, the use and significance of the Vigil-candles (p.215) and the reference to the wax Agnus Dei's (p.218).
3 Antiphonary of Leon p.276.
4 Beroldus p.106.
5 It is very likely that Beneventum's Good Friday liturgy closely followed that of Milan. (Borella p.109.)
was a flame reserved from either Maundy Thursday or Good Friday. The single production of new fire on Holy Saturday at Ripoll and at Vich is almost certainly due to Mozarabic influence, and there is evidence for this tradition within the Gallican Church. For one of PRG's two principal manuscripts records a blessing of the new fire on Holy Saturday, so duplicating the hallowing of the fire on Maundy Thursday. It strongly suggests that formerly in one tradition the fire had been kindled on Holy Saturday. This may have been primitive Gallican practice. On the other hand it may be argued that this was the result of Milanese influence; for that rite is known to have been used in Southern Germany as late as the eleventh century. The single kindling of fire on Holy Saturday is also attested by Lanfranc, and may have featured in the pre-Conquest English Church. Table 10a lists the early evidence for this mode (p.112).

Mode C2. The later Roman tradition.

When the Roman Church adopted the Romano-Germanic Pontifical (PRG) in the tenth century, the arrangements for the production of the new fire, as prescribed by that document, were not adopted into the Roman rite in their entirety. For at Rome the new fire had previously been kindled on Holy Saturday; and, although directed that the new fire should be produced on Maundy Thursday, this day remained unchanged after Rome's adoption of that pontifical. This is clear from the rubric of the twelfth-century Pontificale Romanum:

Hora autem quinta vel sexta, novus ignis, si non fuerit excussus in caena domini, iuxta morem quarumdam ecclesiarum, excutatur hoc die extra ecclesiam de crystallo, vel etiam alio modo fiat.

The churches in which it was customary to kindle the new fire on Maundy Thursday were those whose rites were regulated by PRG and other early ordinæ. One of them was the Church of Salzburg whose new fire ceremonial even in the sixteenth century was still fundamentally the same as that prescribed in PRG.

1 Manuscript C (II p.96 § 344). 2 Borella p.105. 3 See below, Chapter 7 p.179. 4 'Now on this day (Holy Saturday) at the fifth or sixth hour let the new fire be produced from a lens outside the church - or it may be done in any other way - if it has not already been kindled on Maundy Thursday, according to the custom of some churches.' PR XII xxxii.1 p.238.
It is not immediately clear why the practice of kindling the new fire on Maundy Thursday and reserving it until Holy Saturday was not adopted by the Roman Church, especially since it had formerly been the custom at Rome to reserve Maundy Thursday's fire.¹ It may have been felt more convenient not to kindle anew and reserve the fire on that day, especially as the use of two churches² for the ceremonies of the Triduum may have caused difficulties in the reservation or the transportation of the new fire. On the other hand there may have been some reluctance to change what had become a well-established practice, which was also observed in the contemporary rites of Beneventum and Milan.

¹ See pages 170ff.
² The Cathedral of St John Lateran and Sta Croce in Gerusalemme.
Chapter Two

THE TRIPLE AND THE SINGLE PRODUCTION OF FIRE

(i) The triple production of fire

There were two main procedures for the provision of fire on each of the days of the Triduum, both of which have been described in the previous chapter. According to the arrangement outlined in Mode B2, the new fire was kindled on Maundy Thursday and reserved for use on the following two days. Table 7 presents the evidence for this particular mode. This, the earlier of the two traditions involving a threefold production of fire, was almost everywhere replaced by the alternative procedure, outlined in Mode B4 (p.104). This arrangement involved a separate act of kindling fire on each day of the Triduum to replace that lost at the conclusion of each of the three night offices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/Document</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 26</td>
<td>750-75</td>
<td>OR 26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ordo 27)</td>
<td>750-800</td>
<td>OR 27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 28</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>OR 28.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 31</td>
<td>880-900</td>
<td>OR 31.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRG</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>Vol.II p.57 8215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo Corbeiensis</td>
<td>950-1000</td>
<td>DAMR 3.13.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcuin</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>p.126 M 1145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avellana</td>
<td>11 C.</td>
<td>PL 101.1205C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassino</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>PL 151.881B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salzburg</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>M 1139</td>
</tr>
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(Feasey, The Paschal Candle, p.355, claimed that the practice was attested in a missal of Auch, in a sacramentary of Albi, and at Toulouse in 1555.)

Table 7. Evidence for the single kindling of new fire and for its reservation on Maundy Thursday.

In addition to the implicit evidence of the early ordines and other documents, the loss of fire on each day of the Triduum may be inferred with confidence from Lanfranc's Decrees; but it is clearly attested by Rupert of Deutz, who remarks, 'Having lost the fire (amisso

1 PL 150.467B.
igne) which was extinguished at Matins, for those three days we resort to a stone. Durandus also records that fires were extinguished on the three days. Centuries earlier Amalarius had explained that the fire was rekindled during the Triduum, rather than being allowed to remain extinguished for the whole of that period, because of human weakness: services could not be held in church without light; and it enabled food to be cooked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/Commentator</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 29</td>
<td>870-90</td>
<td>OR 29.15, .29, and .45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rupert of Deutz</td>
<td>c.1111</td>
<td>PL 170.149A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John of Avranches</td>
<td>c.1070</td>
<td>PL 147.49A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary's, York</td>
<td>c.1400</td>
<td>HBS 75 p.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouen</td>
<td>c.1700</td>
<td>De Moléon p.299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Grancolas stated c.1730 that there was still a threefold kindling of fire at Reims and Cluny - Commentarius p.316.)

Table 8a. Firm evidence for a kindling of fire on each day of the Triduum.

Table 8a presents the unequivocal evidence for a triple production of fire by three separate acts of ignition. The rubrics of a number of customaries and service-books are too imprecise to allow us to state with complete confidence that there was a threefold kindling of new fire during the Triduum. Some of these documents refer to a blessing of the fire on each of the three days; whilst others describe a repetition on Good Friday and on Holy Saturday of Maundy Thursday's new fire procession. All the sources which do not specifically refer to the kindling of fire on each of the three days have been assigned to Table 8b. However, in each instance it is safe to infer that there was a triple kindling of fire, and that the newly-kindled fire of Maundy Thursday was not reserved on that day.

Table 8b. Additional evidence for the triple production of new fire.

Regardless of whether the new fire was kindled and reserved on Maundy Thursday or kindled on each of the three days, the schedule of events relating to the provision of new fire during the Triduum would assume the following pattern:

Maundy Thursday  
(i) Loss of fire at the night office.
(ii) Production of fire during the day for:
     (a) Mass of the Lord's Supper
     (b) Lotio
     (c) Matins/Lauds of Good Friday

Good Friday  
(i) Loss of fire at the night office.
(ii) Production of fire during the day for:
     (a) Mass of the Pre-sanctified
     (b) Matins/Lauds of Holy Saturday

Holy Saturday  
(i) Loss of fire at the night office.
(ii) Production of fire for the Vigil.

In some of the earlier documents which record a threefold procession of fire, we find that there was a gradation in the seniority of the personages who bore the fire on the second and third days. The assignation of the function to the bishop or abbot on Holy Saturday indicates that
the fire which lit the Easter candle was considered to be of greater importance and significance than the fire of the previous two days. Table 9 illustrates the gradation in rank of those who bore the new fire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ordo 26</td>
<td>S Sacristan</td>
<td>Archdeacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcuin</td>
<td>M Sacristan</td>
<td>Prior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 29</td>
<td>M Sacristan</td>
<td>Prior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularis Concordia</td>
<td>M Sacristan</td>
<td>Deacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluny</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Farfa</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fleury</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corbie</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dijon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lanfranc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reims</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary's, York</td>
<td>M Sacristan</td>
<td>Prior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salzburg</td>
<td>S Sacristan</td>
<td>? Archdeacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S = secular</td>
<td>M = monastic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(For references: see Tables 7 & 8)

Table 9. The bearers of the new fire.

Dendy’s statement¹ that the evidence for the threefold blessing of the new fire is primarily monastic is correct. Liturgical development and the evolution of new forms of ceremonial are more likely to occur in the conducive surroundings of a monastic institution. Nevertheless, according to the eighth-century Ordo 26, the triple production of fire was well-established in both the cathedral and the monastic traditions by the middle of that century (Table 9); and in the absence of further evidence the judgement should be withheld that the practice arose out of a monastic milieu. The appearance in Ordo 26 of the cathedral officials (Section 19) prior to their monastic counterparts (Section 20) indicates that the ordo was compiled for use in a cathedral church in the first instance.

¹ The Use of Lights p.142.
(ii) The single production of fire

It is generally agreed that the ceremonial surrounding the production of new fire on Holy Saturday according to the Mozarabic rite has much in common with the ritual attested by the documents illustrating the former Jerusalem liturgy of Holy Saturday;¹ and it is possible to detect in the Milanese rite also the influence of Jerusalem.¹ In our discussion of the provision of new fire on Holy Saturday in the previous chapter (Modes C1 and C2), we suggested that the production of fire on Holy Saturday at Rome may have been the result of both liturgical changes within her rite and the utilisation of two church buildings for the services of the Triduum (p.106). Also worthy of consideration is the possible influence of the ritual surrounding the 'miraculous fire' at the Holy Sepulchre, which may have resulted following the renewal of contact between Rome and the Holy Land and the establishment of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem in 1099.

As observed in our discussion of Mode C2, PR XII recognised that the production of fire took place on Maundy Thursday 'in some churches'. Subsequent documents relating to the Roman rite confine the ceremony to Holy Saturday; and the influence of the Franciscans, who were instrumental in the popularisation of the Roman rite, ultimately ensured that the Gallican-derived Benedictine practice of kindling new fire on three days yielded to the Roman observance of a single production of new fire on Holy Saturday (Tables 10a and 10b).

| 1. Leon | 10 C | 18. Apamea | 1214 |
| 3. Ripoll | 1038 | 20. Haymo | 1243-4 |
| 5. Lanfranc | c.1070 | 22. Lesnes | 13 C |
| 7. Wulfstan | 11 C | 24. Hereford | 13 C |
| 8. Chester | 11 C | 25. St Vedast,Arras | c.1300 |
| 10. Cistercians | 1119 | 27. Exeter | 1337 |
| 11. Ordo XI | c.1140 | 28. Strasbourg | 1364 |
| 12. Rome | c.1150 | 29. Westminster | 1362-68 |
| 15. Beleth | c.1180 | 32. Lyre | 14 C |
| 16. York | 12 C | 33. Toul, St Epvre | 14 C |
| 17. Sicardus | c.1200 | |

Table 10a. Early evidence for the single production of fire.

¹ See Appendix 13.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Year</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Abo</td>
<td>1522</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Cosenza</td>
<td>1549</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Poitiers</td>
<td>1524</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Amiens</td>
<td>1555</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>1482</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Ratisbon</td>
<td>1570</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Angers</td>
<td>1489</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Esztergom</td>
<td>1501</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Rennes</td>
<td>1523</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Aquileia</td>
<td>1519</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Freisingen</td>
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<td>Hamburg</td>
<td>1509</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>St Malo</td>
<td>1503</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Arras</td>
<td>1508</td>
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<td>Hildesheim</td>
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<td>Saragosse</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Barking</td>
<td>1404</td>
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<td>Langres</td>
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<td>Liege</td>
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<td>Bremen</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Lund</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>1495</td>
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<td>Bursfeld</td>
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<td>1513</td>
<td>46</td>
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<td>48</td>
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<td>1504</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Chezal-Benoit</td>
<td>1531</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Oma</td>
<td>1561</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Verdun</td>
<td>1481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Cologne</td>
<td>1494</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Palencia</td>
<td>1568</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Wurzburg</td>
<td>1477</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Cordoba</td>
<td>1561</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Passau</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10b. Evidence for the single production of fire: 1400-1570.

(References are given below)

References for Table 10a


References for Table 10b

Chapter Three

THE BLESSING OF THE NEW FIRE

(i) Preliminary procession: psalms, litany, and reading.

In many of our sources mention is made of a procession of clergy and people to the place where the new fire was to be kindled; and the negative characteristic of movement in silence is found in a number of the early ordines. Included amongst these are three ordines Romani, the Pontificale Romano-Germanicum, the ordo at Corbie mentioned by Martène, and the Customary of the German Monasteries, all of which are of northern Gallican provenance, and were compiled before AD 1000.

At a relatively early date and almost certainly originating in a monastic milieu where liturgical experimentation and elaboration of ceremonial were more likely to have occurred, a preliminary procession took place either to the accompaniment of or followed by the chanting of the first or all of the penitential psalms. The earliest recorded use of Psalm 50 on this occasion comes from Farfa at the beginning of the eleventh century; but the practice may have originated at Cluny in the tenth century. Table 11 shows that it featured prominently within the monastic tradition; and survived in places into the sixteenth century. On the other hand the chanting of all seven psalms, either during the procession to the new fire or at the place where the fire had been kindled, was a feature of the rites of a number of central European churches, even though it is first attested in the French monastery of Corbie.

(Tables 13 and 14.) At Breslau and Würzburg the procession moved around the fire as the psalms were being chanted, nine circumambulations being accomplished at the latter church; whilst at Breslau and Ratisbon banners were borne in the procession. Both features seem suspiciously to be survivals of pre-Christian ritual.

In a number of French diocesan rites a litany was sung during the

1 There was no procession in the Cistercian rite (Nov. Cist. p.104), or in churches such as Lyon Cathedral, where the new fire was kindled at the altar.  
2 Or 26.9; Or 29.17; Or 31.63.  
3 PPG II p.58 8220.  
4 DAMR 3.13.34 p.126 (M1145).  
5 Albers V p.32.  
6 It is just possible that the mention of this one psalm was in some service-books an abbreviated rubric; and that the chanting of the other six psalms was to be understood.  
7 1519 Missal fol.lxxix.  
8 1477 Ordinary np.  
9 1570 Obsequiale np.
blessing of the fire. Although all of the evidence is comparatively late, the fact that this feature is attested over a wide area of France would suggest that it belongs to Gallican practice during the Middle Ages. At St Bertrand and Mende it was sung by six choristers who remained in the choir. Whilst the fire was being consecrated at Cahors, a senior cleric chanted the reading from the Second Book of Maccabees which commemorated the discovery by Nehemiah of the sacred fire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/Commentator</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cluny</td>
<td>10 C</td>
<td>Albers II p.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farfa</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Albers I p.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruttuaria*</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Albers II p.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gembloux*</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Albers IV p.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Benigne, Dijon</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>DAMR 3.13.34 p.126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John of Avranches</td>
<td>c.1070</td>
<td>PL 147.49A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lanfranc</td>
<td>c.1070</td>
<td>PL 150.446D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magd. Coll.Pont.</td>
<td>12 C</td>
<td>HBS 39 p.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avranches</td>
<td>12 C</td>
<td>DAER 4.24.3 p.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evesham</td>
<td>c.1250</td>
<td>HBS 6 col.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich*</td>
<td>c.1265</td>
<td>HBS 82 p.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Vedast, Arras+</td>
<td>c.1300</td>
<td>HBS 86 p.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>14 C</td>
<td>Missal p.185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reims</td>
<td>14 C</td>
<td>DAER 4.22.5 p.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camaldolese</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>Missal fol.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vallombrosa</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>Missal fol.xci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmelites</td>
<td>1504</td>
<td>Missal fol.xcv</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Psalm 42 was also sung.
+ The point at which it was sung is not stated.
@ Psalm 24 was also sung.

Table 11. Psalm 50 sung in procession.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salisbury</td>
<td>c.1486</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxxiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgos</td>
<td>1546</td>
<td>Missal fol.ciii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palencia</td>
<td>1568</td>
<td>Missal fol.c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12. Psalm 26 sung in procession.

1 At Breslau a litany was sung at the end of the blessing (op.cit.).
2 Paris (1666 Missal p.238); Sées (1742 Missal p.185); Carcassonne (1749 Missal p.194); St Bertrand (1773 Missal p.209); Mende (1766 Missal p.199); Luçon (1828 Missal p.213); La Rochelle (1835 Missal p.186); Autun (1845 Missal p.239).
3 1773 Missal p.209 and 1766 Missal p.199 respectively.
4 1760 Missal p.172.
5 2 Macc 1:18ff.
Table 13. Seven penitential psalms sung in procession to the new fire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meissen</td>
<td>c.1500</td>
<td>Breviary np</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halberstadt</td>
<td>c.1505</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainz</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>Missal fol.xcii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salzburg</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>Missal fol.xciii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spires</td>
<td>1512</td>
<td>Agenda fol.xciii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abo</td>
<td>1522</td>
<td>Manual p.130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14. Seven penitential psalms sung at the new fire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corbie</td>
<td>10 C</td>
<td>PL 78.336D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cologne</td>
<td>12 C</td>
<td>DAER 4.24.3 p.145 (MS Gg 15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strasbourg</td>
<td>1364</td>
<td>DAER 4.24 p.162(M35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wurzburg</td>
<td>1477</td>
<td>Ordinary np</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freising</td>
<td>1487</td>
<td>Missal fol.ciii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trier</td>
<td>1487</td>
<td>Missal fol.cii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prague</td>
<td>1498</td>
<td>Missal fol.xci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passau</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxxiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breslau</td>
<td>1519</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratisbon</td>
<td>1570</td>
<td>Ritual np</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) The formulas*

The forty or so surviving prayers¹ or benediction-formulas for the blessing of the newly-kindled fire² belong to two main categories: those which were specifically composed as benediction-formulas for the hallowing of the new fire, and those, already in existence within related liturgical situations, which were adapted or reapplied to the circumstances appertaining to the new fire ceremony. The prayers belonging to the former group were composed in response to the adoption by the Church of the pagan practice of kindling new fire. Others, inherited from well-established ceremonies, such as the Lucernarium, contain no

¹ These all appear in Appendix 5.
² Within the tradition in which the Easter candle was lit with fire that had been reserved and not newly kindled (Mode B1, p.101), this act of benediction was unnecessary since the fire was presumably taken from an already-consecrated flame. In this situation it is not clear whether a perpetual supply of consecrated fire was maintained from year to year, or whether fire was kindled as and when it was required, and consecrated on each occasion with a minimum of ceremony by a simple act of benediction.

* See References on p.130.
overt references to the production of the new fire; but their references to light and illumination rendered them suitable for adoption as blessings of the new fire.

(a) The use of one formula.

It subsequently became common practice to hallow the new fire using two or more prayers. Earlier practice, however, was to pronounce only one blessing, a feature which survived in a number of non-Roman rites (Table 15), and since 1955 has been part of the Roman rite itself. The use of a single prayer is found in the Mozarabic rite, the older Ambrosian rite, the Beneventan rite, and in the earlier English rite. Likewise one formula is attested in the eighth-century Sacramentary of Prague¹ and in PRG.²

(b) The use of two or more formulas.

The earliest evidence for the existence of more than one prayer for the blessing of the new fire is to be found in PRG. Although this pontifical contains three benediction-formulas, it is almost certain that only one was uttered each time that the new fire was blessed. The three prayers of PRG (viz. A, B1, C) are separated from each other by the rubrical word aliqua, which indicates that a choice of formula existed for the officiating priest. This choice is also found in the twelfth-century Pontificale Romanum³ and in the Pontifical of the Roman Curia;⁴ and in the thirteenth-century Ritual of Evesham aliqua appears between the two prayers which that book records. In subsequent Roman documents and other service-books which contain two or more benediction-formulas (Tables 16-18), there is no indication that a choice existed. In some rites this may suggest that all the prescribed prayers were said. However, in other rites, such as the Roman, in which the new fire could be kindled with either a flint or a lens, presumably benediction-formulas

¹ The prayer for the blessing of the fire in this sacramentary (§ 96) follows the Exultet (§ 95). Its position here suggests that it was a later insertion which made provision for the kindling of the fire. GePr is the only Gelasian sacramentary to record such a formula. Had it been intended for the blessing of Good Friday's reserved fire (§ 94), it would surely have been placed in close proximity to the relevant rubric.
² For the difficulty presented by PRG, see below, p.126.
³ PR XII.xxxii p.238.
⁴ PRG xliv p.470. Only Manuscripts C and E of Durand's Pontifical (PGD) record aliqua (p.587).
such as A and S, would have been omitted, when the latter means of kindling fire was used, in view of the explicit reference in those prayers to silex.

The influence will be noticed of PRG, either directly or through its adoption by the Roman Church, in the use of the benediction-formulas A, B, and C in churches where three or more prayers were said at the blessing of the new fire. The adoption of Roman practice is well illustrated in the Cistercian rite in which the single prayer of the 1487 Missal was replaced in 1669 by the three formulas from the Roman Missal, and in the rite of Braga where in 1558 those same three prayers took the place of Formula B2e of the 1512 Missal.

Within the Ambrosian rite an interesting development occurred. According to the eleventh-century Manuale Ambrosianum\(^1\) a single prayer

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\(^1\) *MWLA* II p. 199. *Excluding the Veniat quaesumus.*

Table 15. One prayer for the blessing of the new fire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Rite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beneventum</td>
<td>c. 1000</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vallombrosa</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Besançon</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rupert of Deutz</td>
<td>c. 1111</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Benedictines</td>
<td>1481</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Usès</td>
<td>1495</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bursfeld</td>
<td>1498</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Valence</td>
<td>1504</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Soville</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Narbonne</td>
<td>1528</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Bayonne</td>
<td>1543</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Besançon</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Reims</td>
<td>1770</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Meaux</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>A(_1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Mozarabic</td>
<td>10 C</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Wulfstan</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>B(_1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Palermo</td>
<td>c. 1130</td>
<td>B(_1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Lateran Missal</td>
<td>13 C</td>
<td>B(_1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Tours</td>
<td>13 C</td>
<td>B(_1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>St Denys</td>
<td>c. 1273</td>
<td>B(_1)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Cistercians</td>
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<td>B(_1)</td>
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<td>Hildesheim*</td>
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<td>Amiens</td>
<td>1555</td>
<td>B(_1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Prague Sacr.</td>
<td>8 C</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Egbert Pont.</td>
<td>10 C</td>
<td>B(_2a)</td>
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<td>St Bénéigne, Dijon</td>
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<td>B(_2a)</td>
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<td>Barking*</td>
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<td>B(_2a)</td>
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<td>1524</td>
<td>B(_2a)</td>
</tr>
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<td>St Martin</td>
<td>1531</td>
<td>B(_2a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Milan</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>B(_2b)</td>
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<td>1038</td>
<td>B(_2c)</td>
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<td>B(_5c)</td>
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<td>43</td>
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<td>St Épvre, Toul</td>
<td>14 C</td>
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<td>Rheinau</td>
<td>1114</td>
<td>B(_9)</td>
</tr>
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<td>46</td>
<td>Milan</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>B(_11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Bec</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>?C</td>
</tr>
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<td>48</td>
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<td>c. 1400</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Tongres</td>
<td>15 C</td>
<td>?C</td>
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<td>Vich</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>Beneventum</td>
<td>c. 1100</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>Sacr-Vetus</td>
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<td>J</td>
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<td>63</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Cambrai</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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is used for the blessing of the fire. However, Manuscript M of the manuale records a tradition in which a triple blessing is used\(^1\) and these three prayers were incorporated into the Am\(\text{brosian M}^b\)issal of 1475. The number was reduced to two in the 1560 Missal; increased to three in the 1594 and 1669 Missals; and reduced to a single formula in 1902.

It is possible to explain the presence in a rite of two or more prayers for the blessing of the fire in a number of ways. (i) We have already noted that the benediction-formula for the new fire produced by friction could not necessarily be pronounced over fire kindled by means of a lens. An alternative prayer would be required. (ii) With the incorporation of the new fire ceremony into the liturgy of the Vigil it was perhaps inevitable that the prayer with which the lamp was blessed at the commencement of the Lucernarium should be reapplied to the new fire, having been displaced as a benediction of the light by the Exultet and Preface.\(^2\) (iii) Similarly, as a result of the universal adoption of the Exultet/Preface formula for the blessing of the Easter candle and the consequent displacement of the older blessing, Deus mundi Conditor, this latter prayer and in particular its concluding pericope, which, as the Veniat quaesumus, became a prayer in its own right, was reassigned to a different function and, in the isolated instances where it survived, became associated with the consecration of the new fire, and not the Easter candle as formerly. (iv) The acquisition of additional formulas for the blessing of the new fire may in some instances have been the result of borrowing from different liturgical traditions. (v) At St Augustine's abbey, Canterbury\(^3\) in the thirteenth century and at Reims\(^4\) during the following century it was the practice to use a different prayer for the blessing of the fire on each day of the Triduum. It is possible that this arrangement obtained in other churches whose service-books prescribed three prayers.

(c) A survey of the formulas and their contents.

(i) Benediction-formulas A, S, P, J. These four prayers appertain specifically to the act of kindling fire. The first two relate to a situation in which the fire is produced by means of a flint; and in J we have a blessing of the fire kindled by the refraction of the sun's rays through a lens. The reference to lapis in Formula P would suggest fire by friction in view of the use of the verb prosilire to describe

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1 MVLA II p.198.  
2 See below, Part IV Chapter 10.  
3 Missal pp.36,37,39.  
4 DABER 4.22.5 p.97 (M 261).
Table 16. Two prayers for the blessing of the new fire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
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<th>Formula</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>A</td>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Minden</td>
<td>1513</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cahors</td>
<td>1760</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Poitiers</td>
<td>1767</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Périgueux</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Le Puy</td>
<td>1783</td>
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<td>B1</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>York</td>
<td>12 C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>1503</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Passau</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lisieux</td>
<td>1752</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>1495</td>
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<td>1578</td>
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</tr>
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<td>13 C</td>
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<td>1561</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Carmelites</td>
<td>1664</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>B1</td>
</tr>
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The manner in which the fire appeared. This, the sole prayer for the blessing of the fire contained in the Missal of Burgos, is inapposite for the kindling of fire by refraction; yet the Missal gives this means as an alternative to fire by friction. However, the difficulty largely disappears if lapis can also be interpreted 'gem' or 'precious stone'. The word would then refer to a beryl or some other translucent stone with which the fire was produced by refraction.

(ii) B-category benediction formulas (B – B10). Formulas B1 to B10 are all variants of a common original; and it is claimed that their Western archetype is the prayer for the first blessing of the lamp in the Mozarabic rite, Formula B. All share a similar structure, and have common themes and close linguistic affinities. God is addressed as both the 'unfailing light' (lumen indeficiens) and the creator and source of all light. The petition for the blessing of the light is followed by a request for a share in that light and for inward illumination. The reference in the Spanish prayer (B) to 'the light....which we bear in our hands' and the emphasis of the prayer on light as opposed to fire strongly suggest that this benediction-formula, and by extension the variants within this same group, was the prayer, or the development of the prayer, formerly used in the daily (or weekly) office of the Lucernarium for the blessing of the lamp; and there is no reason to disagree with Kenneth Stevenson's view that in view of the similarity in structure and theme with the blessing of the light in the Byzantine tradition this prayer and its variant forms in other Western rites derives from a common

2 Stevenson, ibidem p.182. • Excluding the Veniat quaesumus.
<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Evesham</td>
<td>c.1250</td>
<td>B1 D G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Cosenza</td>
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<td>38</td>
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<td>B2a B7b F</td>
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</tr>
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<td>B4 D G</td>
</tr>
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<td>1492</td>
<td>B5a D G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
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<td>11 C + 1475</td>
<td>B6 O E</td>
</tr>
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<td>1768</td>
<td>B6 O C1</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Auch</td>
<td>c.1000</td>
<td>L B2a D</td>
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</table>

Table 17. Three prayers for the blessing of the new fire.*

Jerusalem original. However, the claim that Formula B of the Mozarabic rite is the Western archetype of the rest of the B-category benediction-formulas must be challenged, since it has yet to be shown that Spanish influence was a major factor in the development of the other Western rites. Elsewhere,¹ we have argued that the Mozarabic liturgy of Holy Saturday assumed its final form as a result of Gallican influence. In

¹ See Appendix 13.

* See also Table 20 on p.125.
view of the widespread incidence of B-category prayers, and of their presence in the Milanese rite, and in the early Gallican rite as attested in the Prague Sacramentary, it is more likely that they all derive from an archetype which was the prayer from the Lucernarium for the blessing of the lamp, inherited from the Jerusalem rite; and that the differences of language and theme were the result of their use in a number of different liturgical traditions over several centuries.

We noted above that the theme of light was prominent in the Mozarabic benediction-formula B. This accords well with the suggestion that the prayer originates in the office of the Lucernarium. Moreover, it is significant that the prayer is used, not for the hallowing of the new fire as in other Western traditions, but for the blessing of the light of the lamp lit with the new fire. Further support for the Lucernarium origin of the variant B-category benediction-formulas is provided by the fact that the petition in Formulas B1, B2, B3, B8, B9, and B10 is also for the blessing of the light rather than of the new fire. The blessing of the latter is sought in Formulas B4, B5, and B6; whilst Formulas B7a and B7b both refer to the 'light of this new fire'. In view of the likely origin of these prayers they must rank amongst the earliest surviving benediction-formulas for the blessing of the new fire.

(iii) The Mosaic motif. Unlike the Mozarabic benediction-formula B whose pre-eminent theme is the permeation of God's light throughout creation, the remaining B-category prayers (with the exception of B5) include a reference to the pillar of fire which preceded Moses and the Israelites as they departed from Egypt, and in this way link the provision and the blessing of the new fire closely with the Passover, the

Table 18. Four or more prayers for the blessing of the fire.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>13 C</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B1</th>
<th>C</th>
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</tr>
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<td>U</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>1507</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>DMC</td>
<td>B2a</td>
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<td>D</td>
</tr>
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<td>A</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
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<td>1522</td>
<td>DMC</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>(8)</td>
<td>Braga*</td>
<td>1558</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>1568</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>B1</td>
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</table>

* Found only in MS Vat.Lat.1154.
+ Formula I follows blessing of incense.

1 GePr p.57. * See also Table 20 on p.125.
dominant theme of the Holy Saturday Vigil in the Romano-Gallican tradition. The column of fire in the Book of Exodus not only foreshadowed the flame of the Easter candle at the Christian Passover; it was seen as a fiery manifestation of the Lord's presence, as was His appearance to Moses in the Burning Bush. In the same way, therefore, that a reference to God's use of this element was inserted into the above-mentioned B-category prayers, thus forging a thematic link between the new fire ceremony and the Vigil itself, His appearance to Moses in the Burning Bush was also commemorated in a group of benediction-formulas: F, Y, B8, and B9. For the Mosaic motif which ran through the Paschal vigil included incidents from the life of the Old Testament lawgiver other than his passing through the Red Sea. Formula B9 also makes reference to Moses' mission to Pharaoh and to his ascent of Mt Sinai. Moreover, it is significant that in the shorter Vigil-tradition there are a number of instances where two of the four prophecies were the Mosaic readings, viz. Ex. 14:24-15:1 and Dt 31:22-30.

(iv) Fire-concepts inherited from paganism. (1) According to the purificatory theory for the origin of fire-festivals, first propounded by E. Westermarck and favoured by J. G. Frazer, the new fire acted as a cleansing agent and a disinfectant, and the purpose of its being kindled was to destroy all harmful influences, such as witches and disease, which threatened the survival of a community. This pagan belief is echoed in Formula J. Closely linked to and almost certainly deriving from this belief is the petition, expressed in Formulas O, T, and in B-category prayers, for the eradication of sin within ourselves and for spiritual purification. (2) The pre-Christian belief that the harnessing and control of fire gives power to the possessor is discussed in Chapter 8. Formula C would appear to express this notion, and to warn that power deriving from the possession of fire is important since that element is also used by the Devil.

1 In the prayer following the second blessing of the lamp in the Mozarabic rite, there are references to the departure from Egypt and to the pillar of fire. (Pinell, La Benedicció p.116.)


3 With four or five prophecies as opposed to twelve.

4 In OR 28, and in the Missals of Salisbury, Mainz, Verdun, Passau, Bressanone, Eichstadt, and Palencia amongst others. These two prophecies were retained in the Roman rite when the number was reduced from twelve to four in 1955; and the former was the only reading to be made obligatory of the nine prescribed for the Vigil in the revised Missal of 1970.

5 Golden Bough Vol.10 pp.342ff.
(v) The Deus mundi Conditor. This prayer was originally a formula for the blessing of the Easter candle,¹ but as such was replaced universally by the Exultet/Proface. It survived, however, as a prayer for the consecration of the new fire, the flame of the newly-hallowed candle forming a dominant theme. In each of the instances in which it is recorded as a benediction-formula for the new fire (Table 19), it is difficult to know whether it had formerly served as a prayer for the blessing of the Easter candle, or whether it was borrowed from another rite. In the rite of Salzburg it is clearly derived from PRG. In all six instances listed below the Exultet/Proface was used to bless the Easter candle.

<table>
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<td>Aquileia</td>
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<td>Abo</td>
<td>c.1522</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ratisbon</td>
<td>1570</td>
<td>Ritual np</td>
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Table 19. The use of DMC as a new fire blessing.

(vi) The Veniat quaesumus. This prayer, which subsequently became the formula for the blessing of the five grains of incense in a large number of rites including the Roman,² formed the final pericope of the Deus mundi Conditor, being a concluding petition for God's blessing on the Easter candle which had been kindled shortly before. As such it is found in the Gelasian Sacramentary³ and contains the phrase super hunc incensum,⁴ 'on this lighted candle'. A subsequent request in the prayer invites God to 'intensify the splendour of this night' (hunc nocturnum splendorem intende). Detached from the DMC and an independent prayer for the blessing of the new fire, it is first encountered in PRG, and then in the subsequent documents which are listed in Table 20. In the former pontifical it follows the benediction-formulas A, B₁, and C, and

1 See Part IV Chapter 10 pp.289-90.
2 As such, it is found in PR XII (xxxii.5 p.239) and subsequent Roman documents. The prayer is also found as a blessing of (i) the incense in the thurible (p.272), (ii) the cereus minor (p.291), and (iii) the Easter candle itself(p.290).
3 GeV p.69.
4 Incensum may be viewed in two ways. Either, it is the masculine form of the perfect participle of the verb incendere, used as a noun to mean 'a lighted candle' - compare the adjective cereus, which regularly had the force of the noun 'candle' - or, it is the perfect participle used as an adjective with the noun cereus understood.
forms a fourth prayer for the blessing of the new fire. The rubric which immediately precedes it, oratio postquam incenditur, 1 indicates that the prayer was uttered after the small candle, used for bearing the new fire, had been lit. It is now the small candle, and no longer the Easter candle, over which the Veniat quaesumus is said; and the emphasis of the blessing is on the fire and not the candle. This is clear from the phrase in the prayer super hoc incensum, 'on this fire', which has replaced super hunc incensum of the Gelasian Sacramentary. 2

The possibility of confusion arising over the use of incensum, which had widely displaced the earlier term for incense, was recognised at least at Verdun. In the Veniat quaesumus of that church's 1481 Missal, ignem has replaced incensum in the above-mentioned phrase.

(vii) General prayers and further observations. A number of prayers are simple petitions for God's hallowing of the new fire. To this group belong Formulas D, E, G, I, K, M, and O. The first of these asks that the new fire may benefit mankind. Formula L, which is attested at Cluny and St Florian for the blessing of the new fire, is strictly a prayer to be used at Candlemas. Formula Q, found as a blessing of the fire

1 Also found in the Pontifical of St-Germain-des-Prés (M230).
2 A later modification to the prayer centred around the above-mentioned imperative intende, 'intensify', found in GeV. In PRG, the Pontifical of St Germain-des-Prés, and other documents this command has become attende, 'pay heed to' 'observe' (the splendour of this night). When the prayer was subsequently changed into a blessing of the incense, the verb in question underwent a further change and became accende, 'kindle'. In 1955 when the Veniat quaesumus reverted to its original function as a preliminary blessing of the Easter candle - at Bourges it had continued to serve this purpose (see p. 291) - the former request, intende, was restored to the text.

* Atchley (p.139) also cites the 1752 Missal of Lisieux and the 1778 Missal of Narbonne.
only in the Leofric Missal, is excerpted from the Preface for the blessing of the Easter candle. At Fruttuaria the Pater noster preceded the blessing of the fire; and at Seville Formula A was followed by the Deus qui divitias, a prayer which was said in other rites prior to the reading of the prophecies. At Würzburg a short threefold litany was sung: V. Ut ignem istum benedicere digneris; R. Te rogamus audí nos.¹ In the romanised Sacramentary of Vich the use of Formula B1 for the blessing of the light and Formula E for the new fire derived from Mozarabic practice. Formula R, attested at Beauvais and Strasbourg in the eighteenth century, is introduced in the respective rituals of those churches as a blessing of the Easter candle on a day other than Holy Saturday. It was prescribed for use in the event of the flame of the Easter candle failing during the period it was supposed to burn continuously. In some service-books, such as those of Würzburg and Aquileia, the benediction-formulas are mentioned but not given. In the Missal of the latter church they are said to be contained 'in the Pontifical'.² There are a number of instances where only the opening words of the prayers are given. However, only at Tongres is there some doubt about how the first three words were meant to be continued.

(viii) The Pontificale Romano-Germanicum. We have already touched upon the seemingly-double blessing of the new fire on page 103, and have suggested that this twofold hallowing represents a synthesis of two separate liturgical traditions. The DMC, pronounced on Holy Saturday, was strictly an offering of the lighted candle, a blessing of the berakah-type rather than an invocatory benediction. The use on Holy Saturday of Formula H³ which follows the DMC presents a greater problem, since the blessing of the fire is quite clearly stated: benedicimus ignem. The formula, however, continues: 'and we sanctify it (the fire) together with the wax and all its component elements....'⁴ The presence and use of this prayer presents less of a difficulty if, in view of the second clause, we regard the formula as a blessing of the small candle, soon to be lit, which supplements the oblationary expressions of the DMC.

1 1477 Ordinary np. 2 1519 Missal p.91.
3 Although this prayer is recorded only in Manuscript C, its survival together with the DMC at Salzburg suggests that its use was not confined to a minor tradition.
4 '...et eum cum cera et omnibus eius alimoniis sanctificamus...'

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(iii) Aspersion and incensation

Although documentary evidence for the sprinkling with holy water and the censing of the new fire exists only from the eleventh century, it is likely that this twofold ritual at the new fire ceremony goes back much further in time. The earlier evidence for these two acts is presented in Table 21. There is no reference to them in the twelfth-century Pontificale Romanum, though their omission from this pontifical should not necessarily be regarded as conclusive evidence for their absence from the Roman rite at that time. A number of later missals do not contain rubrics relating to the two rituals; but one suspects that in most of these instances they formed features of the rites, since the evidence for the twofold act after 1500 is plentiful. Attestation of their occurrence at Milan dates only from 1560.†

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/Commentator</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St.Benigne, Dijon</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>DAMR 3.13.34 p.126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John of Avranches</td>
<td>c.1070</td>
<td>PL 147.49A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evesham</td>
<td>6.1250</td>
<td>HBS 6 col.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>c.1265</td>
<td>HBS 82 p.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salisbury</td>
<td>13 C</td>
<td>Missal pp.265-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>13 C</td>
<td>PGD 5.588 &amp; 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>14 C</td>
<td>Missal p.186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reims</td>
<td>14 C</td>
<td>DAER 4.22.5 p.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>1474</td>
<td>Missal p.175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21. Aspersion and incensation of the new fire.

According to Lanfranc's Decrees the new fire is only aspersed; and it is significant that an act of incensation is prescribed in that same work during the blessing of the Easter candle. A similar arrangement is also found in the older Cistercian rite and in the fourteenth-century Westminster Missal. It is unlikely, however, that there is any direct connection between the omission of incensation at the new fire ceremony and the censing of the Easter candle during the singing of the Preface, since at Durham, Evesham, and Norwich the new fire and the Easter candle were honoured with incense.

The Missale Romanum of 1474 does not state the number of times the

1 Customary of St Benigne's, Dijon (DAMR 3.13.34 p.126, M 1150).
2 PL 150.467A.
3 Guignard pp.116-17.
4 HBS 5 col.576.
+ DAER 4.24 p.169.

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new fire was to be aspersed and censed. Later Roman \(^1\) and other diocesan\(^2\) missals, as well as liturgical manuals,\(^3\) specify three times. At Lesnes the fire was aspersed and censed after it had been brought into church.\(^4\) Throughout the history of the new fire ceremony the order has been invariably aspersion followed by incensation.

(iv) The officiant

The preparation and kindling of the new fire were preliminary and functional duties comparable with the lighting of the lamps and candles before the start of Tenebrae, and could therefore be performed by a lay person; and though we shall shortly consider instances in which it was either obligatory or considered desirable that a person possessing sacerdotal authority should kindle the new fire, it seems very likely that in many churches the production of fire was included amongst the duties of the sacristan. The greater importance attached to the blessing of the fire, as opposed to the kindling of the fire, may well account for the fact the official responsible for the latter act is rarely mentioned in our sources. At Nidaros, Spires, Auch, Besançon, and Le Puy\(^5\) it was the responsibility of the sacristan, and of the sacristan's assistant at St Benigne's, Dijon.\(^6\) Amongst the Cistercians a servitor lit the fire.\(^7\) At Milan Cathedral in the eleventh century it was the duty of the cicendelarius, the official responsible for church illuminations, to prepare the new fire.\(^8\)

The different origins and subsequent development of the Mozarabic rite and the unusual circumstances in which the fire was kindled made it obligatory that a priest should perform this ritual act. Indeed in the cathedral churches it was the bishop himself who kindled the fire.\(^9\) The importance of the beryl in the production of fire at St Benigne's Dijon perhaps made it inevitable that one of the monastery's dignitaries should hold the lens.\(^10\) At Soissons in the late twelfth century

\(^1\) e.g. MR 1570.
\(^2\) e.g. Colt, Dictionarium IIp56. \(^3\) HBS 95 p.47.
\(^4\) ONE p.32; 1512 Agenda fol.xciii; 1836 Missal p.191; 1707 Ceremonial p.315; and 1836 Ceremonial p.373, respectively.
\(^5\) This person officiated only if the new fire was kindled from a stone (DAMR 3.13.34 p.126, M 1150).
\(^6\) 1689 Ritual p.245.
\(^7\) 1689 Ritual p.245. \(^8\) MVLA II p.198.
\(^9\) Antiphonary of Léon p.280 and Férotin & 86 for the older Mozarabic rite; PL 85.437.A for the Missale Mixtum.
\(^10\) DAMR 3.13.34 p.126 (M 1150).
the task of providing the new fire devolved upon a deacon.¹ This may have been the result of a desire to make the kindling of the new fire parallel and complementary to the archdeacon's blessing of the Easter candle. At Liège the fire was lit by the Treasurer,² and at Palencia by the priest on duty for the week.³

Within the Roman Church the official Caeremoniale Episcoporum of 1600 recommended that the new fire should be kindled by a bishop wherever possible.⁴ However, Roman service-books from PRG to the Missal of 1970 have always expressed the action of kindling the fire in the passive voice of the verb⁵ and have never specified an agent. Thus the performance of this duty by a sacristan is not precluded. Both before and after the Second Vatican Council the custom has been for a priest to kindle the new fire. French missals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are as non-committal as the Roman in this respect; but it seems likely that in those cathedrals in which the new fire is still kindled by the bishop or by a priest the ancient custom is perpetuated. In twenty-seven of thirty-eight cathedrals for which information is available,⁶ a bishop or a priest strikes the new fire; and in four cathedrals in which this is performed by the sacristan, the kindling may have been one of that official's traditional functions. In some places, following the reforms of 1955 which were intended to increase lay participation in the liturgy, the task of kindling the fire has been given to lay persons.⁶ This has happened at the Cathedrals of Agen, Bayeux, Belley, Digne, and Vannes. At Reims it is always a young lay person; and in the Cathedral of Troyes the duty of kindling the new fire is performed by a nun.

Whilst the kindling of the new fire could be performed by cleric or lay person alike, its commissioning for use in Christian worship required a sacerdotal blessing. Table 22 lists instances where the new fire is known to have been blessed by the bishop or the abbot in a cathedral or monastic church (overleaf). At Rome, where in the later Middle Ages the Pope was not always present at the ceremony, two other dignitaries presided: a minor cardinal priest⁷ or a minor cardinal deacon. At Salisbury the duty was performed by a priest, known as the 'executor';⁸ whilst at Naples the blessing was pronounced by the cimiliarcha, the

1. DAER 4.24 p.161, M 305.  2. 1492 Ordinary np.  
3. 1568 Missal fol.c.  4. 1600 typical edition p.296.  
5. See Table 38.  6. 1984 Survey of France.  
7. PR XII xiii.1 p.238.  8. Ordo Albini p.130.  
cathedral treasurer.\(^1\) In the Milanese rite the officiating priest was formerly a cardinal;\(^2\) but in more recent times this official is not specified.\(^3\) Martène informs us that at Arles\(^4\) and Soissons\(^5\) the duty was formerly carried out by a deacon.

By Abbot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regularis Concordia (PL 137.491B)</th>
<th>PRG (II p.95 § 342)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cistercians (Nom.Cist.p.104)</td>
<td>Corbe (PL 78.336B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesnes (HBS 95 p.47)</td>
<td>Toledo (Férotin § 86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evesham (HBS 6 col.80)</td>
<td>Rouen (PL 147.176A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Vedast, Arras (HBS 86 p.160)</td>
<td>Nidrosa (ONE p.232)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluny (1510 Missal fol.xlix)(^+)</td>
<td>Rome (PGD IV.2 p.587)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 'or another priest'. + 'or the celebrant'.

Table 22. The blessing of the new fire.

References

For the location of the benediction-formulas referred to in Tables 15-18, the reader is requested to consult the corresponding entry in the Key to the Bibliography on pages 373-75.

1 Constitutions of J. Orsini (Mallardo p.33).
2 MS M in MVLA II p.98; and 1475 Missal fol.lxxx.
6 According to the 1519 Missal of Vienne the archbishop blessed the new fire. However, the officiant is not mentioned in the 1782 Missal.
7 Cited by Jounel, Le Semaine Sainte p.147.
Chapter Four

THE PRODUCTION OF NEW FIRE. (1) TIME

(i) Within the tradition of the threefold kindling

(a) Maundy Thursday

According to Ordo 26, which is the earliest document to record a

time for this ceremony, the new fire was kindled at the ninth hour of

the day. This time became traditional for most churches which observed

the rite on Maundy Thursday. It is found in other early ordines and

in the Ordo of Corbie, in the Regularis Concordia and in Lanfranc's

Decrees, and in several of the eleventh-century monastic customs.

The Ritual of Evesham also records the same time. Since the Office of

None was sung at this hour, the phrase post nonam should not be inter­

preted in a strictly temporal sense with the meaning of 'at the end of

the ninth hour' that is, at the start of the tenth; it indicates simply

that the ceremony should take place at the conclusion of that office.

At St Mary's, York the fire was kindled during the singing of None. When

in the later Middle Ages the services of the Triduum came to be antic­

ipated, the new fire ceremony and the Office of None continued to take

place in conjunction with one another. However, by the sixteenth cent­

ury, when the new fire came to be kindled during the morning of Holy

Saturday, the link between the two ceremonies was generally no longer

maintained. At Bayonne in that century the new fire was struck at

9.00 a.m. The rubric in the missal of that church strongly suggests

that hora nona was now understood to refer to the modern system of

reckoning time.

In the period before the ceremony began to be held by anticipation

on Holy Saturday morning, two documents record exceptions to the time

of the ninth hour viz. Poitiers and PRG. We propose to discuss Poitiers

presently. The latter pontifical, together with Alcuin, is unique in

1 OR 26.3. On 18 March, the earliest day on which Maundy Thursday can

fall, the ninth hour would have lasted from approximately 2.10 p.m.

to 3.10 p.m. On 22 April, the latest date for Maundy Thursday, the

same period would last from approximately 2.22 p.m. to 3.33 p.m. by

modern reckoning. The figures relate to the fiftieth parallel.

2 For references for these and subsequent documents, see Tables 23 &24.

3 Strictly there are three. Alcuin (PL 101.1205c) derives from PRG

and contains identical information to that found in the pontifical.

It cannot be regarded here as an independent source.
### Table 23. The earlier evidence of times within the tradition of the threefold production of new fire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Hour of New Fire</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 26 (8 C)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>MT 26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 28 (c.800)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>OR 28.25 &amp; .58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 29 (9 C)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>OR 29.29 &amp; .45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 31 (9 C)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>OR 31.29 &amp; .62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poitiers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pont. p. 138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularis Concordis (c.970)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>PL 137.491B/494C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo of Corbie</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>DAMR 3.13.34 p.126 (M 1145)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 24. The later evidence of times within the tradition of the threefold production of new fire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/Document</th>
<th>Hour of New Fire</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cluny (11 C)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>PL 149.658D,661C, 663A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farfa (11 C)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>PL 150.1198D,1201C, 1203C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avellana (11 C)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>PL 151.880D &amp;.883A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Benigne, Dijon (11 C)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>DAMR 3.13.34 p.126 (M1150)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gembloux (11 C)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Albers II pp.96,99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Monasteries (11 C)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lanfranc (c.1070)</td>
<td>(9)&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>PL 150.466D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Germain-des-Près (12 C)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>DAER 4.23-4 p.135 and p.158 (M 230)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evesham (c.1250)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>HBS 6 col.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norwich (c.1265)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>HBS 82 p.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury (13 C)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>HBS 28 p.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary, York (c.1400)</td>
<td>DN</td>
<td>HBS 75 p.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salzburg (1507)</td>
<td>9/5</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxxv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluny (1510)</td>
<td>AN</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braga (1512)</td>
<td>AN</td>
<td>Missal np</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayonne (1543)</td>
<td>9.00 a.m. 9.00 a.m. 9.00 a.m.</td>
<td>Missal p.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup> Implied in PL 150.467B. 2 Almost certainly 9th hour on each day.

AN = After None  DN = During None
recognising that the amount of daylight on Maundy Thursday depends on when that day falls, and makes allowance for the variation in the lengths of the days.

At the ninth hour when the days are longer or at the fifth hour when they are shorter...¹

Any interpretation of this information seems fraught with difficulties. On first examination the rubric appears to recognise that on the longer days, that is, from 5 to 22 April the new fire was to be struck at the ninth hour (between approximately 2.22 p.m. and 3.33 p.m.); and that on the shorter days, between 18 March and 4 April, the ceremony was to take place at some time between approximately 11.08 a.m. and 12.08 p.m., which period is by former reckoning the fifth hour. Unfortunately the pontifical does not define shorter and longer days so that the division we have suggested, though a reasonable one, must remain tentative. On the other hand it could be argued that the fifth hour and the ninth hour respectively represent the times for the new fire on the earliest and latest dates when Maundy Thursday can fall. This presupposes that an adjustable scale of times was in operation for the kindling of the new fire to accommodate the varying dates on which Maundy Thursday fell.

Thus, for example, on 5 April, which lies midway between the two extremes, the new fire would be struck at the seventh hour, or by modern reckoning between approximately 12.08 p.m. and 1.14 p.m. The medieval churchmen of Mainz may not have used such a scale that featured the exactitude of modern chronometry; but that they adjusted the time for the ceremony between the two extremes of the fifth and the ninth hours is not an unreasonable assumption. To the modern mind, however, a differential of four hours between the two extremes of times at which the new fire ceremony took place seems excessive, since the length of daylight on 18 March at the one extreme is approximately twelve hours by modern reckoning, but on 22 April a little over fourteen hours. The view cannot be sustained that the variation in time was prescribed so as to facilitate the kindling of fire by the refraction of the sun's rays. A lens may be used for this purpose both at an earlier and at a later time of day than the two times prescribed by the pontifical.

Two suggestions may be advanced to explain the occurrence of this variation in times, not attested independently elsewhere.² (a) It may be argued that, since PRG is a composite document, amongst the diverse

¹ PRG II p.57 § 215 = Alcuin (PL 101.1205C). ² See p.131 n.3.
elements in its composition is a choice of times for the new fire which come from differing liturgical traditions; and that in order to accommodate or justify the retention of both times, the fifth hour was assigned to those days when Maundy Thursday fell before 5 April and the ninth hour to those that followed that date. For in spite of the strong evidence of the earlier ordines for the kindling of the new fire at the ninth hour, the evidence of Poitiers, which prescribes the sixth hour on Maundy Thursday, shows that an earlier time was not unknown at this period. Moreover, it is significant that a twelfth-century pontifical from St-Germain-des-Prés records the time of the fifth hour for the new fire. However, we cannot be sure whether this represents a survival of the earlier and alternative tradition we suggest may have existed, or whether that church in question originally observed the times enjoined by PRG, and subsequently opted for the fifth hour as their normal time for the ceremony regardless of the date on which Maundy Thursday fell.

(b) The striking of the new fire at the earlier time may have been the result of a concern about the weather. The compilers of the pontifical were obviously not unaware of the possibility of having inclement weather at the time that the new fire was kindled. It could be argued that in mid to late March the temperature is higher at the fifth hour than at the ninth hour, or at least that the weather is more likely to appear favourable in the late morning to a congregation assembled in the open air for a ceremony which ideally should take place out of doors.

Although John of Avranches and Rupert of Deutz both refer to the blessing of the new fire on Maundy Thursday, neither writer specifies the time at which the ceremony was to take place. The omission of this information may possibly indicate that in the rites of the two churches with which these writers were familiar the times for this ceremony were flexible. For it seems most unlikely that they both inadvertently omitted to mention the time on this day, especially as both record the times for the ceremony on Good Friday and on Holy Saturday.

1 Support for a time inherited from an alternative tradition might come, it could be argued, from the fact that in the rubrics of PRG for Good Friday the new fire is brought at the fifth hour, if it could be proved that within this tradition Good Friday was the original day on which the new fire was produced; and that, when the ceremony was extended to the other two days of the Triduum, the need for liturgical symmetry demanded the same hour on those days also. The kindling of the new fire at the seventh hour on Holy Saturday in PRG, however, makes it difficult to theorise with confidence concerning this alternative tradition.

2 Martimort suggested that the pontifical may have originated at Trier. 3 Lib.de Off.Eccl (PL 147.49A) and De Div.Off.V (PL 170.149A), respect-
(b) Good Friday

The evidence for the blessing of the new fire on Good Friday shows that a greater variety of times existed at which the ceremony was performed than on Maundy Thursday. This is perhaps not surprising in view of the other ceremonies held during the afternoon of Good Friday, and the difficulty perhaps experienced by some churches in accommodating this ceremony at the usual time of the ninth hour. FRG and the pontifical from St-Germain-des-Prés enjoin the fifth hour of the day, and Poitiers the sixth. The new fire ceremony, held at these times, would have taken place before the Passion. According to Ordo 29 the ritual took place at the eighth hour, possibly between the Veneration and the Mass of the Presanctified. However, of the sources which record a time for Good Friday the majority prescribe the hour that was observed in most churches on Maundy Thursday, viz. the ninth. It will be noticed that the evidence for the ninth hour on Good Friday before 1500 is drawn entirely from the monastic tradition. Although a number of monastic documents contain omissions of time, in view of the influence of the tenth-century Benedictine Regularis Concordia, which attests all three times, the ninth hour may be inferred with confidence in all such instances and on all three days.

(c) Holy Saturday

Some of the earlier sources severally record a variety of times. Ordo 29, FRG, and the pontifical from St-Germain-des-Prés prescribe the seventh hour, Ordo 31 the eighth, and Ordo 28 and Poitiers the ninth hour. This last-mentioned time is specified in the Regularis Concordia and by Lanfranc the following century. John of Avranches also refers to the same time. The kindling of the fire at St Mary's, York during the singing of None may suggest that None was no longer held at the ninth hour and that the new fire ceremony took place earlier in the day.

(ii) Within the tradition of the single kindling

(a) The problem of interpreting the phrase post horam nonam has been alluded to above. The Office of None was formerly sung at the ninth hour of the day; so that the new fire ceremony which followed that office took place more or less in the middle of the afternoon. Subsequently when None came to be sung at midday and the new fire ceremony was

1 Viz. the Passion, the Solemn Prayers, the Veneration, and the Mass of the Presanctified.
2 Lib. de Off. Eccl. (PL 147, 528).
also transferred to the earlier hour in a number of monastic and cathedral rites, the phrase *hora nona* lost its former temporal significance in those instances. Moreover, at times None was sung together with the other Little Hours before the principal Mass of the day; so that the phrase *post nonam*, 'after None', in the later Middle Ages and beyond was capable of three interpretations, depending on when that office was sung: (i) during the morning, (ii) at midday, and (iii) in monastic churches, where the traditional times for the offices were still strictly adhered to, during the middle of the afternoon. There is little doubt that in most of the rites in Table 25 which date from the late fifteenth century and beyond, where the time of the new fire ceremony is given in relation to the singing of None, one of the two former above-mentioned times obtained. The Missals of Vallombrosa and Poitiers also add: *hora competenti*, 'at a convenient hour'. In the Ambrosian rite the new fire was formerly kindled also after None.¹ According to the revised Missal of 1902 the ritual took place during None (Rep. p.34).

¹ 1560 Missal fol.110; 1768 Missal p.110.
The interpretation of post nonam is further complicated by the fact that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries two systems of calculating the time of day were in use in different parts of the Western Church; so that it is possible that in some of the instances listed in Table 25 the phrase should be interpreted 'after 9.00 a.m.' especially since in places the new fire ceremony was performed during the morning of Holy Saturday since at least from the close of the fifteenth century.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verdun</td>
<td>1481</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sens</td>
<td>1520</td>
<td>Missal fol.c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osma</td>
<td>1561</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxxix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soissons*</td>
<td>1856</td>
<td>Ritual p.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 26. New fire kindled at 9.00 a.m.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Esztergom</td>
<td>1501</td>
<td>sixth hour</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lübeck</td>
<td>1505</td>
<td>2a. sixth hour, after None</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainz</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>about midday</td>
<td>Missal fol.xcii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arras</td>
<td>1508</td>
<td>midday</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxiv</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 27. New fire kindled at midday.

Table 26 lists four instances about which we can be confident that the new fire ceremony took place at 9.00 a.m. At Verdun and Osma the modern method of telling the time is used; whereas at Sens the time is expressed according to the older system. Churches where noon was specified as the time for the new fire are given in Table 27. These followed earlier Roman practice. A glance at Table 28 on the following page shows that in a number of places no specific time was prescribed for the new fire ceremony. This flexibility was also a feature of the later Roman rite (MR 1570). These churches were therefore at liberty to begin the liturgy at any suitable time during the morning of Holy Saturday. At Cahors the new fire was kindled at the end of the Little Hours.

1 The old Roman system of dividing the hours of light and darkness into twelve equal parts, and the modern method of reckoning time.
2 At Bayonne (Table 24) where the new fire was kindled at 9.00 a.m., the rubric of the Missal states: hora tertia post ortum solis.
3 1760 Missal p.172.
An unusual feature of the Roman rite was the interval of time which elapsed between the kindling and the blessing of the fire. There is no evidence to suggest that this development occurred much before the twelfth century. According to PRG the fire was both kindled and blessed at the same ceremony. Since the rubric of PR XII states that the new fire should be kindled at the fifth or sixth hour, it is likely that 'the sixth hour', attested in the other twelfth-century Roman documents, also signifies 'midday'; but in later documents the new fire is kindled after the Office of Sext, which may not necessarily have taken place at noon, as previously. Whether the new fire was blessed at the ninth hour during the twelfth century is not clear since the Ordo of the Lateran Church and subsequent documents record that this ceremony took place after the Office of None. However, since None on Holy Saturday in the twelfth century was sung after the kindling of the fire, which had taken place at midday, there is good reason to believe that the new fire was blessed at some point during the middle of the afternoon in this period. Moreover, it is clear from PR XII that there was an interval of time between the kindling and the blessing of the fire: 'Later at the hour at which the Pope should enter the cathedral....'

Following the Roman reforms of 1955, which were intended to restore some of the primitive character to the Paschal vigil, it became obligatory for the liturgy of Holy Saturday to begin after sunset, and the acts of kindling and consecrating the new fire became complementary aspects of the one ritual. Likewise in the revised Ambrosian rite the ceremonies of Holy Saturday do not begin before nightfall.

1 II p.57 § 219.
2 Postea hora qua...pontifex intrare debet ecclesiam.

For these and other Roman documents, see Table 29 on the next page.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Kindling of fire</th>
<th>Blessing of fire</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PR XII</td>
<td>12 C</td>
<td>5th/6th hour</td>
<td>postea</td>
<td>Ip.238 xxxii.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OEL</td>
<td>c.1140</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>After</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR XI</td>
<td>c.1140</td>
<td>6th hour</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>PL 1041C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRC (= OR X)</td>
<td>12 C</td>
<td>6th hour</td>
<td>(MS y : None*)</td>
<td>p.470 xliiv.1 (PL 78.1014B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo Albini</td>
<td>c.1190</td>
<td>6th hour</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Lib. Cens. II p.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo of Apamea</td>
<td>1214</td>
<td>5th/6th hour</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>DAPR 4.24.3 p.145 (M 25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>c.1295</td>
<td>6th hour</td>
<td>After</td>
<td>p.587 iv.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haymo's</td>
<td>1243</td>
<td>After Sext</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Van Dijk II p.245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo Miss.</td>
<td>1243</td>
<td>Sext</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codex A 1706</td>
<td>c.1350</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>None*</td>
<td>ZRKM p.213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bindo F.</td>
<td>1377</td>
<td>Usual hour</td>
<td></td>
<td>ZRKM p.276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missale Romanum</td>
<td>1474</td>
<td>After Sext</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>HBS 17 Vol.1 p.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missale Romanum</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>hora com-</td>
<td>After</td>
<td>t.e. p.186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The Pope says None while the new fire is being blessed. + 'at a convenient hour'.

Table 29. Times for the new fire at Rome.
Chapter Five

THE PRODUCTION OF NEW FIRE. (2) LOCATION

(1) The early period

Our earliest sources for the new fire ceremony within the Romano-Gallican tradition relate to the region of N. France and W. Germany, and stipulate in the first instance that the fire should be struck from a stone and that it should be performed out of doors. The external as opposed to the internal location for the new fire almost certainly derived from earlier pre-Christian practice, and was retained after the new fire ritual had been adopted by the Church for liturgical, theological, and cultural reasons. It need hardly be stated that an external location was essential if the new fire was to be obtained by means of a lens.

All of our early sources, except Alcuin, record the additional stipulation that the kindling of the new fire should take place in the doorway of an oratorium, if one existed:

Si ibidem oratorium habuerint, super portam ibi excutiunt.

Because of the variation in meaning of oratorium, this sentence is capable of two different interpretations. In the early Middle Ages oratorium could either describe a small chapel built over the tomb of a martyr; or it could refer to a place of worship in a rural area which facilitated the spiritual life of those living at a distance from their parish church, being the forerunner of the later medieval chapel of ease. Either interpretation is possible in the above-quoted rubric. However, if oratorium is understood in the latter sense, the meaning of ibidem becomes strained. For if oratorium indicates a chapel of prayer in a small village or hamlet, it is difficult to see what ibidem is referring to. The only likely translation would be 'in the same area' where 'area' refers to the diocese. However, it would follow from this that the new fire rubrics related only to cathedral churches - they in fact applied to monastic churches as well - and would imply that some

1 See p.185.
2 Alcuin records that a lamp is lit by the sacristan, and kept burning until Holy Saturday (PL 101.1205C).
3 'If they have an oratorium in the same place, they strike (the fire) there in the doorway.' OR 26.3; OR 28.25; OR 29.14; OR 31.29; FRG II p.57 § 217; Ordo of Corbie (DAMR 3.13.34 p.162, M 1145). In the 1764 edition of DAMR, sub idem oratorium should read si ibidem oratorium.
dioceses had no oratoria at all, whilst others had only one. Much
more likely is the view that oratorium bears the former meaning and re-
fers to a shrine in close proximity to a cathedral or monastic church.
Ibidem would then have its usual meaning, 'in the same place', and
would indicate the shrine's location within the vicinity of the church.

None of the six documents ¹ which refer to the oratorium offers any
explanation as to why the fire was kindled in the doorway of this chapel.
Since the word does not appear elsewhere in connection with the new fire
ceremony, we can but make a few general observations and advance tenta-
tive theories to explain the use of the building on this occasion. If
an external location was an obligatory feature of this ceremony - the
rubrical phrase extra ecclesiam implies that it was - it would perhaps
explain why the kindling took place in the doorway of the oratorium
rather than in the oratorium itself. In this period before AD 1000 our
sources attest that the old fire was extinguished on Maundy Thursday
and the new fire kindled the same day. In the older Roman tradition²
fire was hidden on Maundy Thursday and continued to burn in loco eccle-
siae secretiore ³ until it was required for Baptism on Holy Saturday.
The reservation of fire was a feature of the Gallican rites also; but,
whereas three lamps were used in the Roman rite, according to Gallican
practice only one lamp was required. This is borne out by a number of
ordines ⁴ which state,

Et de ipso igne continuo, in eadem ecclesia vel loco ubi accenditur,⁵
lampada una servetur usque in sabbato sancto ad inluminandum cereum.

The phrase in eadem ecclesia implies the existence and use of a locus
secretior; whilst loco ubi accenditur may relate to the use of an
oratorium for the reservation of the new fire.

We believe that in both the Roman and Gallican traditions the con-
cealment and reservation of the fire ⁶ symbolised Jesus' seeming lack
of animation in the Tomb, and the remote part of the church building
in which the fire was reserved recalled the Sepulchre. In larger
churches the reservation of the fire would have occasioned little diff-
culty if a crypt or sacristy could readily be utilised for that purpose.

¹ See Note 3 on the previous page.
² This is treated at length in Chapter 7.
³ 'In a part of the church well removed from view.'
⁴ For instance, Ordo 26.5 and Ordo 28.27.
⁵ 'Let one lamp be lit from the newly-kindled fire, and kept burning
in the same church or in the place where it was kindled until Holy
Saturday so that the Easter candle may be lit from it.'
⁶ The Gallican fire had been blessed; the Roman was in a state of limbo.
However, it is conceivable that problems may have arisen if the church building contained no suitable side chapels or convenient niches for concealing the lamp of reservation. It is our contention, therefore, that the desirability of having a conveniently-remote place of safe-keeping was one of the main reasons why the ordines recommended that an oratorium should be used, if one was located near to the church.* For such a building would provide protection both from the weather and from the gaze of humanity; and the sepulchral nature of the building would increase the significance of the reserved fire, and heighten the symbolism associated therewith. As already mentioned, this alternative place for the reserved fire is indicated by the phrase vel loco ubi accenditur; and since this is an alternative location to eadem ecclesia, because of the necessity of protecting the flame for at least forty-eight hours, it is almost certain that the writer has in mind the oratorium in whose doorway the new fire was kindled.

Evidence from the sixth century shows that it had become customary by then in parts of Gaul to keep a perpetual flame burning at the tomb of a saint above which an oratorium had been built.¹ Since our sources state that the old fire was extinguished on Maundy Thursday and rekindled the same day, as we have noted, it is our belief that an additional reason for the reservation of fire in an oratorium was the possible feeling of unease caused by leaving the saint's tomb unattended by a light; for the loss of fire on Maundy Thursday was total. In later centuries the light which burned before the Sacrament was also extinguished.² The placing of the new fire on or near the saint's tomb, therefore, ensured that his presence continued to be honoured in this way. Alternatively, it may have been believed that the placing of the fire in an oratorium diminished the chances of its being extinguished, since it enjoyed the protection of the saint. Then again, the placing of the newly-kindled fire in the presence of such a holy person may have been regarded as a means of enhancing in some way the essence or efficacy of the fire. In the absence of contemporary corroborating evidence, these suggestions must remain tentative. Nevertheless it is not completely inapposite to cite evidence from c.1400 in possible support of these suggestions. It comes from St Mary’s Abbey in York, and concerns the disposition of the new fire at that monastery. After the kindling of the new fire the rubric states,

¹ Gregory of Tours, History of the Franks 4.36 (PL 71.291). The use of light at a tomb is discussed more fully in Appendix 6.
² See above, pp.83-84. In more recent times the sanctuary lamp has remained lit at Tenebrae and at the new fire ceremony.
* For the use of the sacristy, see footnote at the bottom of p.145.
accensas carbones de illo igne ponent super tumbas Abbatum in capitulo dum cantatur hora Nona.¹

The Ordinal does not comment upon or explain the purpose of this practice; but it is clear from what we are told in this section that the fire placed on these tombs was not reserved for the lighting of the Easter candle on Holy Saturday; burning coals would only last for a limited period of time. Two possible explanations for the use of the coals in this way are: (i) The placing of the fire on the tombs meant that the former abbots were the first to be honoured with the new fire. (ii) The fire, which was about to be blessed for immediate liturgical use, would by being so placed acquire some of the virtue of the former abbots of the monastery.

As previously mentioned, Alcuin omits any reference to an oratorium, though in other respects it closely follows the wording of the new fire ceremony described in PRG. It is generally thought that Alcuin was compiled considerably later than PRG, although it incorporates many early elements. It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that by the mid-eleventh century the custom of utilising oratoria for the kindling and reservation of the new fire had fallen into desuetude.

Immediately after the injunction in the ordines for the kindling of the fire in the doorway of an oratorium, where an oratorium existed, follows the directive for churches which did not possess this shrine:

sin vero, in loco quo consideravit prior, ita ut ex eo possit candela accendi.²

This concise and grammatically defective Latin sentence can be interpreted in a number of different ways, since it lacks a main verb and the meaning of candela is not immediately clear. Since the verb excutient occurs in the previous clause, one solution would be to supply the same verb to complete the sense of this sentence. However, the dominant idea of the fire's reservation, which this sentence contains, makes the understanding of a verb denoting protection or concealment equally probable. A third possibility would be to supply two main verbs, one of kindling and one of reservation. Accordingly the sentence would admit of three equally valid translations:

¹ 'Let them place lighted coals from that fire on the tombs of the abbots in the chapter house, while None is being sung.' Ordinal and Customary of St Mary's, York (HBS 75 p.275).
² For references, see Note 3 on p.140.
(i) But if there is no oratorium, they strike the fire, in a place which the Prior has deemed suitable, in such a way that a candela may be lit from it.

(ii) But if there is no oratorium, they reserve the fire, in a place which the Prior has deemed suitable, in such a way that a candela may be lit from it.

(iii) But if there is no oratorium, they strike the fire, in a place which the Prior has deemed suitable, and reserve it in such a way that a candela may be lit from it.

It is clear that the next stage in interpreting this sentence correctly is to establish the meaning of candela; for the word may be translated both 'lamp' and 'candle', and within the present context may refer either to the lamp of reservation, or to the candle which was carried into church on each of the three evenings of the Triduum, or to the Easter candle. The first of the tentative translations is solely concerned with the action of kindling the fire and with the manner in which it is done, even though the manner is not explicitly stated. Here candela would indicate the small candle or taper which was used to transfer the new fire from the tinder to the lamp of reservation and was carried in procession into church on the evening of Maundy Thursday. However, it is difficult to see what is the significance of 'in such a way', and how the striking of the fire in this instance should differ from that on any other occasion. Since the information it conveys appears to be gratuitously irrelevant, we conclude that the first interpretation is incorrect.

The third interpretation is an expanded form of the second. The two may be treated together since the dominant notion of reservation is common to both. Moreover, though the latter version only states that the Prior selected the location for the kindling, it may be safely inferred that the decision regarding the location for the reserved fire was also his. Of the three possible interpretations of candela, that of 'lamp of reservation' may be eliminated, since it would have been in that lamp that the fire burned from which the processional candle was lit. It is also unlikely that the Easter candle is here intended; for (a) it was kindled on Holy Saturday, not on Maundy Thursday, and (b) the ordines use cereus to denote the Easter candle and not candela. There remains the processional candle which was lit from the reserved fire on each of the three evenings of the Triduum. This is surely the most obvious interpretation and the one best suited to the context of

1 That is, the bishop or abbot.
2 Whilst the use of a wax or tallow candle should not be ruled out, an oil-lamp with its more reliable flame seems more likely to have been used for this purpose.
the reserved fire. That candela signifies candle and not reed is clear from the fact it was placed at the end of a reed and carried in procession on high.¹

(ii) The later Middle Ages

(a) The external location

The evidence for an external setting for the kindling of the new fire beyond the period covered by the earlier ordines is set out in Tables 30, 31, and 32, and like that of the ordines relates to churches belonging to both the cathedral and the monastic traditions. The practice of kindling the fire in the open air was adopted by the Roman Church in the eleventh or early twelfth century, probably as a result of Cluniac influence.² A number of medieval Roman documents do not specify a location. The Ordo Albini prescribes³ 'before the doors of the Lateran'; and the open air location, enjoined by Durand's pontifical, was a feature of the Pian Missal of 1570, and survives unchanged to this day.⁴ The rubric of the Revised Order for Holy Week of 1955 specified that the ceremony should take place at the door of the church;⁵ and the 1970 Missale Romanum, with its emphasis on the participation of all the faithful, enjoins that a large fire, visible to all, should be prepared out of doors, with the proviso that in the event of inclement weather or the difficulty of staging a fire outside the church, the ceremony should be adapted accordingly.⁶

As with other liturgical or ritual acts which had a utilitarian origin, medieval writers explained the external location for the kindling of new fire with reference to Scripture. Rupert of Deutz cites Hebrews 13:11, itself an allusion to Leviticus 16:28, as the reason for the production of fire out of doors. The allusion is to the Jewish practice of burning 'outside the camp' the bodies of animals whose blood had been shed to atone for the transgressions of men. Since, therefore, the Jews led Jesus outside the city where his atoning

¹ See Part III Chapter 1.
² It seems likely that previously it had been kindled in church, a theory we have argued in favour of in Section (b) on page 149.
³ Liber Censuum II p.130.
⁴ MR 1474 appears to be the exception. Its rubrics relate primarily to the new fire at the Cathedral of St John Lateran. In any case the striking of fire in the cloisters is a partial external kindling.
⁵ Schmidt I p.118.

(From p.142.) At Monte Cassino c.1100 the lamp of reservation was kept burning in the sacristy. (DAMR 3.15.5 p.141, M 1139).
sacrifice took place, our going outside the church to kindle the new fire is dutifully obeying the injunction of the writer to the Hebrews that we should 'go forth to him outside the camp'.

It need hardly be said that this analogy is not apposite in every detail. Durandus is content to record that the new fire is kindled outside in commemoration of the Jewish place of crucifixion. Dom Prosper Guéranger's comment is both apt and relevant. He argues that the sparks of the new fire symbolise the Spirit of Jesus, and the stone from which they are struck represents the Sepulchre. Just as the Resurrection took place in a tomb situated outside the city walls of Jerusalem, so the striking of the fire should be performed outside the walls of the church building.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/Document</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farfa</td>
<td>11 c</td>
<td>blessed in cloister</td>
<td>PL 150.1199A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gembloux</td>
<td>11 c</td>
<td>or in cloister</td>
<td>Albers II p.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rupert of Deutz</td>
<td>c.1111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP XII</td>
<td>12 C</td>
<td>blessed in atrio</td>
<td>Ip.238 xxxii.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>c.1200</td>
<td></td>
<td>Missal p.126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sicardus</td>
<td>c.1210</td>
<td></td>
<td>PL 213.323B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apamea</td>
<td>1214</td>
<td></td>
<td>DAER 4.24 p.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Vedast,</td>
<td></td>
<td>on hospice step</td>
<td>HBS 86 p.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arras</td>
<td>c.1300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strasbourg</td>
<td>1364</td>
<td>on the grass</td>
<td>DAER 4.24 p.162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>1570</td>
<td>outside church</td>
<td>(M 35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leon</td>
<td>1662</td>
<td>blessed inside</td>
<td>1950 Missal p.186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustin.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rite p.813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friars</td>
<td>1714</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ceremonial p.307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amiens</td>
<td>1752</td>
<td></td>
<td>Missal p.182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cahors</td>
<td>1760</td>
<td></td>
<td>Missal p.173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poitiers</td>
<td>1767</td>
<td></td>
<td>Missal p.244</td>
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<tr>
<td>Auch</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td></td>
<td>Missal p.191</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 30. An external location for the kindling of the new fire. (Churches where a lens was used are not included.)

Table 31 lists the evidence attesting the kindling of the new fire in the doorway or porch of the church. Whether this practice owes its origin to the procedure, found in the earlier ordines and in PRG, of striking the fire in the doorway of an oratorium is difficult to say.

1 De Div. Off. V (PL 170.1490). This symbolism is also found in the Mitrale of Sicardus (PL 213.323B).
2 Rationale VI.80 p.350.
3 Liturgical Year (PThW) p.555.
4 The strong evidence in favour of an extramural location for the tomb in which Jesus was laid has been forcefully summarised by John Wenham in Easter Enigma pp.18-19.
The Regularis Concordia and John of Avranches' Liber de officiis ecclesiasticis were written close enough in time to the aforementioned documents for there to be some direct link; but the instances from French cathedrals may possibly be the result of local development in neo-Gallican times. The alternative location to the porch was used presumably if the weather was fine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/Document</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Regularis Concordia</td>
<td>c. 970</td>
<td></td>
<td>PL 137.491B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John of Avranches</td>
<td>c. 1070</td>
<td></td>
<td>PL 147.49A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naples</td>
<td>14 C</td>
<td>west door</td>
<td>Ordinary fol. 164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongres</td>
<td>15 C</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal fol. lxiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usès</td>
<td>1495</td>
<td>in the atrium</td>
<td>Missal fol. xciii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainz</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Ritual p. 305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouen</td>
<td>1640</td>
<td>P/outside W. door</td>
<td>Praxis p. 143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desideri</td>
<td>1739</td>
<td>P/before door</td>
<td>Missal p. 186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evreux</td>
<td>1740</td>
<td>P/outside at door</td>
<td>Missal p. 186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maison du Roy</td>
<td>1741</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Sem. Ste p. 397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sees</td>
<td>1742</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal p. 186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcassonne*</td>
<td>1749</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal p. 194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisieux</td>
<td>1752</td>
<td>door of church</td>
<td>Missal p. 189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mende*</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal p. 220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Bertrand*</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal p. 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capuchins*</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>P/outside at door</td>
<td>Ceremonial p. 124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vienna*</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal p. 215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chartres*</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal p. 171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pérouges</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>door of church</td>
<td>Missal p. 158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayeux</td>
<td>1790</td>
<td>at main door</td>
<td>Missal p. 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1619</td>
<td>P/threshold</td>
<td>Manual II p. 467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coutances</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>P/door of church</td>
<td>Ceremonial p. 329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metz*</td>
<td>1829</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal p. 158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toulouse</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal p. 206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Rochelle*</td>
<td>1835</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal p. 186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Puy</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>P/door of church</td>
<td>Ceremonial p. 373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nantes</td>
<td>1837</td>
<td>P/before door</td>
<td>Missal p. 198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autun*</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Missal p. 239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates that another location was allowed - see other tables.

P = porch

Table 31. The kindling of fire near the church door.

With the exception of MR 1474 the evidence for the kindling of fire in the cloisters is entirely monastic (Table 32). For these colonnaded walkways provided a convenient location for the ceremony in that the striking of the fire could still be held to be performed out of doors; and yet at the same time the measure of protection afforded
Table 32. New fire kindled in the cloisters.

by the cloisters would largely overcome the difficulty experienced in
the lighting of a fire in the open air during particularly inclement
weather. As we have already observed, the injunction of MR 1474 must
relate specifically to the Cathedral of St John Lateran, since non-
monastic cathedrals and churches did not normally possess the luxury of
cloisters. Those at the Mother of Cathedrals were built sometime bet-
ween 1222 and 1230,1 a fact reflected in the Ordo Missalis of Haymo of
Faversham, whose service-books were modelled on the ceremonial of the
papal court. The Gilbertine rite also allowed the new fire to be
kindled in an unfrequented part of the church. This wish for a secluded
location is also found at Palencia.2

Desideri's recommendation3 that in country churches both the place
of kindling and the route leading to the altar should be strewn with
flowers is almost certainly a sanctioning of traditional practice. The
use of 'sweet-smelling flowers' either on the parvis outside the main
door, or in the entrance, or in the atrium was also prescribed in the
Capuchin Ceremonial of 1775.4

1 Masson p.305.
2 1568 Missal fol.c.
3 Praxis p.141.
4 Memoriale p.124.
(b) The internal location

Evidence for the kindling of the new fire in the church itself comes from both England and France. The practice is first attested by John of Avranches in the eleventh century. At Lyon, where the custom has survived until the present day, the new fire is kindled behind the altar. This location, which is peculiar to the rite of Lyon, was very likely a feature of the earlier Roman rite; for it is generally agreed that in a number of respects the ceremonial of Lyon preserves the primitive form of the Roman rite. On the other hand in the absence of direct evidence for the practice at Rome, it can be argued that the kindling of fire behind the altar was a local development confined to the Church of Lyon. It may have been a survival of a pre-Christian ritual; or there may have been some connection with the concealing of the last candle at Tenebrae. Again, it is tempting to attribute its origin to the Old Testament practice of maintaining a perpetual fire at the altar of sacrifice. This may have come about in the wake of the Judaising movement in the twelfth century which resulted in, amongst other things, the introduction of the menorah into Christian churches. Possible support for this view might come from Narbonne, where according to former practice the new fire was kindled 'ad cornu altaris'. Here it is not difficult to see a close connection between the Jewish altar of sacrifice with its four horns and the High Altar of the former Cathedral of Narbonne whose corners are purposely termed horns.

It is significant that all three non-monastic English churches whose service-books record the new fire ceremony enjoin the same location for its kindling. The Exeter Ordinal stipulates 'near the south column'; whilst the books of Salisbury and York agree that it should take place between the two columns on the south side of the church, the Missal of the latter church adding 'near the font'. Although it is generally agreed that the rite of Exeter was greatly influenced by that of Sarum, the relationship between the rites of Salisbury and York in the matter of the new fire is not at all clear. The ceremonies at both churches may have derived from a common rite. Nor is it known why this particular location was only to be found in England and only in the secular or cathedral tradition. For according to the surviving evidence for the monastic tradition in England the new fire was kindled in the cloister. Since both Exeter and Salisbury Cathedrals possessed a

1 For this and other references below, see Table 33 on the next page.
2 Leviticus 6:12.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/ Rite</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) Near the font</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York*</td>
<td>12 C</td>
<td>S.column,nr font</td>
<td>Missal p.109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarum</td>
<td>13 C</td>
<td>between two columns</td>
<td>HBS 91 p.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>1337</td>
<td>on south side</td>
<td>HBS 37 p.322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) In the nave</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John of Avranches</td>
<td>c.1070</td>
<td>(in the church)</td>
<td>PL 147.49A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosenza</td>
<td>1549</td>
<td>east end of nave</td>
<td>Missal fol.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braga</td>
<td>1512</td>
<td>east end of nave</td>
<td>Missal cited by King,LPS p.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) At altar step(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cistercian</td>
<td>1119</td>
<td>only blessed</td>
<td>Nom.Cist. p.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursfeld</td>
<td>12 C</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>Mocquereau p.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican</td>
<td>1504</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxxxv</td>
<td>Missal cited by King,LRO p.190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premonstratensian</td>
<td>1578</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) At the altar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyon</td>
<td>1392</td>
<td>behind altar</td>
<td>Talaru Missal in King, LPS p.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narbonne</td>
<td>1528</td>
<td>at horn of altar</td>
<td>DAER 4.24.3 p.145 (M 203)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saragossa</td>
<td>1552</td>
<td>at Epistle corner</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Near Easter candle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soissons</td>
<td>1745</td>
<td>Missal p.163</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* unless a lens was used for the new fire.

Table 33. An internal location for the kindling of the new fire cloister, it is likely that this internal location was a feature of an indigenous new fire tradition. Moreover the rationale underlying the use of this place is unknown. We know of the close connection between the light of the Easter candle and the blessing of the font at Baptism; but a link between the kindling of the new fire and the font is otherwise unknown.

By the nineteenth century the new fire at St John Lateran was kindled in the sacristy,¹ the place where it had struck at Toledo, Léon, and Milan since the early Middle Ages. The reason for the change of location at Rome is unknown. It may have resulted from a desire to have the ceremony held in a more convenient place. Milanese influence

¹ Baggs p.98.
may be discounted. The use of the sacristy in the eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century instances listed in Table 34 was probably also the result of ritual convenience caused by the decay of the ceremonies of the Triduum during those centuries and the seemingly-futile procession with the new fire in an empty church. However, in Spain and almost certainly in Milan the practice of kindling the new fire in the sacristy had antecedents in the Holy Saturday liturgy of Jerusalem. 1 At Auxerre in the sixteenth century the fire was kindled in one church and blessed in another; 2 and at Rouen by the eighteenth century the fire was kindled in the Church of St-Etienne, and then carried in procession to the cathedral. 3

(c) The twentieth century

It had formerly been customary in many parts of France and Italy for the lighting and blessing of the new fire to function as both a religious and a civic ceremony if one of the doors of the church opened onto the town square. The custom had largely fallen into desuetude either because of the anticipation of the Paschal vigil during the

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Léon</td>
<td>10 C</td>
<td>Antiphonary p. 280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan</td>
<td>12 C</td>
<td>Beroldus p. 109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary's, York@</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>HBS 75 p. 292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Besançon+</td>
<td>1682</td>
<td>Ceremonial p. 329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angers*</td>
<td>1731</td>
<td>Ceremonial p. 258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcassonne*</td>
<td>1749</td>
<td>Missal p. 194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mende*</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>Missal p. 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reims</td>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Missal p. 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Bertrand*</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>Missal p. 209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vienna*</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>Missal p. 215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chartres*</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>Missal p. 171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metz*</td>
<td>1829</td>
<td>Missal p. 158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toulouse*</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>Missal p. 191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verdun</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>Ceremonial p. 312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Rochelle*</td>
<td>1835</td>
<td>Missal p. 186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaux</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Missal p. 169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autun*</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Missal p. 239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* see Table 31 for alternative locations.
+ fire blessed at Gospel corner of altar.
@ fire kindled in chapter house.

Table 34. New Fire kindled in the sacristy
morning of Holy Saturday, or in France because of its suppression at the time of the Revolution. It was not until after the liturgical reforms of 1955, which permitted the holding of the Vigil in the evening of Holy Saturday, that the kindling of the new fire in the open air in front of churches and cathedrals took place again on any widespread scale; although at a small number of cathedrals, such as Lyon and Rodez, the ceremony continued to be performed in the traditional place. In a survey\(^1\) carried out in thirty-four French dioceses in 1961 to ascertain to what extent the recently revived ceremony had been popular and successful, it was discovered that the main problem had been climatic. From a number of replies it was found that on an inclement Holy Saturday evening rain, wind, smoke, the difficulty in lighting the incense, and the unexpected extinction of the flame of the Easter candle as a result of a sudden gust of wind produced lack of concentration, and in places, ridicule. Subsequently at Arras and at Vannes after 1978 the new fire was kindled inside the cathedral.\(^2\) It is significant that the 1970 Roman Missal makes the alternative provision that if the weather is intemperate the blessing of the fire is adapted to circumstances.\(^3\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outside</th>
<th>Square/Parvis</th>
<th>Porch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bayeux</td>
<td>Carcassonne</td>
<td>Pamiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coutances</td>
<td>Angers</td>
<td>Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Versailles</td>
<td>Strasbourg</td>
<td>Reims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Mans</td>
<td>St Die</td>
<td>Angers*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belley</td>
<td>Montpellier</td>
<td>Autun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arras(^1)</td>
<td>St Flour</td>
<td>St Brieuc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vannes(^2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Le Mans*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dijon</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tulle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bayeux*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Troyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside</td>
<td>Main Door</td>
<td>Nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limoges</td>
<td>Carcassonne* (W.End)</td>
<td>Aix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amiens(^3)</td>
<td>Bayonne* (W.End)</td>
<td>Bayonne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimes</td>
<td>Agen (W.End)</td>
<td>St Die*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orléans</td>
<td>Orléans*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Choir</td>
<td>Transept</td>
<td>Behind Altar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevers</td>
<td>Nancy</td>
<td>Lyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rodez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If wet.

1 Now performed indoors.  \(2\) Since 1978 performed indoors.  \(3\) Since 1969 there has been no new fire ceremony in the cathedral.

Table 35. The new fire location in French cathedrals in 1984.

1 Morlot p.115.  \(2\) 1984 Survey.  \(3\) Pope John Sunday Missal p.318. * Experimentation was permitted in 1951.

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Chapter Six

THE PRODUCTION OF NEW FIRE. (3) MEANS

The production of new fire was achieved universally by one of the two time-honoured methods derived from pre-Christian religious milieux: the generation of fire by the friction of iron against stone or wood against wood, and the concentration of the sun's rays onto flammable material by means of a translucent lens. Some churches proscribed the former means, some the latter, and a number permitted both. The means favoured by one church was probably determined by the method employed in producing fire in pre-Christian times in the region in which that church was located. The choice offered by a number of service-books or referred to by medieval writers indicates the validity of either method in the eyes of the Church; and we shall discuss presently the arguments put forward to justify the use of the flint and the lens, and the symbolism associated with both the frictional and refractive methods.

(i) Fire by friction

Evidence for the production of fire within a Christian liturgical context by the friction of wood against wood relates to parts of Central Germany. It is recorded\(^1\) that in Swabia the use of the fire-drill was the only permissible means of kindling the new fire; and there is no good reason for doubting that this was local practice. Unfortunately the 1555 Missal of Augsburg does not contain the new fire ceremony. Elsewhere throughout the Western Church the frictional method of producing fire involved the use of a stone.

The earlier *Ordines Romani*, our oldest sources for the new fire ceremony, stipulate that the new fire should be kindled by the striking of a stone.\(^2\) There is no mention of an alternative method. Since the object struck was considered to be more important than the implement used for striking, it is the stone which is referred to in the rubric; and this is true of all subsequent documents which refer to the new fire kindled by friction. Of the medieval writers who refer to the ceremony only John Beleth mentions that the spark is produced by striking the stone *saxo calibe aut ferro*, 'with iron pyrites (*FeS\(_2\)*) or iron'.\(^3\)

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2 *Ordines* 26.3; (27.6); 28.25; 29.14; 31.29.
3 *Rationale* (PL 202.110B).

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The ancients had long known the result of striking either of these minerals against flint. The use of the two-rock method, that is, with iron pyrites and flint, when it had long been known that a spark is more easily obtained using iron and flint, may suggest the survival from a pagan religious ceremony, which antedated the discovery of iron, of a very primitive means of producing fire. Its mention by Beleth implies that in some places two stones were struck together to obtain fire; whilst elsewhere the method of striking the flint with iron or steel had been adopted. Since it is almost invariably only the flint or the stone object struck that is referred to, we can have no idea how widespread the more primitive method was.

One of the areas where this method may have been in use was Southern Italy; for according to the Beneventan rite \(^1\) the principal means of generating a spark was 'ex ignario', that is, from a fire-stone. Ignarium is probably to be identified with the mineral copper pyrites (CuFeS\(_2\)).\(^2\) This ore, like iron pyrites, produces a spark when struck with a flint. If this interpretation of ignarium is accepted, we may have in the Beneventan ceremonial an instance of the two-rock method of obtaining fire. On the other hand it is possible to interpret ignarium 'flint', since lapis igniarius is found with this meaning:\(^3\) The word may be dialectal, or a synonym for silex. A similar confusion exists in English regarding fire-stone; for the word may refer to the flint or to the iron pyrites.

The survival into historical times of this primitive method of obtaining fire should cause no surprise. For it would seem that Christian homo religiosus in Europe is just as traditional and conservative as his pre-Christian forebears. For in an age when fire can be readily obtained by matches, cigarette-lighters, or electrical current, in many places the Church perpetuates the tradition of using flint.\(^4\)

---

1 Gradual and Missale Antiquum. Text in Hesbert, L'Antiphonale p.188
2 Thus Du Cange. In classical Latin ignarium signified 'a stick for making fire' (OLD), as is clear from Pliny, Natural History 16.207. It is most unlikely that ignarium retains this meaning in the rubrics of the Beneventan service-books, since the Beneventan formula for the blessing of the new fire (A) contains a reference to flint (silex). The discrepancy in spelling (ignarium and igniarium) is not crucial. Both the Gradual and the Missale Antiquum contain orthographical oddities.
3 Marcellus Empiricus 33.
4 In the survey of forty French cathedrals undertaken by the writer in March 1984, a flint continued to be used as the sole means of kindling the new fire in twenty-six churches. In a further four it was alternative to matches.
In some documents and service-books which record only the frictional production of fire, the word *lapis* is used to refer to the medium employed in obtaining the fire. It is true that this word may indicate any hard stone capable of causing iron or steel to produce a spark. However, according to the majority of instances, including Ordo 26 our earliest authority, the stone is specifically said to be *silex*, 'fire-stone' otherwise 'flint' \((SiO_2.nH_2O)\). There are three main reasons for its almost-universal adoption as the means of creating a spark for the new fire. (i) It is easily and cheaply obtained in most parts of Europe and requires little attention to commission it for service. (ii) Whereas a sunny day is a prerequisite for the production of fire by means of a lens, a flint may be used within or without a building and in any type of weather. (iii) In addition to its use in the Milanese and Mozarabic rites, and in many parts of Gaul, the adoption of the flint by the Roman Church encouraged its use in those churches in whose rites the new fire was kindled by means of a lens. (See Table 36 on page 157.)

The principle involved in the use of flint and steel is exactly the same as that which lies behind the use of the tinder-box of more recent times. The flint was struck with the steel, and the sparks thus generated fell into a *patella* \(^1\) or chafing-dish, if the fire was kindled within the church. In this receptacle lay *sarmentum*, 'touchwood' or 'punk', twigs converted into an easily-ignitable consistency. \(^2\) At Freising, Vallombrosa, Cologne, and Prague dried twigs from vines were used; \(^3\) whilst a number of service-books mention simply *ligna*, 'twigs'. \(^4\) Also in the dish, or close at hand, were pieces of charcoal, *carbones*, \(^5\) which would catch fire once the touchwood was ablaze. Some of the charcoal would be transferred to the thurible in order that the new fire might be censed. The rest would continue to burn in the vessel, if the fire had been kindled in church, until the Easter candle was alight and there was no danger that its flame would fail. This is attested in the

1 Nom.Cist. p.104; Lesnes Missal (HBS 95 p.47); Dominican Missals: 1504 fol.lxxvi and 1908 p.62. The Lateran Missal (Schmidt II p.110) and MR 1474 (HBS 17 p.174) use the term *vas*.

2 ColtI II p.156. Also Sicardus, *Mitrale* (PL 213.322D) and MS Gg 15 (DAER 4.24.3 p.145).

3 Respectively, 1487 Missal fol.ciii; 1503 Missal fol.xci; MS Gg 15 (As Note 2 above); 1498 Missal fol.xci.

4 1570 Ratisbon Ritual mp; 1664 Carmelitae Missal p.156. (Continued p.157.)

5 Their use is well-documented in a number of missals: Lesnes (HBS 95 p.47); Cistercian (1669 p.154); Evreux (1740 p.186); Sees (1742 p.186); Amiens (1752 p.182); St Bertrand (1773 p.209); Perigueux (1782 p.158); Le Puy (1783 p.159); Dominicans(1482 fol.69).
Dominican rite. If some form of bonfire had been prepared for the new fire outside the church, the touchwood would have been used to kindle the mound of wood. There is, however, little documentary evidence for the construction of bonfires. The mention of strues at Spires leaves open the possibility of a large mound of wood; and at the monastery of St-Martin d'Ainay near Lyon the woodpile was sufficiently large for the monks to warm themselves as they returned into church. In parts of Germany until recent times bonfires were lit at Easter from the new fire. These, however, appear to have been comparable with the Lent and Midsummer fires of Northern Europe, and in all probability were kindled at a distance from the church after the completion of the Paschal vigil by way of celebrating Easter. In more recent times woodfires observed by the writer and by those with whom the writer has communicated have been of very modest proportions.

The anticipation of the ceremonies of Holy Week was only one of the causes which led to the decay of the Triduum. The abolition of the three-day holiday by Pope Urban VIII in the seventeenth century must have further reduced the tiny congregations of the faithful, who during the morning of Holy Saturday could hear the deacon chant 'Haec nox est'. Moreover, one of the results of the increase in solemnity of the liturgy, a sacerdotal domain in which the discharge of ceremonial came to be regarded, increasingly after the Counter-Reformation, as the sole prerogative of the priesthood, was the consequent exclusion and almost irrelevant presence of the laity at any divine service other than the Mass; and whereas in the Middle Ages the ritual that accompanied the kindling of the new fire provided a liturgical pageantry which was capable of winning the attention of the laity, to say nothing of the excitement there must have been at the prospect of carrying some of the new fire to their homes, the ceremony of the new fire in later centuries lost much of its former significance and importance. The anticipated ritual on Holy Saturday morning was now of little liturgical relevance to the laity; and those who did attend were present out of either habit or curiosity.

The Holy Week reforms of 1955 within the Roman Catholic Church were an attempt not only to restore the ceremonies of the Triduum to

1 1504 Missal fol.lxxxvi.  2 1512 Agenda fol.xciii.
3 Martene, DAER 4.22 p.125, M175.
4 Van Gennep 1.3 p.1259; Frazer, Golden Bough 7.1 p.141.
5 Beauduin p.6.  6 See Chapter 8 p.185.
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Table 36. Evidence for the use of flint and steel. (The omission of any reference in a number of missals to the means of kindling the fire may indicate that any method was permissible.)

Continuation of Note 4 on page 155.

At Poitiers tow was also used (1524 Missal fol.lxix). The Carmelites used small palm and olive branches (1664 Missal p.156); whilst the Augustinian Friars placed flowers and fragrant herbs on top of the olive twigs which they used (Ceremonial of 1714 p.307).
their original times of performance, but to bring about a much greater lay participation in the Paschal liturgy. In the surge of enthusiasm following those reforms, the presence of a large congregation in the parvis of a church or cathedral encouraged the construction of large bonfires. But the frustration, disappointment, and even ridicule experienced when the rain-sodden wood refused to catch fire, and the wane in interest in the ceremony in recent years have resulted in fires of considerably less magnitude. Other problems encountered in staging the ceremony in the open air include the danger to life and limb risked by the clergy attempting to read the prayers by the light of a small fire, and the inclemency of the weather, which makes difficult the lighting of the incense, not to mention the new fire itself, and the possibility of having the Easter candle extinguished by a sudden gust of wind. In some churches, such as the Cathedrals of Annecy and Arras, the charcoals which used to be brought into church in a small portable stove have been replaced by a rag soaked in spirits. In 1983 at Tulle Cathedral a quantity of methylated spirit burned in a small dish until the Paschal vigil had ended.

The Roman Catholic Church never officially countenanced the use of matches for the kindling of the new fire until 1970. However, in many parishes in England and France and in some cathedrals matches have been used for many years, mainly because of their reliability, and because of the speed with which fire can be obtained - the use of flint and steel requires some skill. It is significant that most matches are ignited by striking their heads against glass-paper, one of the constituents of which is silicon dioxide ($\text{SiO}_2$), the basic compound of flint. The 'matches' referred to in C.M. Merati's Ceremonies of the Roman Church were fire-sticks, the ligna sulphurata, described below on page 206.

The earliest evidence for the use of flint as the sole means of obtaining fire in the Roman rite is to be found in the Roman Missal of 1474. Although the possibility must not be ruled out that a lens may have been used at Rome in the fifteenth century, the latest documentary evidence for the use of a lens antedates this missal by about a century. The use of a flint, prescribed in the Pian Missal of 1570, was also

1 For the problems encountered following the revival of the ceremony in the open air in France, see Morlot pp.114-22.
2 1984 Survey.
4 Missale Romanum (HBS 17 p.174).
5 Ordo of P.Amiel (OPA), PL 78.1321C. 6 Missale Romanum (1950)p.186.
enjoined in the 1955 Revised Order of Holy Week; but in the 1970 Missale Romanum the historical and symbolic method of kindling the new fire has been abandoned, and the rubric 'a large fire is prepared' allows of any convenient means of producing a flame. In Lent, Holy Week, and Easter, the new service-book of the Church of England, the rubric relating to the new fire contains no firm injunction, but merely states that 'According to ancient custom, the light for the Easter candle was taken from newly-kindled fire and not from an already existing source of light' (p.226). It does, however, countenance the lighting of a bonfire outside the building and a procession of the faithful into church accompanying the new fire.

The Symbolism of the Flint

Medieval commentators were not slow to detect a symbolic significance in the use of the flint, in the action of striking, and in the generation of a spark. In his identification of the stone with Christ, Rupert of Deutz cites the authority of Psalm 117. The same author sees in the striking of the stone a symbolic reminder of the Crucifixion; and for him the production of the spark represents the release of the Holy Spirit. The notion of the symbolic representation of Christ by the stone is mentioned by both John Beleth and Sicardus. The former adds that the Church has been built on the rock which stands for Christ, and from that rock comes the New Law. He thus implicitly draws a parallel with Moses and the tablets of stone in Chapter 32 of Exodus.

Durandus enlarges upon the symbolism, attached by these three writers to the stone, by adding that the spark produced from the striking of the stone represents the fire of God's love, and at the same time symbolises the piercing of Jesus' side, out of which flowed the blood and the water. In more recent times Guéranger has likened the spark leaping from the flint to Christ rising from the rock-hewn sepulchre; and Bouyer, expressing the notion more succinctly, writes that the new fire, drawn from the flint, symbolises 'the divine spark that God himself would cause to rise from the sepulchre of Golgotha to kindle the universe at the flame of Christ's own splendour'. As late as 1956

in a preamble to his edition of the revised services of Holy Week, Dom Godfrey Diekman described the kindling of fire from the flint as 'a vivid image of Christ's new presence among men: as the spark leaps from the flint, so He arose from His rock tomb.' It is important to note that there is a twofold symbolism in the identification of Christ with the stone. For not only is He the *lapis angularis* of Psalm 117; Christ is also the stone through the medium of which God's brightness is brought to the faithful. The notion that it is the rock that stands for Christ is also mentioned by Thurston.

With the simplification of the Paschal ceremonies in the liturgical changes following the Second Vatican Council, much of the traditional symbolism associated with the new fire ceremony was omitted from the Missal of 1970. With the abandoning of the flint as the obligatory means of obtaining the new fire, it was almost inevitable that the reference to the flint in benediction-formula A should be removed from that prayer.

It is perhaps not out of place at this juncture to refer to the belief, recorded by Rupert of Deutz, that fire was inherent in certain types of rock, for example, flint. John of Avranches implies that the spark released from the stone had been confined within it prior to the act of striking. The use of the verb *elicere*, 'to draw out', by a number of writers within this context reinforces this idea. It is beyond the scope of this work to discuss ancient and medieval notions regarding the nature and essence of fire. However, it is not difficult to understand that the act of generating a spark from a stone was regarded by the unscientific minds of primitive men both as a miracle and as a mystery; so that the stone from which the fire leapt came to be held in reverential awe, and the fire was believed to participate in the divine nature and to be the visible presence of God in the world. This belief is of course present in the Old Testament in the incidents of the Burning Bush and the Pillar of Fire. Christian thought had inherited from Judaism the notion of conceiving the nature of God in terms of fire and light; had evolved a theology of light from the discourses of Jesus, as recorded in the Johannine writings; and to a certain extent had adopted the pagan philosophical notion that fire was the underlying principle behind creation.

(ii) Fire by refraction of the sun's rays

Throughout this section 'lens' translates *crystallum*, the term found in our sources to signify the semi-precious stones, such as beryl and rock-crystal, which were used to produce fire by the refraction of the sun's rays. There is good reason to believe that these stones, which were widely used for this purpose in the ancient world, also featured in pagan religious new fire ceremonies which were adopted by the Church into her liturgy. Although the word *vitrum*, 'glass', is not found within the context of the new fire rubrics, this material was probably used as a substitute for translucent stones on occasions.

Since the use of a lens for the production of the new fire was dependent upon the shining of the sun at the required moment, it may be safely assumed that in those churches where the new fire was kindled by this method, alternative means of obtaining fire must always have been readily available in the event of a cloudy day. The obumbration of the sun is succinctly alluded to in the Missal of St-Martin d'Ainay. Of the thirty-two instances, compiled from documentary sources and listed in Table 37 where a lens is stated to be a means of producing fire, six, including St-Martin d'Ainay referred-to above, do not record an alternative method. To this group belong the twelfth-century Ritual of Soissons and the eleventh-century Sacramentary of Holy Trinity on Mons Suaviciniius.

In the Sacramentary Honorius of Autun refers only to *crystallum*; but in the *Gemma Animae* we find that a flint is alternative to a lens. This would suggest that the lens was the principal but not the sole device for kindling the new fire in the liturgical milieu with which Honorius was familiar. Hugh of St Victor refers only to the lens, and also mentions the pieces of charcoal. In a somewhat forced analogy he likens Christ to the mediatorial rays which shine through the lens and bring back to life the 'dead' charcoals, which themselves symbolise the souls of men in bondage to sin.

In the Customary of Cluny the lens is specifically stated to be a beryl. As at St Bénigne's, Dijon, it was kept in the custody of an

1 See especially F. Dolger, *Das Karasamstag Feuer* pp.288-96.
2 'Si fieri potest.' The phrase also indicates the importance attached to this method.
3 The use of a lens here is suggested by the use of benediction-
4 PL 172.746A and PL 172.668A, respectively. * See p.165.
official called the apocrisarius (sonior sacristan), who carried it in the procession for the blessing of the new fire. It was perhaps inevitable therefore, in view of the importance attached to this translucent stone at Cluny, that reference to an alternative fire-kindling device was omitted from the rubrics relating to the new fire ceremony. In addition to the two monasteries just mentioned, a beryl was also used at Fleury, Barking, and York, and by the Gilbertines.

Unlike the identification of מְשִׁיתם in the Old Testament, there seems little doubt that the beryl referred to in our medieval texts within the new fire context is to be equated with the aluminium silicate of beryllium (Be₂Al₂Si₆O₁₈), the chemical composition of the gemstone which is still known by that name. For in an eighth-century (or ninth-century) description of the stone we read

Beryllus, nube auroc togitur: et sex angulos habet, tenentem manu adurere dicitur.

The vitreous and almost resinous quality of the beryl could well be said to give the impression that the stone was surrounded by a haze; and this particular silicate does indeed crystallise in the hexagonal system. Its reputation for burning the hand, if held, almost certainly arose, partly from its use in kindling the new fire, partly from ignorance, and partly from its being endowed with wonderfully strange qualities by the superstitious and unscientific mind of medieval man. For the beryl, which was used for the new fire, almost certainly saw the light of day only one day of the year and remained safely locked away for the rest of the time. Beryls of various colours occur; but the colourless or white variety is sufficiently translucent as to allow the rays of the sun to pass through and to ignite combustible materials. The view that the term beryllus within the context of the new fire merely refers to glass of high quality cannot be sustained. For in addition to the evidence of Bede's Pseudographia, it must be stated that if the lens had been made of glass or of rock-crystal, the writers who referred

1 In the Massoretic Text of Ex 28:20, 39:13; Ez 1:16, 10:9, 28:13; and Dan 10:6, מְשִׁיתם is rendered throughout in the AV 'beryl'. The uncertainty of the LXX translators in their varying renditions of this word is reflected in modern English versions, where the Hebrew word is variously interpreted as 'chalcedony', 'chrysolite', 'a precious stone', as well as 'beryl'.

2 'Beryl is surrounded by a golden mist and has six facets. It is said to burn the hand of anyone who holds it.' Baedae Pseudographia, PL 94.552A.

3 And presumably on three days of the year when the new fire came to be kindled on each day of the Triduum.
to beryllus would almost certainly have used vitrum or crystallum respectively; and the importance attached to the lens in the procession at Cluny and other places can more easily understood if that object were a stone both rare and of considerable value rather than an easily-obtainable piece of artificial glass.

The fact that no alternative means of kindling the new fire at Tours is recorded by Martène may well be explained by his desire to draw attention to the curious method involved in the use of the lens. For according to the thirteenth-century missal of that church the new fire was produced

sole et cristallo et aqua frigida.¹

It is clear that the fire was kindled by means of a translucent stone held above the tinder; but the mention of the third element, cold water, seemingly essential for the production of the fire, is baffling. This method involving water is also mentioned by John Beleth, who, when describing how the new fire is kindled, writes

Nam si crystallus supponatur orificio phialae aqua plenae ad solem sine mora ignis e crystallo illico excutuetur.²

Beleth gives no indication as to the shape or size of the bottle, although the use of water as well as a lens in a device intended to refract the rays of the sun strongly suggests that the bottle was made of glass or some translucent substance.³ Without more information it is difficult for us at this point in time to understand why the lens alone was not sufficient to produce fire. One possibility is that the water-filled bottle with a lens for a stopper provided a double refractive surface and so, it was believed, enhanced the effectiveness of the device. The use of a translucent container for the production of the new fire is recorded in the tenth-century Sacramentary of Corbie. It refers ⁴

¹ 'By sunlight, a lens, and cold water.' Martène, DAER 4.22.5 p.96 (M324).
² 'For if a lens is fitted in the mouth of a bottle filled with water and tilted towards the sun, fire is very quickly produced from the lens at that place.' PL 202.111B.
³ The use of rock-crystal for the manufacture of containers for liquids is attested by Solinus (Coll. Rerum Mem. 15, 29-31); cited by Dolger, Das Karsamstag p.294.
⁴ PL 78.336B: hora sexta cum ampulla a sole illuminatum (sive a silice excusum). Originally and by derivation an ampulla was a vessel with two handles. Even in classical times the feature characteristic of this container was a convex or bulbous shape. See, for example, Plautus, Merc.5.2.86; Persius 1.3.44; Cicero, De Fin.4.12 and Atticus 1.14; Horace, Ars Poetica 97.
to an **ampulla**. We are not told whether this vessel was filled with water; but it must be presupposed that it was of a vitreous or crystalline composition, and that part of its external surface was convex in shape. The need for a translucent container which would allow the rays of the sun to pass through makes it extremely likely that the **phiala**, referred to by Beleth, was also made of glass or crystal.

A choice of devices for refracting the sun's rays is attested in the Pontifical of Poitiers:

*ignis de christallo sive do amula sumitur, vel etiam de cote, si neutrum horum fuerit, excititur.*

The third choice provides for obtaining the new fire by frictional means, should it not be possible to use either of the other two methods, both of which involve the refraction of sunlight. There is no reason to suppose that **christallo** indicates anything other than a lens of some translucent stone. The presence of **amula** between **christallo** and **de cote** does not signify that this word relates to a method of obtaining fire other than by refraction or friction; for it is difficult to see in what other way fire could have been produced quickly given the circumstances in which it was obtained. Moreover, since **de amula** and **de christallo** are dependent predicatively upon **sumitur** and linked to each other by **sive** (as opposed to **vel** which contrasts the two main verbs), it is almost certain that **amula** is an alternative refractive device. The term is otherwise unknown within the context of the new fire. Most attempts to connect the word with other documented nouns seem fraught with difficulties and forced. **Amula** seems to have little in common with **(h)amulus** (a little hook), **amulum** (starch), and **amuletum** (amulet); and the link with **hamula** (a small water-bucket used for extinguishing fires) is surely one only in spelling. However, in view of the occurrence of **ampulla** in the Sacramentary of Corbie in the rubric relating to the new fire, the most likely interpretation of **amula** is to regard it either as a dialectal or regional variation of **ampulla**, or simply as a wrongly-spelt form of this latter word.

The use of a lens, in preference to a flint, at Barking, Upsala, and York shows that its use was not confined to the generally sunnier

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1 'Fire is obtained from a lens or from **amula**, or, failing either of these, it is struck from a stone' (p.138).
2 Plautus, *Stich.2.1.17.*
3 Celsus 2.20.
4 Pliny, *Nat.Hist.29.4.19.*
5 Columela 10.387.
6 See Note 4 on the previous page.
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<td>PL 177.889D</td>
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<td>c. 1150</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>c. 1200</td>
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<td>1762</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Manuale p.189</td>
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</table>

+ used at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Mons Suavicinii. * signifies the use of a beryl. / See p.180. (m) indicates possible Mozarabic influence.

Table 37. Evidence for the production of fire by refraction.¹
(The figure 1 in the third and fourth columns indicates that the rubrics give this method priority. The figure 2 indicates the alternative method.)

and warmer parts of Southern Europe.² A hitherto largely-unnoticed

¹ In addition to the above there are two ordinaries cited in the 1856 Ritual of Soissons - see p.167- and the evidence of Bede, which is discussed on the following page.

² The writer has demonstrated by experiment that fire can be kindled with the use of a lens at an early hour on both a late autumnal and an early spring morning at a latitude of 540 N.
passage in Bede's *De Tabernaculo* may well be a reference to the use of the lens, and if so, would antedate the first recorded instance of its use (PKE) by over two hundred years.

Nullum offerri licet tabernaculo Dei, nisi quod de lignis olivarum conficitur, sicut nec ignis alius quam qui coelo descendit, vel in lucernis sanctis vel in altari Dei debet accendi. Offerant ergo filii Israel oleum ad lucernam Dei, non qualecumque, sed de lignis olivarum, et hoc purissimum, piloque contusum.¹

This reference to fire occurs in a passage containing regulations relating to the use of oil in church lamps. It is true that the passage contains Old Testament allusions, and an attempt is made to justify the liturgical practices of the day by appealing to biblical precedents; but it is difficult to see any reference or allusion here to an instance in the Old Testament of fire from heaven. For on those occasions when fire is said to have originated with the Lord, some (such as Lev 9:24 and 1 Ki 18:38) involve the consuming of the sacrifice upon the altar; others (for example, Gen 19:24, Lev 10:2, Num 11:1) describe the punishment of those who had sinned against the Lord. In the passage under discussion neither of these above-mentioned aspects of fire seems to be of relevance. It is more the fire which burns in the lamps for illumination or on the altar for symbolic reasons that is of concern to Bede, and for this reason he is almost certainly referring to the source of the flame for those lamps. Moreover, in the only instance in the Old Testament where a downward movement of fire is recorded, viz. in the contest on Mt Carmel (1 Ki 18:38), the fire is said to have fallen rather than to have descended from heaven; although it must be admitted that in that context there is little difference, if any, in meaning.²

Since there was no tradition in Judaism of obtaining fire for liturgical lights from any particular source, as opposed to either the flint or lens in Christian ritual, it is tempting to see in the phrase *ignis... qui coelo descendit* an implicit but unmistakable reference to the kindling of the new fire by means of a lens.

¹ 'It is only permissible to offer for use in the temple of God oil which is made from the fruit of the olive, just as the fire which burns in the sacred lamps or upon the altar of God should only be that which has come down from heaven. Accordingly let the oil which the sons of Israel bring for the lamp of God be not any kind of oil, but obtained from the fruit of the olive, of the best quality, and beaten with a stick.' PL 91.463.

² Neither in the original Hebrew נְעָן הַשֵּׁרֶשׁ, nor in the Latin translation *cecidit autem ignis Domini* with which Bede would have been familiar, does the phrase *from heaven* occur.

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The compilers of the 1856 Ritual of Soissons claimed that the mention and use of crystallum in former times implied that the new fire was kindled by frictional means; and that the historian Jean Cabaret was guilty of a very serious mistake when he wrote that at Soissons the new fire was produced 'by a lens of crystal glass which they used to expose to the rays of the sun' (p.308 note xi). In support of their assertion they cited the rubric from an Ordinary of St-Martial, Limoges igne do cristallo vel silice noviter excusso,
in which the participle excusso qualifies both nouns, and part of the corresponding instruction in the Ordinary of St-Pierre d'Orval:

silice vel cristallo noviter cum calibe.

It is true that in the second instance cum calibe, 'with a steel', appears to relate to both silice and cristallo; but the absence of a verb makes difficult the interpretation of the rubric which, being incomplete, is therefore inadmissible as corroborative evidence. Moreover, the addition of cum calibe is rare in other rubrics similar to this. The compilers would almost certainly have been familiar with the rubric of the twelfth-century Ritual of Soissons which prescribed the use of a lens (Table 37); but they may not have been able to reconcile this information with the rubric of their 1745 Missal which referred to the use of a flint (silex, p.163). It would seem, therefore, that they attempted to explain this inconsistency of practice by maintaining that the crystallus had formerly served the same purpose as the flint.

The compilers were apparently unaware of John Beleth's statement, quoted on page 163, or Rupert of Deutz's reference to the use of a lens 'on a cloudless day', or the evidence of Sicardus. Moreover it would seem that the verb excutere, whose perfect participle excussus is used in the first of the above-quoted rubrics, and which formerly suggested 'shaking out' or 'driving out' with the use of rapid or violent movement, had either extended its meaning to include other methods of kindling fire, as Rubrics 1, 2, 4, and 7 in Table 38 would suggest; or was linking cristallo and silice in a sylleptic union. At first sight the new fire rubric in the Gilbertine Ordinal would appear to support the view of the nineteenth-century rubricians of Soissons:

a cilice (sic) vel cristallo aut berillo excussus.

1 For references, see Table 37 on page 165.
In classical Latin the use of vel would have indicated that silex and cristallus were variants within the same category, as opposed to beryllus, which was contrasted with them by the use of vel. In medieval Latin these former niceties of distinction no longer obtained. Indeed, in the above-quoted instance and in the corresponding rubric in the Pontifical of Poitiers the role and function of vel is reversed.

A number of observations may be adduced in favour of the traditional interpretation and understanding of the use of crystallus to show that the liturgists of Soissons were themselves in error, and that the word crystallus within the present context signified a lens used for generating fire by the refraction of the sun's rays. (i) In earlier documents it is clear that two different methods are involved from the use of two separate verbs to express the actions of kindling fire by refraction and by friction: in Poitiers sumere and excutere respectively, and in the Customary of Fleury producre and excutere respectively. (ii) The symbolic interpretation of the lens makes sense only if the principle of refraction is under discussion. (iii) There are clear references to the sun in the Sacramentary of Corbie and by John Beleth; and the Ordinal of St Mary's, York refers to the possibility of cloud covering. (iv) It is difficult to believe that a semi-precious stone was subjected to the violent impact of a bar of iron. (v) Few semi-precious stones, such as beryl, will produce a spark if struck with iron. Moreover, their small size would have necessitated their being held in a clamp or other similar device.

The writer is of the opinion that the placing in the rubric of the lens before the flint indicates that within the rite priority was given to the use of the lens. The inclusion of the alternative method of fire by friction was a prudent precaution designed to obviate the possible dismay or frustration likely to be experienced in the event of a cloudy day. In instances in which the rubric prescribes the use of the flint first, followed by the alternative of a lens, it should not be assumed that the frictional method of kindling fire had priority. In many instances it is likely that a simple choice existed and that either method was valid liturgically. One suspects that in a number of rites the existence of a choice represents a synthesis of ceremonial elements drawn from different cultural or religious traditions. The preference of most of the liturgical commentators for the frictional method of

1 For references, see Table 37.
kindling fire reflects the fact that the use of the flint was far more common than that of the lens throughout the Western Church.

The Symbolism of the Lens

Whereas the action of striking a steel against a flint was thought to result in the release of a spark contained in the flint, a lens was believed to be the means of transferring fire from the sun to the earth. Medieval writers seized upon the potential symbolism inherent in this method of obtaining fire, not only because of the obvious similarity in function between a fire-producing lens and the mediatorial role of Christ, but also because of the closeness of spelling and the identical pronunciation of Christ with part of the Latin word for lens, cristallum. Commenting upon the method of obtaining fire by the refraction of the sun's rays, Rupert of Deutz compares the sun with God and the pieces of charcoal with men in bondage to death. The lens is Christ who mediates between God and men, and who brings life to the latter. Similarly the fire which the lens brings into being and which ignites the charcoal is the Holy Spirit which Jesus told his disciples he would send (Jn 14:26). In another sense the lens brings the fire of God's love to men; for without the mediation of Christ they would exist without it. The symbolic interpretation of the lens as Christ the Mediator is also mentioned by both Sicardus and Durandus. The notion of the fire representing the Spirit of Christ spread amongst the faithful is found in the Gemma Animae of Honorius of Autun. John Beleth and Honorius both elaborate the idea of the lens representing Christ; for they see the translucent stone as symbolising the 'clear resurrection body of Christ'. Beleth describes the resurrectional flesh of Christ as 'pure and pellucid', a notion echoed in the Missal of Upsala.

In some churches there was no new fire ceremony as such; instead, the new fire was 'taken from elsewhere' (sumptus aliunde). This practice is discussed in Chapter 8 on page 186.

1 This notion is also found in the Miscellanea of Hugh of St Victor (PL 177.889D).
4 Rationale VI.80 p.350. Durandus says that the lens comes between the sun and the moon. It is almost certain that he or a later copyist should have written earth for the latter noun.
5 PL 172.668B. 6 Honorius, ibidem.
Chapter Seven

THE NEW FIRE AT ROME

(i) The eighth-century evidence of Pope Zachary

The earliest explicit reference to the new fire ceremony at Rome is found in the following extract from a letter which Pope Zachary (741-52) wrote in reply to an enquiry from Boniface, the Bishop of Mainz:

De igne autem paschali quod inquisisti, a sanctis priscis patribus, ex quo per Dei et Domini nostri Jesu Christi gratiam et pretioso sanguine eius Ecclesia dedicata est, quinta feria Paschae, tres lampades magnae capacitatis, ex diversis candelis ecclesiae oleo collecto, in secreto ecclesiae loco ad figuram interioris tabernaculi insistente indeficienter cum multa diligentia ardebunt, ita ut oleum sufficere possit usque ad tertium diem. De quibus candelis sabbato sancto sanctora sacrorum fontis baptismate sumptus ignis per sacerdotem renovabitur. De crystallis autem, ut asseru­­isti, nullo habemus traditionem.1

Before we discuss the practice of reserving fire and comment on the ceremonial details, we must first deal with a number of points of interpretation which this passage raises. The custom of reserving the fire at Rome on Maundy Thursday and renewing it on Holy Saturday was obviously of long standing. Zachary himself was writing in the 740s; and it is reasonable to suppose that the practice went back at least to the middle of the seventh century. The Pope was in no doubt that the ceremony was of very great antiquity, although precisely which era he is referring to in the above-quoted extract is debatable. For from a temporal point of view the first three lines of the extract from the letter are capable of two different interpretations. (i) The Latin text is taken from the nineteenth-century edition of J.P.Migne. In the third line of the Latin text the word for 'church' is printed with a capital letter E. The editor clearly regards Zachary as here envisaging...

1 'Now concerning the Paschal fire about which you enquired: since the time of our saintly fathers of old, when the Church was established (or when the church was dedicated) through the grace of God and our Lord Jesus Christ and by His precious blood, on Thursday of Holy Week while the Sacrament is being consecrated, three large lamps, fuelled by a copious supply of oil which had been collected from the various lamps in church, will be tended with great care and will burn continuously in a remote part of the church, recalling the flame of the inner tabernacle. There is sufficient oil to last until the third day. From these lamps fire will be taken on Holy Saturday for the sacred Baptism at the font, and will be rehallowed by the Bishop (or by a priest). As you have made mention of lenses, we have no tradition of using them.' (PL 89.951.)
the universal Church which came into being after the Resurrection; and the sancti prisci patres are presumably the twelve apostles. According to this interpretation, therefore, it would appear that Zachary is ascribing a venerable age to the custom of reserving the Paschal fire, and is claiming an antiquity for the practice co-eval with the Church itself. (ii) Alternatively, if Ecclesia refers to the Cathedral of St John Lateran and the sancti prisci patres are to be identified with the leaders of the Church in Rome at the time of St John's Constantinian foundation, Zachary is attributing an age of about 400 years to the custom. This latter explanation has two serious drawbacks. First, the phrase pretioso sanguine can only be accommodated with difficulty within a fourth-century Roman context. Secondly, the identification of the sancti prisci patres with a fourth-century Roman bishop and his presbyters is strained.

There is probably an element of credibility in both interpretations. For on the one hand Zachary is specifically referring to the Church in Rome, since his description of the way in which the fire is reserved relates to Roman usage. Yet he is also claiming an apostolic descent and approbation for the practice in order, perhaps, to assert the prior claim of Rome to be guardian of the Church's traditions. For the Roman Church had been established with the apostolic authority of St Peter; Mainz and the other churches of Gaul and Germany had no comparable foundation. Yet at the same time one suspects that the Pope may have been aware that the customs relating to the reservation of the Paschal fire may have derived in part from pagan Roman ceremonial. The attribution of the origin of the new fire ritual at Rome to the Apostolic Age may have been a deliberate attempt by him, or more likely one of his predecessors, to discountenance the suggestion or belief that the ritual surrounding the reservation of fire at Rome was inherited from a pre-Christian milieu. However, as we shall mention again, 1 the custom of renewing the sacred fire at Rome at this time of the year antedates the Age of the Apostles by many centuries; for it was a feature of the ancient Roman religion. Zachary's claim, therefore, that the reservation and renewal of fire during Holy Week is a practice of the Roman Church dating from the first century is not entirely without truth. It must be stressed, however, that the ceremonial surrounding the provision of Paschal fire at Rome also contained elements drawn from the Lucernarium and suggested by the events of the first Holy Week. These will be discussed in Chapter 16 of Part IV.

1 See Chapter 8 for the Church's adoption of the new fire ritual.
It is clear from the words insistente indoficienter... ardebunt and from the fact that they were large that the three lamps burned simultaneously and not singly in succession as the supply of oil in each one became exhausted. The size of these three lamps can only be estimated by the amount of oil it was necessary for each to hold in its reservoir. It is known that half a log of oil was required for keeping alight the נַרְנְרָךְ נְרָךְ נְרָךְ (nor tamid) in the Jewish Temple during a winter's night.\(^1\) If we accept that a log was equivalent to about one imperial pint or half a litre\(^2\) and that for the sake of our argument a winter's night comprised twelve hours, each of the Roman lamps would have required an oil reservoir with a capacity of at least two pints in order to provide continuous illumination for the forty-eight hours between the evenings of Maundy Thursday and Holy Saturday. This accords well with the description of the lamps as being 'magnae capacitatis'.

The concealing of the lamps 'in a remote part' of the basilica prompted Zachary to draw the analogy between the reserved fire of Rome and the נַרְנְרָךְ נְרָךְ נְרָךְ in Jerusalem. The phrase cum multa diligentia reveals the importance attached to keeping the fire alive and the concern felt that it should not go out. The phrase would imply that the lamps were constantly attended during this two-day period.

The phrase in secretiore ecclesiae loco clearly indicates that the lamps were placed in a less frequented part of the basilica. It is just possible that the sacristy was used for this purpose; although one might perhaps have expected Zachary to specify the sacristy if the fire had been reserved in that room. However, the sepulchral aspect of the occasion and the circumstances in which the fire was reserved demanded that the place of concealment should be as far removed from the gaze of men as possible; and although the Cathedral of St John Lateran remained unused for divine worship during the whole of Good Friday and for most of Holy Saturday, it is likely that the sacristy of the basilica received a number of visitors during that period. Moreover, the size of that church afforded a much more suitable location for the reservation of the fire than the sacristy.

It is true that the reservation of fire on Maundy Thursday was also a feature of some of the Gallican rites. However, in those rites the fire was reserved on Maundy Thursday in order to replace that lost at Tenebrae on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday.\(^3\)

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1 Babylonian Talmud, Shabbath 22b, p.96 note 13.
in the eighth century the purpose in reserving the fire was partly functional - to provide light at Baptism on Holy Saturday after the Vigil - but its principal function was to convey through the symbolism of fire something of the death and resurrection of Jesus. This was facilitated by the use to which St John Lateran was put on Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Commenting on the later practice of illuminating the altar and church lights with a flame from the triple candle, Van Gennep stated: 'L'ensemble constitue une dramatisation visuelle du schéma des Rites de Passage : séparation, marge, et renaissance.'

His triple-phase theory is equally pertinent to the ceremonial of the Roman Church in the eighth century. For the fire is removed from view together with all the oil in the church lamps; it is kept in a state of limbo in its place of reservation; and it is subsequently reproduced for use at Baptism on Holy Saturday. However, it is not at all clear to what extent the new fire ritual of the Roman Church derived from pagan antecedents, since the events of the latter part of Holy Week provided a parallel historical setting for the evolution of a liturgical re-enactment and 'visual dramatisation' of the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus, in which He was symbolically represented by the fire. It is true that Zachary does not mention any symbolic significance attached to the reservation of the fire; but it is our belief that by placing the old fire in a remote part of the church, concealed from sight and the living world in the same way that the dead are hidden away in a tomb, the old fire was in a sense held to have died; and that the act of blessing performed by the Pope or priest accomplished the revivification of the dead fire, analogously to the way in which God had raised Jesus from the dead. Thurston calls the Roman method of hiding fire an image of the death of Christ and its reappearance 'a wonderful type of Resurrection'.

There is some uncertainty as to whether the reserved fire was a newly-kindled flame or whether it was taken from an already-existing source of fire. The silence of Zachary in this matter leaves both possibilities open. It is true that in pagan Rome new fire had been kindled annually in March in the Temple of Vesta. It is unlikely, however, that there was any continuity of practice in Rome itself once that city had closed its temples. Paganism in Rome was suppressed more ruthlessly than in most rural areas where pre-Christian rituals and traditions were often either Christianised or adopted into the life and liturgy.

1 Manuel 1.3 p.1297 n.2. 2 Lent and Holy Week p.413. 3 Ovid, Fasti III.143.
of the Church. Possible support for the view that the fire was newly-kindled comes from the Lucernarium hymn of Prudentius, which was sung at that daily office. According to lines 7 and 8 of the hymn the flame for the lamp which burned during that service was kindled anew each day. Since the bringing of the reserved fire for the lighting of the baptismal candles at Rome represented the survival of the old office of the Lucernarium within the rite of that city's Church, and since it would seem that the act, if it took place, of kindling the new fire at Rome did not possess the same liturgical importance that it did in the Gallican and Spanish rites, it could be argued that reference to the source of fire did not merit inclusion in any rubrics and was therefore omitted. From this it follows that there is no good reason to believe that the flame for lighting the three large lamps was not obtained from newly-kindled fire. The evidence of Prudentius in this matter, however, should be treated with extreme caution. For not only does a period of about 350 years stand between Prudentius and Zachary, we cannot be sure that the lighting of the lamp for the Lucernarium was accomplished in Spain in the same way as in Rome, assuming that, as a Spaniard, Prudentius in his hymn was drawing on his experience of the Spanish form of the service.

The final sentence of Zachary's letter provides weightier support for the view that the three lamps were lit with newly-kindled fire. Although we do not possess a copy of Boniface's letter and do not know the precise form of the question which prompted Zachary in his reply to mention the use of lenses, there can be little doubt that Boniface had referred to their use in the kindling of the new fire for the Easter vigil. In view of Zachary's denial of the Roman use of the lens it

1 Liber Cathemerinon V (Cunningham p.23) : Incussu silicis lumina...monstras saxigeno semine, 'At a blow of the flint you reveal the light with a rock-born spark.'
2 Zachary's silence concerning the source of the new fire is perhaps comparable to the omission of reference to the water in a baptismal font in the rubrics of service-books and manuals. Rarely is it stated that the font should contain water; for its presence is presupposed.
3 It is debatable whether in this instance a distinction should be made between what Stevenson terms Vesper-light and Paschal-light (The Ceremonies p.178). For the Paschal themes from Exodus figure prominently in Prudentius' Lucernarium hymn (11.37-88 and 89-104).
4 Boniface's letter appears to have contained a twofold request : for information concerning the new fire procedure at Rome, and for papal approval for the use of a lens in Christian ceremonial. The Englishman was almost certainly familiar with the method of kindling the Paschal fire by friction - Ordo 26, which attests the practice, is to be dated to the mid-eighth century - (continued at the foot of the next page)
would seem to follow that at Rome the Paschal fire was kindled by means of a flint. However, his reply relates specifically to the use of a lens as opposed to any other means of producing fire; and his silence concerning the use of a flint at Rome can equally be interpreted as indicating that there was no production of new fire at Rome, but that the lamps were lit from an already-existing source of fire.

In favour of the view, already referred to above, that the three lamps were kindled with old fire is Zachary's silence regarding the source of the fire. For in view of his mention of the size and number of the lamps, the source of the oil that fuelled them, the time at which they were reserved, their location, and the care with which they were tended, his failure to refer to the act of kindling anew the fire, assuming that this act did occur, would seem somewhat surprising. A more important consideration, however, centres around the interpretation of renovabitur, 'will be renewed', in the penultimate line of the above-quoted passage. The verb obviously does not describe the kindling of the fire either prior to or following its reservation since it refers to the act of renewal which the already-burning flame undergoes (de candelis....sumptus ignis). It is true that renovare may be interpreted 'change' or 'alter' and that within the Roman context under discussion it would indicate that the newly-kindled and therefore unconsecrated fire in reservation was transformed by the Pope, or a priest deputising for the Pope, on Holy Saturday into fire hallowed for liturgical use. However, it is difficult to see why Zachary did not write benedicetur ('will be blessed') if he intended renovabitur to have the sense of 'will be changed'. The usual interpretation of renovare is 'renew' or 'restore', and, given the circumstances in which the verb is being used, it is unnecessary to translate the word otherwise. For it is the view of the writer that the flame for kindling the three lamps was taken from an already-existing source of consecrated fire and that, since it symbolised the spirit of Jesus in this visual dramatisation

(Continuation of Note 4 from the previous page.) and the guidance which he is seeking in the matter of the lens may relate to the first occasion when that method of producing the new fire for Easter was permitted by the Church. Interestingly, the use of a lens for the new fire is allowed in FRG, which is thought to have had its provenance in Mainz, the city of which Boniface was bishop. Zachary's non-committal reply suggests a grudging approval. A policy of toleration towards non-Roman ritual had characterised the pontificate of St Gregory (Bede, A History of the English Church and People 1.27 : the reply to Augustine's second question).
of His death and burial, it was held to be 'dead' during the time of its reservation. On Holy Saturday, when the fire was brought out of its place of concealment, it was necessary to revivify the flame for liturgical use by means of a sacerdotal pronouncement of blessing. In this way the old fire which had died was restored to life and thus renewed.¹

The three lamps were lit during the Mass which commemorated the Last Supper. Dendy, perhaps because of the superficial connection between the collecting of the oil for the lamps and the blessing of the chrism on Maundy Thursday, states that the lamps were hidden during the Mass of the Holy Oils.² However, the fact that mention is made of the consecration of the sacrum rather than the chrism would suggest that Zachary is referring to the evening Mass of Maundy Thursday; and the absence of Tenebrae on Maundy Thursday at Rome in the mid-eighth century would indicate that in that city at that time the Triduum was held to begin at the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Thursday evening,³ a time more suitable for the lighting and reservation of the three large lamps than one earlier in the day. Subsequently on Holy Saturday the reserved fire was used to light the two Vigil-candles which were set close to the font as it was being blessed - a fact alluded to by Zachary.⁴

The Pope does not comment upon the reservation of three lamps as opposed to one. It would be not unreasonable to believe that the simultaneous burning of three flames was designed to minimise greatly the chances of losing the fire during this period. However, in the Gallican tradition in which the reservation of fire also took place, only one lamp was used; and since the flames were constantly attended by an official of the Lateran Basilica, as we have already suggested, it is clear that three lamps were lit not as a precautionary measure. A symbolic significance would seem to be the most likely explanation for the use of three lamps. Either they were lit in honour of the Trinity; or more likely they symbolised the three-day repose of Jesus in the tomb.

The absence of illumination at the all-night vigil of Good Friday/

¹ In Part IV Chapter 16 we will present additional corroborative evidence for the sepulchral nature of the place in which the fire was reserved.
² The Use of Lights p.133. According to the eighth-century Gregorian
³ Since the liturgical changes of 1955 this is now once more a feature of the Roman rite.
⁴ For a description of the old Roman Vigil, see Part IV Chapter 16.
² (cont.) Sacramentary there was only one Mass at Rome on MT.
Holy Saturday at Poitiers in the sixth century, and at Matins/Lauds of Holy Saturday in Rome, Milan, and parts of Gaul in the eighth century\(^1\) leads us to believe that in Rome before and including the time of Pope Zachary no liturgical lights were lit on Good Friday at all.\(^2\) This is further borne out by the fact that the old fire was reserved during the evening of Maundy Thursday and remained concealed until its renewal on Holy Saturday. In any study of the Triduum at Rome in the early Middle Ages, it is important to bear in mind that not all the ceremonies of the last three days of Holy Week were held in the same church. In other dioceses the ceremonies were necessarily confined to one building, at least in the period of which we treat. At Rome the Good Friday ceremonies viz. the Mass of the Catechumens, the Passion, the Solemn Prayers, the Adoration, and the Mass of the Presanctified were held in the Church of Sta Croce in Gerusalemme; whilst those of Maundy Thursday, and the Vigil on Holy Saturday took place in the Cathedral of St John Lateran. As a result no liturgical illumination was required in the latter church on Good Friday since the Pope was officiating in Sta Croce. The three lamps would therefore burn in the remote part of St John Lateran from the evening of Maundy Thursday onwards, light not being required for any purpose in the cathedral during the next forty-eight hours. For the lamps used at the night office of Good Friday could be lit from the flame of a candle used at the Lotio; and the night office of Holy Saturday was sung in total darkness at this period, as we have already noted.

(iii) The ninth-century evidence

(a) Theodore's evidence (AD 832)

In Chapter 1 we discussed Archdeacon Theodore's inconclusive evidence relating to the provision of new fire at Rome during the Triduum.\(^3\) We observed that if, in addition to providing illumination at the night office of Holy Saturday, the new fire of Good Friday was also reserved to light the two Vigil-candles later that day, the ritual involving the

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1 See Part I Chapter 1.
2 The absence of any liturgical light at Rome on Good Friday may be assumed from the fact that the old fire was reserved in the three large lamps during the whole of this day. Moreover, the Pope on that day used unconsecrated fire for his honorific lights (pp.9-10).
3 (Pages 99-101). In ipsa die novus ignis accenditur de quo reservatur usque ad nocturnale officium. 'On that same day (Good Friday) new fire is kindled and reserved for the night office.' Amalarius, Liber de ordine antiphonarii XLIV.2.
reservation of the three large lamps would have lost its raison d'être; and presumably they would cease to have featured in the Roman rite. On the other hand since the conversation between Amalarius and Theodore centred around the provision and the loss of light at the night offices of the Triduum, and since the reserved fire could not be used for the supply of illumination at the night office of Holy Saturday in view of its unconsecrated state, there was no reason why Theodore should have mentioned the three lamps, assuming that they were burning all the while in their state of reservation.

Although the evidence of Theodore by itself is inconclusive, the statement by Amalarius that in the Roman Church all fire (totus ignis) was extinguished at midday and new fire was kindled at about the ninth hour would imply that the old fire was no longer reserved in the three large lamps, if totus here bears its all-inclusive meaning. However, if, as we have suggested, the reserved fire was held to exist in a state of limbo, as it were, it is unlikely that the fire considered to be dead was included in the extinguishing of all the fires that took place on Good Friday; and if the new fire was kindled during the afternoon of that same day for the sole purpose of providing illumination at the night office of Holy Saturday, we can but assume that the three large lamps continued to be reserved as before.

In Chapter 5 we suggested that the kindling of the new fire at Lyon behind the high altar may have been a feature of that church's liturgy inherited from the old Roman rite which Leidrad of Nürnberg had introduced at Lyon in the early years of the ninth century. We also suggested on page 13 that the use of light at the night office of Holy Saturday may have been introduced into the Roman rite during the pontificate of Leo III (AD 795-816). It would not be unreasonable to believe that the kindling of the fire for that office became a part of Roman ritual at the same time. Since Leidrad was responsible for the adoption of the Roman rite by the Church of Lyon, he presumably also introduced the new fire ceremony which would only recently have made its appearance in Rome itself. From this it would follow that the new fire at Rome was kindled behind the high altar of the Cathedral of St John Lateran, in which church the night office of Holy Saturday was to be held.

1 For the full text of this statement, see above, p.100.
2 Section (ii) (b) p.149.
3 King, LFS p.11.
Some fifteen or twenty years after the date of Theodore's testimony, Pope Leo IV issued the following decree:

In sabbato Paschae extincto veteri novus ignis benedicatur, et per populum dividatur, et agua benedicta similiter.¹

The uncertainty regarding the relationship of extincto veteri to the rest of the first clause, and the absence of any reference to the kindling of the new fire renders the first clause open to a number of different interpretations. For instance the loss of fire may have taken place and the new fire kindled on the previous day - the arrangement familiar to Theodore - or the old fire may have been extinguished on Good Friday and the new fire kindled shortly before it was blessed on the following day. The most likely meaning, however, is that the loss of fire, and the kindling and blessing of the new fire all took place on Holy Saturday. If this interpretation is correct, it would indicate that a significant development had occurred in the new fire ceremony of the Roman Church between the archidiaconate of Theodore and the pontificate of Leo IV.

In attempting to account for the change of day² on which the new fire was kindled at Rome it is unnecessary to look for Milanese, Mozarabic, or direct Gallican influence. In view of Leo's keen interest in liturgy it is not difficult to ascribe this development in Rome's new fire ceremonial to the Pope. The reform survived the changes brought about by the introduction into Rome of PRG; for, as we have already observed,³ the twelfth-century Pontificale Romanum gave priority to the practice of kindling the new fire on Holy Saturday, reducing PRG's performance of the ceremony on Maundy Thursday to an alternative.

There is no evidence from the middle of the ninth century to show that the use of the Easter candle had been introduced into Rome by that date. Attestation of its use in the Roman rite is first provided by PRG a century later. It would seem, therefore, that the new fire, kindled on Holy Saturday, provided the flame for lighting the two Vigil-

¹ 'On Holy Saturday let the old fire be extinguished and let the new fire be blessed. Let it be distributed amongst the people in the same way as the holy water.' PL 115.681/2. The exact year of the decree is not known. Leo was Pope from AD 847 to AD 855.  
² That is, from Good Friday to Holy Saturday.  
³ See above, page 106.
(iii) The use of a lens in the Roman rite

There is no firm evidence for the use of a lens as the means of kindling the new fire at Rome before the twelfth century. We have already shown that the mid-eighth-century statement of Pope Zachary that 'we have no tradition of using lenses' related to the production of fire generally and not specifically to the ceremony for the kindling of the Paschal fire; and, although in the evidence provided by Theodore and Leo there is no indication of how the new fire was produced, Zachary's denial of the use of lenses would suggest that the frictional method was employed in ninth-century Rome. In assessing the evidence of PRG, which became the service-book of the Roman Church, we must take into account the fact that it is unknown which of the two traditions relating to the production of the new fire was adopted into the Roman rite. The uncertainty is caused by the tradition, attested in Manuscript C, in which the choice is offered between a flint and a lens for the kindling of the new fire. This tradition vis-à-vis the practice of the Roman Church invites the consideration of two possibilities. (i) Assuming that prior to the introduction of PRG the new fire at Rome had been kindled by means of a flint, did the existence of this choice of means, attested in Manuscript C, so influence the practice of the Roman Church that she abandoned the use of the flint and opted for the lens? (ii) Was the rubric, enjoining only the use of a flint, expanded to include the use of a lens as an alternative in order to accommodate those churches where the practice of using a lens was well-established? The situation envisaged by the former suggestion is most unlikely. It requires much more than the alternative directive of a rubric to change radically a well-established practice. The latter possibility has more to commend it. However, the uncertainty concerning the precise origin of the double rubric, the fact that Manuscripts C and K relate to different liturgical traditions, and doubt that a lens was used at Rome for the new fire before the tenth century can lead in this instance only to conclusions which are based on speculation.

1 For the use of these two candles, see Part IV Chapter 16.
2 PL 89.951. See also p.175.
3 PRG preserves two different traditions relating to the method by which the new fire was kindled. According to Manuscript K they obtained fire 'excussum de lapide'; whilst Manuscript C records: 'excussum de silice vel christallo' (II p.94 #342). The two variants represent the practices of different liturgical milieux.
Rubric

Date

'L novus igniS.ooeXCUtiatur

12 c
1214

••• de cryatallo vel etiam
alio modo fiat.
2. ignem de cristallo vel
silice ••• noviter excussum
J. efficitur novus ignis
4. ignis excutitur de
cristallo sive lapide
5· efficitur novus ignis

c.1140

.Po_CJ!Plctnt

1

.PR XII

Pontifical of
Apamea
QrS.2 Ecclesiae
La~eranensis

a.1140

.Qr.gg Benedicti

12 c

Pl(C (..: Ordo X)

£.1190
£_.1190

Ordo Albini
Ordo Cencii
Lateran Missal

c

6. ignis excuti tur de lapide

13

7. ignis novus de cristallo
vel silice excutitur
8. ••• de crystallo sive lapide
9· extrahitur novus ignis de
cristalo sive lapide
10. extrahitur novue ignis de
crystallo vel alio lapide
11. efficitur novus ignis

£·1296

~

.£·1310

~ Caietani

.£·1350
1377
14 c

C.A.1760
Bindo F.
Ordo XV (= Ordo
1·Amelii)
Pontifical of
G.Barozzi
Missale Rom' um

£·1451

12. ignis excutitur de lapide

Table

3§.

1474

The Roman evidence (12 C- - 15 C ) for the
means by which the new fire was kindled.

On page 168 we suggested that,if in a new fire rubric a reference
to the lens preceded the mention of a flint, priority was to be given
to the production of fire b.f the refraction of the sun's rays. This is
well exemplified in the rubric of PR XII (Table 38, Rubric 1), which is
also the earliest evidence for the use of a lens at Rome. That this
method had priority at Rome is further intimated by the unspecified and
2
almost vague alternative which the rubric offere.
~~probably
implies the use of a stone; but the alternative device involving friction, viz. a wooden fire-drill, should not be completely ruled out. The
use of a lens is attested in eight documents which span a period of
some two centuries; and the absence of any reference to the means in
1 The documentary references are as follows : (1) I xxxii.1 p.2)8 and
DAER 4.24 p.160 (M 25). (2) ~ p.61. (3) ~ p.151. (4) II xliv.1
p.470 (= P.L 78.1014D). (5) Liber Ceneuum 1 p.296 and 2 p.130.
{6) Schmidt II 8 1o8 p.610.~III iv.1 p.587. {8) PL 78.1218A/B.
2 'Or it may also be done in any other way.'
181


Rubrics 3, 5, and 11 (Table 38) leaves open the possibility that the use of the lens was allowed.

It might be argued that, although a lens may have been used at Rome in the twelfth century, its use did not extend much beyond 1200, and that mention was made of it in the fourteenth-century documents almost as a matter of course, the rubric having assumed a set form of words and the device itself having by then become an anachronism. For it is significant that the Lateran Missal makes reference only to the flint (Rubric 6). An argument, however, based upon this assumption cannot be sustained. To challenge the accuracy of these rubrics is to call into question the evidence of all other such rubrics which offer a choice of action. Moreover, if the practice of using a translucent stone for the new fire had fallen into desuetude, it is almost certain that any reference to the lens would have been omitted from the relevant rubric. The apparent difficulty caused by the intrusion of the rubric from the Lateran Missal can best be explained by the circumstances in which medieval service-books were compiled. The compilation of a service-book, be it ordo, pontifical, or missal, was the responsibility of an individual; and the arrangement and content to some extent reflected the preference and revealed the mind of its compiler. It is possible, therefore, that the compiler of the Lateran Missal omitted any reference to the lens out of a personal preference for the use of the flint.

On page 145 we referred to the influence of Cluniac practice upon the Roman rite. In view of the prominence given to the beryl in the new fire ceremony at that monastery (pp.161-2), it is not difficult to believe that the Roman Church borrowed this liturgical feature from the new fire ceremonial of Cluny; for it is known that Pope Gregory VII and Pope Paschal II had close connections with that monastery. The introduction of the lens into the new fire ceremony at Rome is probably to be dated to the latter part of the eleventh century or to the early years of the twelfth century.

1 That is, Rubrics 7, 8, 9, and 10 (Table 38).
2 It is just possible that de cristallo has disappeared from the rubric in the transmission of the text.
3 The duration of their pontificates were respectively 1073 to 1085, and 1099 to 1118.
The incorporation into the liturgy of Holy Saturday and the development of the new fire ceremony were closely linked with the need for a supply of light at the Paschal vigil. The antecedents of this ceremony are to be found in two distinct liturgical traditions.

(1) According to the older tradition, which derives from the fourth-century Jerusalem archetype, the flame, which provided the light at the Easter vigil, was obtained from an existing source of fire which burned in a darkened place that represented the Sepulchre of Jesus. At Jerusalem a perpetual lamp burned within the Church of the Anastasis at the very place where Jesus had been buried. A flame was taken from this shrine in procession to the Church of the Martyrium, in which the Easter vigil at Jerusalem was held. This two-church arrangement also obtained at Milan; and the use of a darkened sacristy for the kindling of the new fire according to the Mozarabic rite is almost certainly an attempt to reproduce conditions comparable to those found at Jerusalem.\footnote{For the Milanese and Mozarabic rites, see Appendix 13.} The use of the darkened west end of the nave of Salisbury Cathedral may also ultimately derive from the Jerusalem-type setting for the production of the Paschal light.\footnote{Sarum Missal of ?1486 fol.lxxxiii.} It is possible that a similar arrangement obtained at Auxerre where the new fire was kindled in one church and subsequently blessed in another.\footnote{Martène, DAER 4.24.3 p.145, M 39.} However, there is some uncertainty about the practice at Rouen where the new fire was kindled in the Church of St-Etienne; for De Moléon informs us that the fire had previously been kindled in the porch of the cathedral.\footnote{Voyages p.299.}

(2) The Gallico-Germanic tradition was derived from the pre-Christian new fire rituals of Northern Europe. Unlike the fire in the tradition which had its provenance in Jerusalem, the flame for the provision of light at the Vigil was taken from newly-kindled fire in a ceremony performed for that very purpose.

The study of the new fire rituals of pre-Christian Europe is beyond the scope of this work.\footnote{J.G. Frazer's Golden Bough, researched in the earlier part of this century, still remains the standard work on this aspect of pre-Christian European religion.} Suffice it to state that, in addition to the fires lit in honour of the sun or the local deity, fire was also kindled for purificatory or for sympathetic reasons. The attitude of the Church was at times hostile, if the use of fire posed a threat to the survival of
Christianity or was at odds with teaching of the Church. These were probably the reasons for the denunciation of certain practices involving the use of fire at a synod held c.AD 745 under the presidency of Boniface of Mainz.\(^1\) Generally, however, the Church seems to have been tolerant of pagan fire rituals especially if they could be transformed and given a Christian orientation, or incorporated into the liturgy of the Church. To the former category of rituals belong the Yule candles of England and Serbia, the bonfires lit on St John’s Eve in Brittany\(^2\) and Spain,\(^3\) or those formerly lit in Belgium and Northern France at the start of Lent.\(^4\) Into the latter group may be placed the former lighting of the candles at Candlemas in parts of the Cotswolds designed to strengthen the power of the winter sun,\(^5\) and especially the lighting of fire on the eve of 1st May in Scotland,\(^6\) Ireland,\(^7\) Wales and Scandinavia,\(^8\) and in other parts of Europe.\(^9\) In view of the need for the provision of newly-kindled fire for use at the Easter vigil, it would seem that the production of fire for this pagan festival was transferred to an earlier, though changeable, day before Easter. Thus the fires, formerly kindled in honour of the Celtic sun-god Bel or Beal,\(^10\) were henceforth to be lit in the worship of the Sun of Righteousness.

The toleration afforded by the Church to pagan fire festivals and other allied rituals depended on her control and monopoly of the use of fire. The Pythagorean belief that fire was at the centre of the universe manifested itself in many of the religious systems of Europe and the Middle East. It is found in the Rig Veda, in Zoroastrianism, in the worship of Hephaestus amongst the Greeks and of Vesta at Rome, and amongst the Celtic peoples of Northern Europe. In practical terms it often meant that the lighting of a fire on a piece of ground entitled the kindler either to the possession of that ground or to rights on that land.\(^11\) It was ‘a ritual proclamation of the ascendancy of the one who lights it’.\(^12\)

\(^1\)Frazer, *Golden Bough* 10 p.270.  
\(^2\)Le Braz p.101.  
\(^3\)Herrera p.234.  
\(^5\)Briggs p.19.  
\(^6\)Ross p.138.  
\(^7\)Bury pp.104 ff.  
\(^8\)Rees and Rees p.193.  
\(^9\)Frazer, *ibidem* p.159.  
\(^10\)Known somewhat tautologically as ‘Beltane fires’. The element *tane* signifies ‘fire’.  
\(^11\)Wade-Evans 16 p.10. The custom survived in parts of Wales up to the end of the nineteenth century.  
\(^12\)Rees and Rees p.157.
By adopting and incorporating this annual ritual of kindling the new fire into her own liturgy, the Church not only tacitly accepted the theological implications of this understanding of fire, but appropriated to herself the rights and responsibilities that had formerly belonged to those who had previously performed the new fire rites. The discharge of this duty provided a means by which the Church was able to consolidate or extend her authority both at a theological level and vis-à-vis each location in which Christianity had been established. For the authority which she possessed related to the places in which she had supervised the kindling of the new fire. This is clear from the directive in the Pontifical of Poitiers which states that the new fire should be kindled and blessed in the most recently-built church in the locality or in one at some distance from the cathedral. The performance of this ritual established an ontological rapport between the church in which the new fire was kindled and the ground on which the church stood. It also bestowed the benefits of God’s protection on those who availed themselves of the fire that had been kindled and blessed within the church.

The extinguishing of the old fire prior to the kindling of the new afforded the Church an opportunity to reassert each year that authority which she possessed by virtue of her role as administrator of that ritual, and to maintain a spiritual hegemony over the lives of those who owed her their allegiance. For the conversion of communities to Christianity did not result in the obliteration of existing pagan beliefs and rituals. These age-old pre-Christian religious practices continued to thrive at times only just beneath the surface of an outwardly Christian culture. The Church, therefore, did not discourage the renewal of the fires, which were extinguished annually in the homes of the faithful, with a flame taken from the fire newly-kindled and hallowed by a Christian priest. For in a sense the taking home of the new fire perpetuated the spiritual authority of the Church and enabled the faithful to enjoy the benefit of a life-giving element upon which God’s blessing had been invoked.

Evidence for the taking of new fire to every home is plentiful throughout Western Europe from the eighth century onwards. The custom survived in parts of France well into the present century.

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1 *In novissima sive forensi loci eclesia [sic]. Poitiers* p.138.
2 Documentary evidence for this practice comes from Regensburg (Sacramentary p.126), Salzburg (1507 Missal folcxi), and Auch (1836 Missal p.191).
3 Ordo 28.63; Ordo 32.21; Poitiers p.215; *PRG II* p.99 §348; John of Avranches, PL 147.49A.
4 Van Gennep p.1257.
Grancolas’ statement that the new fire was not kindled in some churches but was taken from another place relates to churches which obtained their new fire from a central supply either from the cathedral or from a nearby monastery. Although he himself does not give any instance of this procedure, we know from another source that the new fire in the churches of Evreux and its suburbs was obtained from Evreux Cathedral.2

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The Symbolism of the Old and The New Fire

The extinguishing of all illumination during the afternoon liturgy of Good Friday was, it would seem, a practice originally confined to the Roman Church. Amalarius is the earliest writer to record the absence of light during this period and the symbolic interpretation attached to this Roman custom. For according to him the absence of light during the Solemn Prayers and Veneration both commemorated and symbolised the period from the sixth to the ninth hour on Good Friday when ‘there was darkness over all the earth’.3 Moreover those three hours of darkness were held to foreshadow the three days and nights when ‘the creator and producer of light would cover himself with darkness in the tomb’.4 Honorius of Autun also draws the same analogy between the liturgical darkness of the Passion and the solar eclipse that took place during the Crucifixion.5

Commenting on the extinguishing of all fuees prior to the start of the Paschal vigil on Holy Saturday, Sicardus likens the old fue to the Law of the Old Covenant, now fulfilled and superseded by Christ.6 John Beleth records a similar interpretation of the old fue.7

In a general sense the new fue is seen to represent different aspects of God’s nature and gifts. For John of Avranches it symbolises the lux deitatis which remained concealed during the earthly life of our Lord, but which was revealed mystically to the Church and which shone forth in the hearts of the faithful during the Passion and after

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1Non eliciebatur sed aliunde suomebatur. Commentarius p.316.
21740 Missal p.187.
3Liber de ord. ant. XLIV.6.
4Ut praedicaret orbi tribus diebus et tribus noctibus creatorem et operatorem obscuratum se in sepulchro, (ibidem).
5Gemma Animae, PL 172.667C.
6Mitrale, PL 213.322D.
7Rationale, PL 202.111B.
the Resurrection. In the Speculum Ecclesiae Honorius of Autun likens the new fire to the Holy Spirit who illuminates the souls of all the faithful; but in the Gemma Animae he compares the new fire with the new Christian teaching. Robert Paululus, echoing Honorius, suggests that the new fire also represents the new grace that results from the Resurrection. In his commentary on the ceremonies of the Roman Church, Philippe Zazzera in more recent times compared the new fire with the life-sustaining flame with which Jesus is continuously kindling us, a notion expressed some centuries earlier by Bianco da Siena in his hymn Discendi Amor Santo, and also in a nineteenth-century commentary from Langres.

In our discussion of the symbolic interpretation of the kindling of fire from flint (p.160), we suggested that in view of the medieval ignorance as to its physical nature, fire was regarded as being essentially one with that aspect of God’s nature which was manifest in the Burning Bush and at the Transfiguration, though present and visible in the world as perceived by mankind in an allotropic form, as it were. This is in contrast with the understanding of fire purely as a symbol of life and lacking any essential relationship with the divine nature, such as was held by the Gipsies and other peoples. Using Johannine theological concepts, Durandus describes the new fire as the ‘unfailing light’ of God, which comes into the world and illuminates our hearts and senses. It brings us from darkness to light and eternal life.

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1 Lib.de Off.Eccl., PL 147.49A.
2 PL 172.928C and PL 172.668A, respectively.
3 PL 172.452.
4 SS.Ecclesiae Rituum p.301.
5 "(Le) feu nouveau, image de la lumière et de la charité que nous recevons par Notre-Seigneur Jesus-Christ." 1844 Langres Directory p.53.
7 Rationale VI.80 p.350. This phrase occurs in the B-group of the Benediction-formulas (Appendix 5). Used in the vocative case, it is both a title and an attribute of God.
PART III

The New Fire Procession
Chapter One

THE NEW FIRE AND THE PROCESSION

(This section describes the new fire procession on Holy Saturday. In places where the new fire was kindled on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday the processions on those two days were identical except that they did not culminate in the lighting and blessing of the Easter candle.)

There can be little doubt that the new fire procession was a feature of pre-Christian ritual which was adopted into the liturgy of the Christian Church. The necessity of transferring the new fire from its place of reservation on Maundy Thursday, or place of kindling on Holy Saturday, also perpetuated a primitive element of the Lucernarium viz. the bringing in of the lamp, and within its revitalised Christian milieu resulted in the emergence of an elaborate ceremonial which invested the procession with its own distinctive character. From the evidence of the early ordines we find that two main traditions existed within the Romano-Gallican Church: (i) that in which a small candle, lit with the new fire, was borne in procession for the lighting of the Easter candle in church; and (ii) that in which the Easter candle itself was carried in procession, having previously been kindled with the new fire.

(i) The Gelasian sacramentaries do not state how the fire was conveyed to the Easter candle. It is likely, however, that a small lighted candle was carried from the place of reservation. The practice of lighting the small candle from the new or reserved fire is first attested in the eighth-century Ordo 26. It is also found in the ninth-century Ordo 29 and Pontifical of Poitiers, and in the Regularis Concordia of the tenth century. Thereafter this became the practice of the vast majority of churches in both the cathedral and monastic traditions. Information about the size of the small candle is meagre. However, it is recorded that at Canterbury the candle should weigh half a pound, and that it should not previously have been used. In some places the upper candle of the Tenebrae hearse was used.

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1 If the fire was reserved beneath the altar, a small taper would still have been required to transfer the flame.
2 OR 26.14, by inference.
3 OR 29.59.
4 Poitiers p.138.
5 PL 137.349B.
6 HBS 23 p.380.
7 Feasey p.189.
After the candle had been lit from the new fire, it was common practice to light another small taper and to place it in a lantern.¹ Gavanti tells us that this was done in case a high wind should extinguish the processional candle;² and this is confirmed by Lanfranc and the Gilbertine Ordinal, and by evidence from St Lo and Nidaros. At St Paul’s, Rome, at Besançon, and at Nidaros the lantern was carried by a boy; but the Decrees of Lanfranc, implemented at St Vedast’s Abbey and at Durham, specify the magister puerorum.³

The processional candle was carried into church raised aloft.⁴ A symbolic interpretation was subsequently attached to the raising of the light; but our sources give no indication as to why the candle was originally held on high. There are a number of possible reasons. (i) It was a feature of a corresponding pre-Christian ritual. (ii) It was done so that the fire would be visible to all those participating in the ceremony. (iii) It was raised as a gesture of thankfulness that the minor miracle of producing fire had been performed. (iv) The bringing of light into the gloom of the church symbolised Christ’s leaving the darkness of His tomb, as Van Doren observed.⁵ The candle raised on high would have visually expressed the notion of His triumph and symbolised His victory over the forces of darkness.

A number of different devices were used for supporting the candle.

1. The Pole. The use of the pole⁶ is enjoined in Lanfranc’s Decrees and in most of the early surviving monastic customaries. In more recent times a pole continued to be used at Amiens and Le Mans, and most likely in other churches which clung to their Gallican traditions. At Cambrai the pole was painted red, in sympathy perhaps with the colour of the fire.⁷ (Table 39).

2. The Reed. In respect of the surviving documentary evidence the use of a reed antedates that of a pole. It figures in a number of early ordines⁸ and is found in some other early sources.⁹ Some of the later medieval Roman service-books¹⁰ offer a choice

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¹ Or sconsa, ‘a screened light’, as at Fleury and Besançon.
³ For the references in this paragraph, see Tables 39-41.
⁴ It was customary for this candle to be borne by the officiating deacon. Maigne-d’Ams ascribes the duty to a subdeacon (Lexicon VII p.438).
⁵ La cérémonie p.78.
⁶Baculus, pertica, virga: all three terms are found.
⁷ Compare the phrase rutilans ignis from the Romano-Gallican Preface.
⁸ OR 26.4; OR 28.26; OR 29.15; OR 31.29. The latter ordo records its use only on Maundy Thursday; but it was presumably used on the other two days of the Triduum.
⁹Poitiers, PRG, and Alcuin.
¹⁰ Ordo XIV, Ordo XV, CA 1706, and Bindo F.
between a reed and a pole; others,\(^1\) which relate more closely to the ceremonial of the papal court, specify ‘reed’ alone. Similarly the influential Pian Missal of 1570 specifies the sole use of a reed.

The length of the reed\(^2\) was traditionally three and a half cubits or ten palms,\(^3\) both measurements being approximately the height of a man. More recent manuals have recommended a measurement of about five feet.\(^4\) Some liturgical commentators\(^5\) insisted that the reed should not be a pole or a rod; nor should it be an imitation reed.\(^6\)

For symbolically it was important. According to Rupert of Deutz\(^7\) it represented the

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\(^1\)Haymo’s *Ordo Missalis*, *PGD*, and *MR* 1474.
\(^2\)Or *baculus* (1491 Missal of Augustinian Friars np).
\(^3\)Desideri p.150; Bisso I p.79. The former measurement is first recorded in Ordo XIV (*Ordo Caietani*), PL 78.1218B.
\(^5\)Gavantus/Merati IV p.155; Desideri p.149.
\(^6\)Loan p.283. He admitted that in practice a thin pole 5’ long was often used.
\(^7\)*De Div.Off.* V, PL 170.169C
reed which the soldiers gave to Jesus after his trial (Mt 27:29). Bisso, followed by Desideri, also links the reed with the Passion;¹ but the symbolism is forced. Possibly alluding to the use of the serpent-rod or the serpent-candle, which had all but disappeared from the ceremonial of Holy Saturday by his day, Bisso claimed that the reed signified the Passion of Christ, and that, just as a reed is used to kill serpents, so the Passion of Christ destroys the Devil.

It became customary in some churches to decorate the reed with flowers, thus paralleling the ornamentation of the Easter candle. The earliest references to the practice come from two writers in the middle of the seventeenth century.² Both state that some of the actual reed should be visible, the latter adding that this is done ‘because it (the reed) is not devoid of symbolism’.³ Van Gennep also wrote that flowers were attached to the upper portion of the reed (1.3 p.1257). The importance of leaving part of the reed free of flowers is mentioned in two eighteenth-century ceremonials,⁴ and by other commentators such as Merati and Desideri.⁵ The latter also mentions its being decorated with other ornaments. At Constance the reed was in fact a pole, at the end of which was the effigy of a deacon bent backwards; and above its head were the words ‘Here (is placed) the twisted candle’.⁶

It might be argued that the reed was a development of the pole, suggested by the scriptural precedent of Matthew 27:29. Caution, however, is recommended here for two reasons. The evidence for the reed antedates that for the pole by some 250 years; and there is only a tenuous link between the reed of the New Testament and that used for conveying the new fire. In all likelihood the reed and the pole derive from different liturgical milieux. Moreover it is tempting to see in the use of the reed an echo of the myth of Prometheus’ theft of fire from heaven;⁷ or at least a Gallican version of the myth whose re-enactment in a pre-Christian religious context the Church incorporated into her own ceremonial. Corroborative evidence, however, to confirm direct continuity is lacking; but the pagan ancestry of the ritual seems almost certain.

3. The Spear. The use of a spear for the transportation of the candle is first attested in the tenth-century Regularis Concordia; and the fact that it also appears in Lanfranc’s Decrees as an alternative to a pole may suggest that the spear was a development or

¹Hierurgia I p.78 and Praxis p.149, respectively.
²Corsetti (1656) p.316 and De Bralion (1657) p.247. Colti (1772) adds that it may also be adorned with gold (II p.156).
³Id enim mysterio non caret (ibidem).
⁴Augustinian Priars (1714) p.307 and Capuchins (1775) p.128.
⁵Gavantus/Merati IV p.155 and Praxis p.150, respectively.
⁷Interestingly, the plant fennel, in which the fire was stolen, grows to a height of 5 feet.
Table 40. The use of a reed for the new fire.

refinement of the latter - unlike the reed which we maintain was inherited from pre-Christian ritual. Its use may have been suggested by the biblical precedent of the soldier’s lance of John 19:34 in the same way that the use of the reed recalled Matthew 27:48. Alternatively, the spear with its sharp point provided a suitable instrument for affixing the candle, and, having become a feature of the new fire ceremonial, was subsequently endowed with a symbolic interpretation. John of Avranches commented that the spear recalled the Crucifixion.¹

¹Lib.de Off.Eccl.,PL 147.49A : Christus in cruce suspensus.
The surviving evidence would suggest that in addition to the houses of the Benedictine order the spear was used mainly in England and Northern France. In the romanised ceremonial at Palencia the two small candles, which were lit from the new fire, were placed on small spears (hastuli).1 Somewhat surprisingly, the twelfth-century Roman Ordo Albini prescribes the use of a spear; other Roman ordines stipulate a reed.

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1 Reference to small candle.
2 Offers choice of device.
3 Spare candle in lantern.
4 Evidence for Maundy Thursday only.
5 Use of two small spears.

Table 41 The use of a spear for the new fire.

4. The arundo serpentina. This device is discussed in Chapter 2.

1568 Missale Pallantinum fol.c.
Chapter Two

THE ARUNDO SERPENTINA

(i) Its description and use

The *arundo serpentina* was a reed or, more likely, a pole, the upper part of which terminated in the effigy or representation of a serpent.\(^1\) Three variations of the device are known. (i) Either the end of the wooden pole was carved in the likeness of a serpent, or a graven image of this creature was attached to the end of the pole.\(^2\) At Braga the *arundo* was a bronze winged dragon with three candles issuing from its mouth.\(^3\) Elsewhere the candle, which was inserted into the serpent’s mouth, terminated in a triple ramification.\(^4\) The use of the serpent-reed is attested in the seventeenth century\(^5\) and also in the eighteenth century. De Moléon refers to the *arundo* used at Rouen Cathedral at the beginning of the latter century; but records that the carving of the serpent had disappeared.\(^6\) Its use was still permitted at Bayeux at the end of the same century.\(^7\) (ii) The *arundo serpentina* was also a reed or pole to the end of which was affixed a candle twisted to resemble a snake. Examples of this type appear on some of the *Exultet* rolls of Southern Italy, and show the candle either protruding from a spike or socket at the end of the pole, or entwined around the upper section of the shaft.\(^8\) (iii) The tenth-century *Regularis Concordia* attests the combination of the two variants described above in the same device:

ferentes hastam cum imagine serpentis...et...candela, quae more serpentis infixa est.\(^9\)

The combination of serpent-reed and serpent-candle was also familiar to Durandus:

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\(^1\) In addition to *serpens* it was also known as *coluber* (Poitiers p.215), and *draco* (1790 Missal of Bayeux).

\(^2\) The latter type is well exemplified in the woodcut illustration in the 1502 Sarum Processional (p.75). Also in Wordsworth, *Ceremonies and Processions*, p.84.

\(^3\) King, *LPS* p.224. At Worcester also the serpent held three candles (Antiphonary p.69).

\(^4\) For instance, in the Roman rite. See also Table 43.

\(^5\) Feasey (*The Paschal Preconium* p.259) refers to an illustration of a boy, dressed as an angel with wings, lighting the Easter candle with a wax serpent twined about a rod, in *Le Tableau de la Croix représenté dans les cérémonies de la Sainte Messe*, printed by F. Mazot in 1653.

\(^6\) *Voyages Liturgiques* p.304.

\(^7\) 1790 Missal of Bayeux p.168.

\(^8\) Avery, *Plates LXXII, CXX, and CXXXIII*.

\(^9\) ‘Bearing a spear with an effigy of a serpent...and...a candle, which is inserted to resemble a snake.’ PL 137.491B.
In some churches also during these seven days (Easter Week), when they go to the font for Baptism, the effigy of a serpent placed on a pole leads the procession. A twisted candle, lit with the new fire, is fixed on the head of the serpent. With this the Easter candle and all the other lights of the church are lit.\(^1\)

and is attested at Toulouse in the late fifteenth century.\(^2\) A triple twisted candle emerging from the serpent’s mouth is found at Braga in the mid-sixteenth century. At Bayeux in the thirteenth century the serpent held an unspecified number of twisted candles in its mouth: *habeat draco in ore candelas plures retortas*.

The use of the serpent was not confined to the lighting of the Easter candle. We have already noted in the above-quoted excerpt from the *Rationale* that Durandus mentions the lighting of the lamps in some churches by means of the *arundo* - a practice attested by evidence from Vallombrosa.\(^3\) Moreover the serpent was used at other ceremonies and on other days. Its use at the blessing of the font and at Baptism is not only attested by Durandus in the same above-quoted passage from the *Rationale*, but is also found in the rite of Braga and in the revised Mozarabic rite.\(^4\) It featured in the new fire processions on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday at Auch;\(^5\) and at Bayonne the serpent-candle was lit for the reading of St John’s Passion on Good Friday, perhaps as a liturgical allusion to Jesus’ reference to the raising of the serpent in the same gospel (Jn 3:14).\(^6\) At Rouen a winged dragon was borne in procession on Ascension Day by a verger in a purple robe, and placed at the feet of the Blessed Virgin Mary.\(^7\)

(ii) *The origin of the* arundo serpentina

The origin of the serpent-reed or serpent-candle should not be sought in the emergence and development of the triple candle; rather, it was the triple candle which developed from the serpent-candle, as we shall show. In fact the earliest reference to the serpent-candle is to found in the ninth-century Pontifical of Poitiers (p.215); the earliest *ordines* are silent concerning the shape of the candle. The presence of liturgical

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\(^{1}\)In quibusdam etiam ecclesiis, in his septem diebus, quando descenditur ad fontes, antefurtur quidam serpens imaginarius, super virgam; et candela novo lumine accensa, super caput serpantis retorta affigitur, ex qua cereus paschalis et omnes aliae ecclesiae accenduntur. *Rationale* VI.89 p.377.

\(^{2}\)Deferentes virgam sculptam in figuram serpantis...Nam ex igne novo accendeatur cereus in modum serpantis effomatus. Martène, *DAER* 4.23.6 p.127 (M 311).

\(^{3}\)1503 Missal fol.xcv.

\(^{4}\)King, *LPS* p.224 and *Missale Mixtum*, PL 85.470A, respectively.

\(^{5}\)1491 Missal, cited by Feasey, *The Paschal preconium* p.259.

\(^{6}\)1543 Missal p.42. It was put to one side after the reading and taken to the sacristy at the end of the liturgy.

\(^{7}\)Guide de la France Mysterieuse* p.814.
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C Use of serpent-candle.
R Use of serpent-reed.
CR Use of serpent-candle and serpent reed in combination.

Table 42. Evidence for the use of the arundo serpentina.

features and ritual elements of probable pagan provenance in this pontifical\(^1\) and in ceremonies described in other documents\(^2\) suggest a pre-Christian antecedent for the serpent-candle also. For there can be little doubt that the ceremony of the new fire pre-dates the arrival of Christianity.

If the use of the serpent-candle derives from a pre-Christian religious milieu - the importance of the snake in northern European worship is widely recognised - it is difficult to see how it can represent the malign aspects of that creature within the context of the new fire. The fire-breathing serpents and dragons, inherited from pagan folklore,

\(^1\)For instance, the three apotropaic weather-candles (§406), and the carved wooden model of a turret city (§407), both on p.216.

\(^2\)The circumambulation of the new fire at Breslau and Würzburg (p.114), and the noise at the conclusion of Tenebrae.
appear within the context of Christian theology as creatures symbolising vice or evil or paganism itself. Numerous are the instances of hermits, bishops, and saints who in times past had done battle with and vanquished such monsters. One should not try to see a link between this type of serpent and that which bore the new fire. Nor should one try to find in the new-fire serpent an echo of an otherwise-irrecoverable myth relating to the conquest of the powers of darkness by the superior strength of the deities of heaven represented by fire and light.

On the other hand the fire-serpent may have been a tangible relic of the belief that this being symbolised the force of power and life, which was visually represented amongst the ancient Greeks by the caduceus. Again, it has been pointed out that in a caduceus-like device the serpents may stand for the past and the future, while the wand represents eternity. The weakness of both these theories is that no account is taken of the presence and use of fire; and since the ceremony under study revolves around the production of fire and its transportation, it is safer to look for the origin of the fire-serpent elsewhere. If its origin is to be sought in mythology, a more plausible explanation would be to see in the fire-serpent a visual representation and re-enactment of the myth found in many parts of the world, according to which the thief of the fire stolen from the gods was a bird or a beast. Interestingly, a woodcut illustration in the Sarum Processional of 1508 depicts the head of an animal, almost certainly a boar, with a candle protruding from its mouth, as the termination of the arundo serpentina (p.75). However the lateness of the drawing, together with allowance made for artistic licence, the uniqueness of the creature, and the otherwise-universal use of a snake for the transportation of the new fire seem to rule out any direct connection between the Sarum device and the above-mentioned myth.

A propos of this myth it is appropriate to mention at this point those instances in which the Easter candle was lit by means of a dove. In an Exultet roll of the early twelfth century from Monte Cassino there is an illustration of a dove lighting the Easter candle. This may be the artist’s own graphic means of expressing the symbolism suggested by the account of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan. On the other hand the dove may represent the actual device used for the kindling - a sculptured bird atop a pole, or even a contrivance which enabled a metal or ceramic dove to be lowered from the ceiling or

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1For instance, St Romain (Rouen), St Vigor (Bayeux), St Nicaise (Vaux), St Julien and St Leon (Le Mans), St Bienheure (Vendôme), St Clement (Metz), St Martial (Bordeaux), St Martha (Tarascon), St Florent (Seaumur).
2Varley p.126.
3Frazer, Apollodorus II Appendix III p.327.
4Avery Plate LXII.
to be swung in a lateral movement to the wick of the candle.\textsuperscript{1} The former device was used to light the Easter candle at Tongres in the fifteenth century; a candle was placed in the dove’s mouth.\textsuperscript{2} A similar appliance may have been in use at York in the fourteenth century. For we read in an inventory:

\begin{quote}
\textit{inveniet cereum paschalem et omnia ad eum pertinencia tam in coloribus, floribus et cordis quam in aliis pertinentibus ad columbam.\textsuperscript{3}}
\end{quote}

It is difficult to see what else \textit{columbam} may refer to.

We have previously referred to the likely scripturally-inspired origin of the reed and of the spear (p.193). In attempting to discover a biblical antecedent for the fire-serpent we may with confidence dismiss the suggestion that it was inspired either by the Cherubim of Genesis 3:24 or by the Seraphim of Isaiah 6:2, since serpentine characteristics were attributed to neither beings; although fire was associated attributively with the former and circumstantially with the latter. Moreover allusions to these creatures seem incongruous within the context of the new fire. Both John of Avranches and Rupert of Deutz state that the fire-serpent recalls the fiery serpent which Moses set upon a pole (Numbers 21:8-9). The former alludes\textsuperscript{4} to John 3:14 and, just as Jesus compared himself to the bronze serpent which Moses set up in the desert, he symbolically identifies Christ with the fire-serpent used in church. However, he does not observe that, just as the uplifting of Moses’ serpent and of Christ brought salvation, so fire in a sense brings life to men. The identification of Christ with the fire-serpent represents an instance of secondary or expository symbolism which characterised medieval interpretation of the liturgy, and which to the mind of modern man often seems inapposite and forced.

Rupert of Deutz offers\textsuperscript{5} a mystical and more explicitly allegorical interpretation of the fire-serpent, and at the same time presents a symbolic interpretation of both the reed and the rod, and links both in a secondary comparison. The reed, which represents that which the soldiers gave Jesus after his trial, was foreshadowed by the rod which Moses

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1] The artificial descent of fire at Easter was not unknown in the East. At the beginning of the eleventh century the Christian writer Abelfaragius records the allegation that at Jerusalem the iron chain, which held the lamp above the Holy Sepulchre, was probably greased with oil of balsam and ignited from the roof. Masudi, a Moslem historian, had previously alluded to the production of fire by a clever device. Goodrich-Freer pp.107-8.
\item[2] Ordinary pp.164-5.
\item[3] 'He will find the Easter candle and all its accessories, viz. paints, flowers, and ribbons, as well as the accoutrements for the dove.' Bradshaw and Wordsworth II p.98.
\item[4] \textit{Lib.de Off.Eccl.}, PL 147.49A.
\end{footnotes}
turned into a snake; so that, in the same way that the rod was transformed into a snake and then became a rod again, so Jesus (prefigured by the rod) lives, will die, and then will transform the deaths of sinners by rising to life again.

It is possible that Rupert, though writing some decades later than John of Avranches, preserves an older tradition which relates, not to the origin of the serpent-candle, but to the reason for its adoption within the Paschal liturgy. As we have noted elsewhere, the theme of the entire Paschal liturgy is rooted in the Old Testament types and prefigurements of Exodus and Numbers: from the allusions and references to Moses and the Burning Bush in the formulas for the blessing of the fire at the start of the liturgy, to the ceremony of Baptism which recalls the entry of the Israelites, God’s chosen people, into the promised land. The writer is therefore of the opinion that, in view of the Mosaic motif running through the Paschal liturgy, the rod on which the new fire was borne into church was seen to be foreshadowed in the rod which Moses used at the court of Pharaoh; and that the image of the serpent, borrowed possibly from a corresponding pre-Christian new fire ritual, became attached to the end of a pole to commemorate and to portray vividly the transformation of the rod as described in Exodus 4:3. It is significant that just as the rod was turned into a serpent shortly after the beginning of Moses’ mission, so the serpent-rod was used in the early stages of the new fire ceremony. The writer also believes that the development of the serpentine candle emerging from the serpent’s mouth was a visual portrayal and liturgical re-enactment of the swallowing of the snakes by Aaron’s rod in Exodus 7:12.

1See Part II Chapter 3 (ii).
2A copper-gilt and enamel cross from the Meuse region, now in the British Museum, shows Moses and Aaron flanking a brazen serpent on top of a column. It dates from the third quarter of the twelfth century.
Chapter Three

THE TRIPLE CANDLE

(i) Description and construction

The use of the triple candle is first attested in the Pontificale Romanum of the twelfth century. It refers to triplicem candelam coniunctam, 'a candle twisted into three branches', a device found in nearly all subsequent Roman documents up to and including the Pian Missal of 1570, as well as in the rites of some religious orders and of some churches outside Italy. Corsetti refers to the triple candle as 'in calce unum'; England, describing the papal ceremony of the last century, mentions that the three candles 'part from a common stock'; and Van Gennep, writing in the earlier part of the present century, refers to the candle with three branches. With the eventual adoption of the Roman rite by most of the churches in the West, the use of the triple candle became almost universal. However, up to the liturgical changes of 1955 a single candle was still used for bearing the new fire in a number of French dioceses whose rites still preserved features of their traditional ceremonial.

It would appear that elsewhere three separate candles were arranged at the end of the reed or pole in a triangular formation. This is the arrangement prescribed in the Roman Missal of 1474. The Ritual of Evesham refers to three cereoli; and the mention of a three-branched candlestick, as opposed to single candle, at Aquileia, Lyon, Vallombrosa, and St Mary's, York indicates that three individual candles were used. At Tours the candleholder was known as the rastrum, 'the three-pronged hoe'. In some instances it is not clear whether it was the candle or the candlestick which was triple. The 1836 Missal of Auch refers to the triple arundo; whilst in a manual of the Augustinian Friars the descriptive phrase triangulo distinctis is equally ambiguous.

Twentieth-century manuals permitted the use of either three separate tapers or a triple candle with a single stock. The disposition of the candles in a trident-like forma-

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1 For this and other documentary references relating to the use of the triple candle, see Table 43.
2 Its use was unknown in the Milanese and Mozarabic rites, and in those of the Cistercian and Dominican orders.
3 Praxis p.316.
4 Ceremonies of Holy Week p.119.
5 Manuel 1.3 p.1257. The Capuchin candle had one foot and three branches.
6 For instance, Agen, Autun, Bayonne, Carcassonne, Digne, St Brieuc, St Die, and Vannes. Survey of 1984.
7 O'Loan p.283; Fortescue and O'Connell (4th ed.) p.337.
tion was prohibited, even though the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* of 1600 contains an illustration of the three candles arranged in this very way (p.298). The combination of serpent-reed and triple candle has been noted above on page 145.

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* Evidence for Maundy Thursday.

Table 43. Evidence for the use of the triple candle.

1Fortescue and O'Connell *ibidem*.

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No single explanation can adequately account for the emergence of the triple candle and its use within the new fire ceremony; surviving documentary evidence would suggest that its origins are to be sought in a number of different liturgical milieux. It is maintained\(^1\) that the small candle which bore the new fire into church became a triple taper to match the threefold cry of *Lumen Christi*; and indeed this theory is difficult to discredit in view of the fact that the triple candle and the triple acclamation do occur together in *PR XII*, our earliest evidence for the former. Also in support of this view there is the illustrated evidence of the *Exultet* rolls of Southern Italy: some\(^2\) of the poles have a single twisted termination, perhaps representing a serpent, and one\(^3\) has a double twisted end to the shaft. It is not difficult to believe, in view of the evidence of the latter, that the number of candles may have been increased from one to three to match the number of cries, or to symbolise the Trinity, or to accommodate both. The objection that such an explanation does not satisfactorily account for the springing of the candles from a central stock is partially removed when one considers the relative difficulty of entwining three candles around a central pole compared with the ease of affixing a *candela triplex*.

The evidence of the slightly later *Ordo Ecclesiae Lateranensis*, however, does not support the theory that the number of candles was increased to three in order to achieve the above-mentioned liturgical symmetry. For according to that document the deacon, prior to chanting the triple *Lumen Christi*, carried into church on the reed

\[
\text{plures candelas in unum glomeratas, ne a vento leviter exinguantur.}^4
\]

The functional purpose of the several candles could not be more clearly stated. The mention of *plures* suggests that a definite number had not been fixed; but the fact that an indefinite number was used clearly shows that as far as the Lateran Church was concerned their number had not been increased to correspond to the cries of *Lumen Christi*. The subsequent use of three candles in the Roman rite could just as easily have been determined by that number's symbolic representation of the Trinity as by a deliberate design to achieve numerical correspondence with the acclamations of *Lumen Christi*. Subsequently the trinitarian significance of the device in question was highlighted.

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\(^1\)Bugnini and Braga p.189.
\(^2\)Avery Plates CXX and CXXXIII.
\(^3\)Avery Plate CXXXVIII.
\(^4\)'Several candles bound together, so that they might not easily be extinguished by the wind.' *OEL* p.61.
Louis Thomasson commented that ‘we light the tripartite candle in honour of the Trinity, believing that, bathed in the light of Jesus Christ, we have knowledge of the inner mysteries of the Trinity’. ¹

Indeed the evidence of OEL and the service-books of other churches² in which the three candles were lit at the same time strongly suggests that the close rapport which existed between each of the three candles and the corresponding cry of Lumen Christi, as exemplified in the Pian Missal - of which more presently - was unknown during most of the Middle Ages. In support of this position we can make two important observations. (i) The acclamation of Lumen Christi did not feature in the rites of a number of churches in which the triple candle was used.³ (ii) The triple candle was borne in procession to the singing of the Inventor rutili at Evesham, Salisbury, York, and Tongres.⁴

The significance of the phrase in unum⁵ is not immediately clear. It may indicate simply that the candles were bound together around the reed and not arranged at fixed intervals from each other; or it may signify that the candles sprang from a central stock - a method of arrangement more easy to accomplish, as we suggested above. The serpentine theme involving the reed and the candles, which is attested in other documents, was unknown in the Roman rite.

Further support for the functional origin of the triple candle comes from England and Ireland. At Barking and Durham an unspecified number of candles were affixed to the top of the spear for the reception of the new fire.⁶ Similarly in the Old Irish Missal the number of candles is not stated (p.126). However, in the Gilbertine rite five candles were used.⁷ In view of the reason given in OEL for the use of several candles, it is not difficult to see in the multiple use of candles attested by these four documents a precaution against the sudden quenching of the processional fire by the elements.⁸

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¹ In Trinitatis honorem Cereum in tres divisum accendimus, rati nos Jesu Christi lumine fusos Trinitatis penitiora Mysteria nosse. De Dierum Festorum II.14 p.72.
² For instance, Monte Cassino and Coutances, and also the Carmelite Missal. See Table 43 for all documentary reference to the triple candle.
³ For instance, Bee, Braga, Lyon (all missals including that of 1904), and Rome, according to the testimony of Haymo's Ordo Missalis, and most pre-Tridentine missals. In twenty-two of the latter service-books (from 1474 to 1561) which were examined by the writer, only two (1558 and 1560 Missals) contain the triple cry of Lumen Christi.
⁴ See Chapter 4, Table 45.
⁵ From the above-quoted excerpt from OEL.
⁶ HBS 65 p.101 and Missal p.186, respectively.
⁷ HBS 59 p.39. It is unlikely that this number was chosen to match the number of grains of incense inserted into the Easter candle.
⁸ At Durham a candle in a lantern was also used in case of an emergency (Missal p.186).
There remain to be considered three further possible factors which may have contributed to the emergence and use of the triple candle. (i) The first has already been touched upon. We saw that the eighteenth-century liturgist Thomassin suggested that the processional candle became tripartite in honour of the Trinity.¹ Jean Grancolas also put forward this explanation.² However, we cannot be sure whether the number of candles was fixed at three as a gesture to honour the Trinity, or whether the trinitarian association was subsequently added to this device. Corsetti pointed out³ that the three candles springing from a central stock signified both the trinity and the unity of God. Other writers⁴ have commented upon the trinitarian symbolism of the candles, Dom Gaspar Le Fèbvre noting in the twentieth century that the device anticipated the Baptism in the Trinity which the catechumens in former times had undergone.⁵ Van Doren’s claim that the use of the triple candle is purely allegorical is unwarranted. Moreover, his statement that this candle represents Christ in His divinity and in His humanity seems curious, as does his comparison of the reed bending in the wind with the humiliation of Christ during His Passion. (ii) It might be argued that the increase in the number of candles from one to three constituted an elaboration of the serpent-candle, and symbolised more realistically the swallowing of the snakes, as narrated in Exodus 7:12. However, while such a theory is attractive, it must be advanced tentatively in view of the absence of corroborative evidence. It is true that at Braga a triple candle emerged from the mouth of the serpent-reed; however the late appearance of the device and the known influence of Cluny suggest that the use of the triple candle in this rite was a later development. (iii) In an eleventh-century Exultet roll from Bari there is an illustration of the triple candle, which, if part of the original picture, would provide the earliest evidence for the device.⁶ Significantly, the pole is tilted forwards, the position in which it should be held according to a number of early documents.⁷ Moreover, it should be borne in mind that Bari was a Byzantine dependency until 1071; and though the local Italian rite was used in that city, the influence of Byzantine ceremonial, which included the episcopal triple hand-candle,⁸ should not be completely ruled out.

¹ De Dierum Festorum II.14 p.72.  
² Commentarius p.316.  
³ Praxis p.316.  
⁴ Desideri, Praxis p.150; Thurston, LHW p.415.  
⁵ 1928 Daily Missal p.828.  
⁶ Avery Plate XIX. Avery is of the opinion that the pole is a later addition.  
⁷ OR 26.9; OR 29.17; Alcuin, PL 101.1205D.  
⁸ The τρικηρίον is mentioned in Byzantine liturgical texts of the tenth century.
(iii) The lighting of the triple candle

The functional purpose of the triple candle necessitated the kindling of all three wicks at the same time.¹ There is no evidence before the sixteenth century to show that the three candles were lit one by one in close conjunction with each cry of Lumen Christi.² Even after the practice had become established of uttering the three cries intermittently during the procession into church, the lighting of all three candles at the same time continued at Vallombrosa, at Cosenza, in the Carmelite rite, and possibly at Aquileia.³

The custom of lighting one candle in sympathy with each acclamation of Lumen Christi is first attested, perhaps surprisingly, as late as 1570 in the Missale Romanum of Pope Pius V, and seems to have had its origin within the liturgy of that church. The practice was subsequently adopted by a number of diocesan churches, mostly French, and by some religious orders.⁴

The establishment of the close rapport between the candle and the cry of Lumen Christi resulted in the lighting of the first candle inside the church,⁵ and necessitated the transportation of the flame from the source of the new fire to the door of the church in readiness for the lighting of the first candle. A number of different devices are known to have been used to fetch the new fire. They include a small candle,⁶ which was sometimes placed in a lantern if a strong wind was blowing;⁷ a busia, which consisted of two wax-wicks twisted together for the better preservation of the flame;⁸ and a gossypium ceratum, which was a length or roll of cotton covered with wax.⁹ A manual of ceremonies for Poland mentions a wax-coated spill for lighting the triple candle or that in the lantern if necessary.¹⁰ The use of ligna sulphurata first appears in the

¹ 1507 Missal of Monte Cassino fol.92; Ordinary of Tongres p.164.
² This practice has to be inferred in some manuals e.g. the 1634 Camaldolese Ceremonial (p.84) and the 1775 Cappuchin Ritual (p.128).
³ 1503 Missal fol.xcii; 1549 Missal fol.115; 1664 Missal p.157; and 1519 Missal fol.91, respectively.
⁴ Missals of Evreux (1740) p.187; of Cahors (1760) p.173; of Poitiers (1767) p.245; of Auch (1836) p.192; and of Nantes (1837) p.199. Religious orders include Augustinian Canons (1579 Ordinary fol.137); Camaldolese (1634 Ceremonial p.84); and Capuchins (1775 Ritual p.128).
⁵ See also Chapter 4 Section (iii).
⁶ Caeremoniale Episcoporum p.298; Maison du Roy p.400; Ceremonial of Lyon p.474. At Lyon, where there was no new fire procession, the triple candle was lit only at the announcement of the Exultet.
⁷ Gavanti I p.234.
⁸ Merati p.78.
⁹ Martinucci II p.241.
Camaldolensian Ceremonial of 1634. They were sulphur-tipped or sulphur-coated splints of wood whose original purpose was to transfer the new fire from the burning woodpile or chafing-dish to the small candle, or to the triple candle in instances where all three lights were kindled together. They were subsequently used, it would appear, to bring the new fire into church and to light one of the three candles prior to the singing of the first Lumen Christi, as at Auch and Nantes, and also to light the Easter candle itself.

(iv) The disposition and disposal of the processional candle(s)

Several commentators mention the stand for holding the reed once the Easter candle had been lit. This could be made of marble or wood, materials also specified in a number of ceremonials. The Augustinian Ceremonial enjoined that it should be placed on the Epistle side of the altar. At Uzès the serpent-reed was placed next to the archdeacon’s seat. According to the Pontifical of Poitiers the deacon handed the reed to the sacristan after he had lit the Easter candle (p.215); and among the Cistercians the small candle taper used for lighting the Easter candle was blown out after the singing of the Exultet and Preface. At the Cathedral of St John Lateran the reed was taken into the sacristy after the two standard candles and the seven lamps had been lit. A rubric in the Sarum Missal states simply that the reed should be moved after the conclusion of the Preface, a direction enjoined by Corsetti. Merati prescribes that a drip-pan should be placed below the reed-candle to catch the wax as it falls (p.77). Elsewhere the extinguishing of the reed-candle or of the triple candles probably did not take place until the conclusion of the ceremony, as at Lyon. The Augustinian Friars allowed their three candles to burn until after the end of Vespers on Holy Saturday. At Vallombrosa the church lamps were lit by using the triple candle.

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1Page 82. The mention of them by Gavantus in 1652 (Thesaurus I p.233) would suggest that their use in the sixteenth century was not confined to the rite of this order.
21634 Camaldolese Ceremonial p.82 and p.84; 1662 Ceremonial of Paris p.375.
3For instance, in the Cistercian rite (1689 Ritual p.247).
41836 Missal p.192 and 1837 Missal p.199, respectively.
5See Part IV Chapter 11.
6Gavantus/Merati IV p.155; Desideri p.144; Gattinari p.143.
7For instance, those of the Augustinian Friars (1714) p.311; of the Capuchins (1775) p.125; and of the Camaldolese (1634) p.82.
81495 Missal fol.lxiii. The rubric adds 'or in a convenient place'.
9Nom.Cist. p.105. A reed was not used in this rite.
10This took place during the singing of the Preface. OEL p.61.
11Dickinson, Missale p.343 and Praxis p.320, respectively.
121838 Ceremonial p.418.
131714 Ceremonial p.314.
141503 Missal fol.xcv.
Chapter Four

THE PSALMS, THE INVENTOR RUTILI, AND THE LUMEN CHRISTI

The earliest documents record that the procession of clergy and people moved into church with the new fire in silence.\(^1\) From the middle of the tenth century the practice arose of singing one or more psalms, or Prudentius' hymn, Inventor rutili. Alternatively the cries of Lumen Christi punctuated the silence of the procession in some churches.

(i) The Psalms

The chanting of psalms during the return of the procession with the newly-kindled fire was prescribed in Lanfranc's Decrees. It was also enjoined in a number of earlier Benedictine customs as well as in the Cluniac and Carmelite rites.\(^2\) The tradition survived for several centuries in a number of cathedrals, mainly it would seem, as a result of monastic influence. It is not difficult to believe that the return-psalms were introduced into the new fire ceremonial as a counterpart to those sung on the way to the new fire in an attempt to achieve a sort of liturgical symmetry. Psalms 26, 66, and 79 were almost certainly chosen because of their mention of the light of the Lord. Psalms 23 and 147 tell of the triumph of the Lord and of his glorification, the latter actually mentioning God's control offire. The choice of Psalms 69 and 119, and to some extent Psalm 56, seems somewhat obscure. Their penitential aspect makes them more fitting to have been sung before the kindling of the new fire, as indeed the Penitential Psalms were sung in a number of places.\(^3\)

At Bayeux the choir sang the antiphon Clamaverunt ad Dominum cum tribularentur as they returned into church; whilst at Rouen, before the deacon began the Exultet, they sang the antiphon Cum rex gloriae Christus infernum debellaturus intraret et chorus angelicus portas principum tolli praeciperet.\(^4\) This antiphon was also sung at Hereford at the Sepulchre on Holy Saturday night (Breviary p.324).

(ii) The Inventor rutili\(^5\)

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\(^1\)OR 26.9; OR 29.17; OR 31.63; OR 32.17; PRG II p.97; CMG (Albers V p.32); the ordo of Corbie and Ordinal of M.Cassino (DAMR 3.13.34 p.126, M 1145 and M 1139 respectively); and Alcuin, PL 101.1205D.

\(^2\)For these and other relevant references, see Table 44.

\(^3\)The Consuetudines Cluniacenses (Albers II p.47, Antiquiores C) record the older tradition of using the Penitential Psalms on the return.

\(^4\)1780 Semaine Sainte p.495 and 1497 Missal np, respectively.

\(^5\)For the implications of the internal evidence of the hymn, see Appendix 12. For a list of churches where this hymn was sung after the blessing of the new fire, see Table 45.
The singing of this hymn of Prudentius after the kindling of the new fire is first attested in the Romano-Germanic Pontifical; but according to that document its use was geographically restricted.¹ Although Lanfranc refers to the *Inventor rutili* in his Decrees,² there is no evidence for its use in any monastery of Italy, Spain or Switzerland. Indeed, with the exception of Aquileia, the hymn was sung only in churches to the east and north of the Alps.³ It was particularly popular in Germany as is clear from a glance at Table 45. According to Lanfranc the *Inventor rutili* was sung by two choir-boys who were standing close to the bishop’s throne as the procession made its way from the place where the new fire had been kindled and blessed; but the practice developed in which the singers themselves joined the procession, and a chorus, formed of those participating, repeated the first verse of the hymn as a refrain between the singing of subsequent verses. At Durham and Westminster two brothers led the singing, at Exeter two boys, and at Barking the duty-priest for the week and a priest representing the Chapter; whilst among the Gilbertines two candle-bearers (*ceroferarii*), or two

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¹ *PRG* II §345 p.97. Manuscripts C and K both state that a procession in silence was the norm. It is only C which adds: *Aliqui tamen hic cantant hymnum Prudentii*, ‘However some sing Prudentius’ hymn at this point.’

² *PL* 150.467B. Since Lanfranc also mentions the singing of psalms after the kindling of the new fire, presumably the *Inventor rutili* was alternative to them; although Lanfranc does not refer to a choice.

³ Since the singing of the hymn was not universal according to *PRG*, Dendy’s statement (p.140) that the hymn was used in the Roman rite for a time must be challenged: ‘...the Inventor rutili...at Rome only enjoyed a brief period of use during the ascendancy of the *Ordo Romanus Antiquus [=PRG]*’. Not all features of the new fire ceremony found in *PRG* passed into the Roman rite, e.g. the kindling of fire on Maundy Thursday.
others performed the duty. Instances of its use after the Council of Trent are few. It survived at Sens and at Périgueux until the eighteenth century; and is even found in a ceremonial for Le Puy as late as 1836.

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<td>Mainz</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>Missal fol.xcii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salzburg</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>Missal fol.xciii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamburg</td>
<td>1509</td>
<td>Missal fol.xc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bremen</td>
<td>1511</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spires</td>
<td>1512</td>
<td>Agenda fol.lxvii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minden</td>
<td>1513</td>
<td>Missal fol.ciii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lund</td>
<td>1514</td>
<td>Missal fol.xc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquileia</td>
<td>1519</td>
<td>Missal fol.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breslau</td>
<td>1519</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meissen</td>
<td>1520</td>
<td>Breviary np</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abo</td>
<td>c.1522</td>
<td>Manual p.240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxerre</td>
<td>1537</td>
<td>DAER 4.24.3 p.146 (M 39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liège</td>
<td>1540</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxvii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratisbon</td>
<td>1570</td>
<td>Ritual np</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sens</td>
<td>1715</td>
<td>Missal p.238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Périgueux</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>Missal p.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Puy</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>Ceremonial p.376</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 45. Evidence for the Inventor rutili.
(iii) The cry of Lumen Christi

(a) Origin.

Dom Bernard Capelle, followed by others, would find the origin of the triple cry of Lumen Christi of the Roman rite, together with the complementary refrain of Deo gratias, in the corresponding Mozarabic ceremonial of Holy Saturday. According to the latter rite the bishop emerged from the sacristy with the lighted Easter candle and proclaimed 'Deo gratias'; to which the congregation responded three times in like manner. As the procession moved into the choir, they sang the antiphon Lumen verum inluminans omnem hominem in hunc mundum venientem. Capelle argues that this ritual found its way to Rome by way of Gaul, Milan, and Central Italy (p.117), citing as evidence for this route a debatable instance of Mozarabic influence in the Old Gallican Missal, and the testimony of what he believed to be an eleventh-century Milanese ordo (MS Vat.lat 10673), but which has been shown to be a Beneventan gradual.

It is true that similarities do exist between the Spanish rite and that of Central Italy: the lighting of the bishop's candle, the procession into church with that candle, and the threefold acclamation of the congregation; but the greater number of differences which exist between the two rites should make us very cautious in trying to detect the influence or dependency of the one rite on the other. Moreover, it has yet to be shown what liturgical contact or interchange existed between Spain and Southern Italy in the period AD 700 to AD 900 when the Beneventan rite is most likely to have been susceptible to the liturgical influences of other churches, and when any importations of Spanish provenance are most likely to have occurred. Political conditions in Spain,

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1 La Procession pp.116-7.
2 Bugnini and Brage pp.189-90; Dendy p.138.
3 See also Appendix 13.
4 It is true that the prayer in the Vetus Missale Gallicum (PL 72.363) entitled PRAEFATIO CERAE 'does seem to indicate a procession where all carried lights' and may have originated in a liturgical milieu, such as the Mozarabic, where this ritual did take place. On the other hand the references in the prayer to vinculis..disruptis, illuminationem, and candoris suggest a baptismal setting in which accensa luminaria will be the candles of the neophytes. Evidence for the existence of these lights at the time comes from Amalarius (Liber de Ord.Ant. 44.8).
5 Hesbert p.189.
6 As attested in the Beneventan Gradual and Missale Antiquum. For the text of these two documents, see Hesbert p.188.
however, during this crucial time would suggest that exchanges of liturgical forms and practices between Spain and Southern Italy were most unlikely, especially any issuing from Spain.

The new fire ceremonies of the Beneventan and Mozarabic rites differed from each other in the following respects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mozarabic</th>
<th>Beneventan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Easter candle brought into church.</td>
<td>Easter candle already in position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bishop cries 'Deo gratias' at the sacristy door.</td>
<td>Deacon cries threefold Lumen Christi at ambo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fire kindled and Easter candle lit in a darkened room.</td>
<td>Fire not necessarily kindled inside the building.†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lighting and blessing of a lamp.</td>
<td>No use of lamp.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the Beneventan rite had been subjected to Mozarabic influence, we might have expected a greater correspondence of ceremonial detail and fewer divergencies. The phrase *ex occulto* does not necessarily refer to a darkened sacristy - see Note 1 below; and even the congregational cry of *Deo gratias* is not completely parallel in the two rites. Moreover, although certain features of the Spanish rite are of a venerable antiquity, it is by no means certain that all the elements recorded in the tenth-century

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†The rubric of the Gradual states: De quo igne accendetur cereus; et, quasi ex occulto, proferatur in publicum. ‘From this fire the Easter candle will be lit; and, just as the fire has been kept in a place of concealment, so let it be brought forth for all to see.’ Dendy’s claim (p.132) that this ‘suggests the theatrical procession with lights from a darkened room’ is unconvincing. Not only is there no evidence for the use of more than one light in the Beneventan procession; rather, the phrase suggests the *locus secretior*, familiar from the Roman rite, which was a place well hidden from view. Moreover, a rubric earlier in the Gradual prescribed the kindling of the new fire by means of a firestone ‘or in some other way’ (*alio livet <= quolibet> modo*). If the latter included the use of a lens, the ritual could hardly have been performed ‘in a darkened room’.
Antiphonary date from the time of Elipandus (c.AD 718-802). In Appendix 12 we have argued in favour of the importation of a number of Gallicanisms into the Mozarabic rite, including the cry of Deo gratias.

All the early evidence for the Lumen Christi is to be found in documents of Central Italian provenance. Indeed, as we observed above, the threefold cry is only found outside Italy amongst the religious orders whose own rites closely followed that of Rome - it is even absent from the ceremonial of many northern Benedictine houses, not being prescribed in Lanfranc's Decrees - and in churches which were influenced by Roman ritual, such as Marseille, or which used romanised Gallican missals, such as Chalons and Poitiers. Having discounted a Mozarabic provenance for this liturgical feature, it is not difficult to find its origin within the Romano-Gallican tradition. In Section 22 of the eighth-century Ordo 19 we read:

If night comes while they are eating and it is necessary to kindle a light, as soon as the brother who carries the light enters, he says, so that all may hear, 'The Light of Christ'. All reply 'Thanks be to God'. After a blessing from the senior he puts the light in its place.

As Andrieu observed, Benedict's Rule provided for the evening meal to end before night-fall. However the 'Strasbourg liturgical historian', who dated this ordo to the years AD 781-90, suggested somewhat carelessly that, in view of the climatic consideration relating to Section 22, the ordo may well have come from north of the Alps. Bad winter evenings do occur in Italy; and presumably the evening meal was always taken at the same hour. This ordo, therefore, could equally have originated in Italy. Indeed, it seems difficult to escape the conclusion that this greeting with its response came to be used in the Holy Saturday liturgy once the Vigil began to be held in the late afternoon or early evening.

(b) The development of the ritual.

The ritual of the Lumen Christi passed through a number of stages in its development before it reached the form familiar from the Pian Missal of 1570.

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1 For a list of rites in which the Lumen Christi was a feature and for the documentary references, see Table 46.
2 In the Cistercian rite there was only a single cry at the altar (1669 Missal p.155); whilst the Lumen Christi did not feature in that of the Premonstatensians (King, LRO p.190).
3 Les Ordines Romani III p.212.
### Church/Document | Date | Source
--- | --- | ---
Beneventum* | c.1000 | Hesbert p.188
Vallombrosa | 11 C | Albers IV p.249
Lateran | c.1140 | OEL p.61
Monte Cassino A* | 12 C | PR XII I p.292
PR XII | 12 C | I xxxii.7 p.239
Apamea | 1214 | DAER 4.24. p.160 (M 25)
Marseille | 13 C | ILEM p.84
Ordo XIV | c.1310 | PL 78.1218C
CA 1706 | c.1350 | ZRK M p.214
Uzès | 1495 | Missal fol.lxiii
Camaldolese | 1503 | Missal fol.89
Aquileia | 1519 | Missal fol.91
Cosenza | 1549 | Missal fol.115
Missale Romanum | 1558 | HBS 33 p.84
Missale Romanum | 1560 | HBS 33 p.84
Missale Romanum | 1570 | 1950 t.e. p.188
Austin Canons | 1579 | Ordinary fol.137
Fréjus | c.1600 | De Rubeis p.327
Cistercians† | 1689 | Ritual p.247
Evreux | 1740 | Missal p.187
Cahors | 1760 | Missal p.173
Poitiers | 1767 | Missal p.245
Capuchins | 1775 | Ritual p.128
Auch | 1836 | Missal p.192
Nantes | 1837 | Missal p.199

* There was only one processional candle.
† *Lumen Christi* was acclaimed only once.

Table 46. Evidence for the acclamation of *Lumen Christi*.

1. The oldest form of the ritual, and that from which subsequent variations of the ceremonial developed is found in the Beneventan rite of the late tenth century, as attested in the Gradual and *Missale Antiquum*. According to these two documents the threefold *Lumen Christi* together with the responsorial *Deo gratias* was acclaimed at the ambo after the lighting of the Easter candle by the deacon and just prior to his chanting of the *Exultet*.† *Monte Cassino A* may attest the same practice.‡

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†As the bearer of the *Lumen Christi* it was the duty of the deacon to proclaim its presence.
‡The text of *Monte Cassino A* and *Monte Cassino B*, both of the twelfth century, is printed in Andrieu’s edition of *PR XII* (I pp.292-3). The problem of the former document and in particular the interpretation of the clause: *Acolytus vero portat cereum ad ammonem*, is discussed in Appendix 11. If *cereum* refers to the Easter candle, this document attests Beneventan practice. If, however, the reed-candle is to be understood, the document relates to the second stage of the development, as does *Monte Cassino B*. In either interpretation it is the acolyte’s voice that is heard.
2. In Monte Cassino B the cry of Lumen Christi is directed by the deacon at the reed-candle which has been brought into church, lit with the new fire, by an acolyte. Only after the last response of Deo gratias is the Easter candle lit. The so-called suburbicarian practice, described in PR XII, suggests that the triple cry was uttered by the deacon standing close to the Easter candle near to the altar, again before that candle was lit.¹

3. The next stage of development reveals an elaboration of ceremonial. For, whereas the deacon or acolyte had previously stood in the same position to utter the cries,² the proclamations of Lumen Christi became incorporated into the new fire procession in such a way that the first Lumen Christi was heard at the door of the church, the second in the nave, and the final cry at the altar. This arrangement subsequently obtained until 1970, surviving the liturgical reforms of 1955, though with the Easter candle replacing the triple candle. In some rites the stational norm of door, nave, and altar was not observed. The third acclamation occurred at the ambo if it was customary to locate the Easter candle in that position. Ordo XIV prescribed the choir for the second station. This also took place at Fréjus and Cahors. At Marseille the procession emerged from the sacristy door and stopped at the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the choir, and at the reading desk next to the Easter candle. In the Roman rite since 1970 the nave stopping has generally been omitted, the acclamations occurring at the new fire, in the doorway, and at the altar.

The processional chanting of the Lumen Christi is first attested at Vallombrosa in the eleventh century; and it may be that the practice originated within that very monastery. According to earlier practice the procession had moved into the church in silence, as we noted at the beginning of this chapter. At Vallombrosa, however, the unique practice obtained of chanting a psalm and uttering the triple Lumen Christi during the procession. A glance at Table 44 shows that contemporary monastic practice was to chant several psalms on the return into church; at Vallombrosa only one psalm was sung. It is the writer's belief that at this monastery in former times more than one psalm was chanted during this part of the ceremony; and that the processional Lumen Christi, borrowed from a Central Italian monastic milieu, was deliberately included in the ceremonial either as a musical feature additional to the psalms, or as a replacement for those psalms which were previously chanted once the procession had entered the

¹xxxii.10 p.241. So also PGD (III iv.8-9 p.588). For the so-called suburbicarian practice, see Appendix 15.
²Sicardus records that this took place at the doors of the church. Mitrale, PL 213.323B.

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church. The triple acclamation of the *Lumen Christi* during the procession subsequently found its way into the Roman rite in the twelfth century. At Rome the duty was performed by the junior cardinal deacon.  

4. The final stage in the development saw the utilisation of the triple candle to reinforce dramatically the significance of the threefold cry. It had formerly been the practice to light all three candles from the new fire at the same time. This is implied in Ordo XIV: with each successive cry of *Lumen Christi* the deacon raised the candle higher. The practice is also attested in the two Roman missals of 1558 and 1560. According to the Pian Missal of 1570 the triple candle was carried into church unlit. The deacon who bore the candle then lowered the reed and one of the candles was lit with the new fire. Thereupon the deacon chanted the first *Lumen Christi*. The ritual was then repeated in the centre of the church; and after the procession had reached the altar, the last candle was lit, and *Lumen Christi* was announced for the third and final time. In prescribing the west end of the chancel, the centre of the chancel, and the altar steps as the three stations for the *Lumen Christi*, the compilers of the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* were perhaps taking a realistic view of the small number of laity who were likely to attend the Vigil, then held on Saturday morning (II.27 p.297). The Roman Missal of 1574 and the Vallombrosan Missal of 1503 both record that the triple candle was handed to an acolyte and subdeacon, respectively, after the chanting of the third *Lumen Christi*. They held it until it was time to light the Easter candle. With each cry of *Lumen Christi* all genuflected except the cross-bearer.

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1 *PR XII* I xxxii p.239 and *OEL* p.61. The history of the *Lumen Christi* in the Roman rite is not at all clear. In addition to the two above-mentioned documents, it is also found in Ordo XII (1192) PL 78.1076C; *PGD* (c.1296) III p.588; Ordo XIV (1311) PL 78.1121; CA 1706 (c.1350) ZRKM p.214; and *Bindo F.* (1377) ZRKM p.276. It is not found in Haymo’s *Ordo Missalis*, or in the Dominican rite, both of which were modelled closely on papal ceremonial (*SMRL* I p.44; King, *LRO* p.338), or in the 1474 *Missale Romanum* and subsequent missals except two printed in Venice in 1558 and 1560. It appears in the mandatory Pian Missal of 1570. Van Dijk (I p.82) attributed the omission of the *Lumen Christi* in Haymo’s *ordo* to the fact that it was not known outside Rome; but this, as we have seen, is clearly incorrect, as is Dendy’s claim that it was ‘probably kept out by the popularity of the *Inventor rutili* (p.140).’ Both the 1558 and the 1560 Missals refer to the custom being observed ‘in certain places’ (HBS 33 p.84), one of which was presumably the papal court, and state that it is a priest, as opposed to a deacon in *MR* 1474 and other Roman missals who performs the duty.

2 HBS 33 p.85 and 1503 Missal fol.xcii.

3 The genuflection of the deacon who held the reed is first attested in the Roman rite. (Ordo XV, PL 78.1321C). The practice is also found at Cahors (1760 Missal p.172). According to the 1600 *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* the deacon should both genuflect and raise high the triple candle simultaneously (p.298).
Thus a close rapport was established between the lighting of the three candles and the threefold acclamation. It inevitably resulted in directing the attention of the congregation away from the Easter candle, and in the close identification of the ‘light of Christ’ with the flames of the three candles. Nor did the trinitarian significance of the number of candles go unnoticed. Indeed it might be said that a slight shift in emphasis occurred in the status and role of the triple candle vis-à-vis the aspect of God which the light represented. For the triple light and the threefold cry to some extent blurred the distinction between God’s light and Christ’s light as expressed in the Nicene Creed, and detracted from the centrality of the latter within the Paschal vigil. Guéranger went so far as to assert that the threefold cry of Lumen Christi expressed the revelation of the divinity of the Three Persons of the Trinity. The greeting of the triple candle also had the effect of detracting from the significance of the Easter candle, especially since it was not kindled in the majority of churches until the singing of the Preface was half-completed. This had the result of marring the close relationship between the Candle and the flame, and of assigning to the column of wax almost the function of a totem.

The practice of chanting the first Lumen Christi in a deep voice, and the subsequent cries at a successively higher pitch, is first found in the above-mentioned eleventh-century Customary of Vallombrosa. Apropos of our contention referred to above, this may suggest a Central Italian provenance for the custom, although there is no hint of this practice in the two Beneventan documents. The ritual is also attested in PR XII and PGD, and was subsequently adopted in the majority of churches in which the Lumen Christi was acclaimed.

The emergence of this liturgical feature may be explained in two ways. (i) If we are correct in our belief that the custom originated in a Central or Southern Italian liturgical milieu, the rise in pitch in the deacon’s voice may have developed in correspondence with his ascent of the ambo in three stages. The weakness of this theory is that there is no evidence that his ascent of the ambo was a gradual one. (ii) More likely, perhaps, is the writer’s own suggestion that the rise in pitch occurred so as to enable those standing at some distance from the deacon to hear his acclamation. A desire to make oneself more audible is usually achieved by an utterance or shout at a higher level.

1The prominence of the triple candle and the superstitious awe in which it came to be held is referred to by two writers. Sir James Frazer recorded that at the end of the last century in the Abruzzi fragments of the three candles were used as charms against lightning (Golden Bough 7.1 p.122); and well into the present century Estella Canziani wrote that at Isemia, ‘If three drops of wax from the three candles lit by the priest from the new fire drop on anyone’s hat, that person is safe against lightning, provided he keeps his hat on.’ (Through the Apennines p.328.)

2Liturgical Year pp.558-9.

3Harbert p.236.
of sound, especially if the first attempt at attracting attention was considered ineffective and the strength of the voice insufficient. Moreover, the twice-repeated cry of Lumen Christi would serve to emphasise the importance and significance of the flame which the deacon held in his hands.

References for Table 36 on p. 157. (NB M. = Missal.)

Chapter Five

THE EASTER CANDLE AND THE PROCESSION

The bringing in of the fire and the blessing of the light that it provided are the two principal elements which are derived from the *Lucernarium* and present in all the rites of the western tradition. The Milanese rite preserved the primitive practice of using a lamp for the bearing of the light. In other traditions in which the new fire ceremony was combined with the blessing of the Easter candle, three different practices developed of conveying the new fire to the place where the Easter candle was to be blessd. The most common method of employing a small candle or the triple candle to carry the fire has been dealt with in the above Chapters 1-3. The second and third ways of bringing the new fire into church involved the same fundamental procedure, but admit the use of the Easter candle as a characteristic feature of the procession.

(i) *The bearing of the Easter candle: 1 Lit*

The tradition in which the Easter candle was borne in procession already kindled is first attested in the eighth-century Ordo 28:

Et, accenso cereo, procedunt simul omnes de sacrario cum ipso cereo in ecclesia cum silentio, nihil cantantes, et ponitur in candelabro ante altare.¹

There seems little doubt that the Easter candle has been substituted for the lamp of the *Lucernarium* in order to bear the new fire into church. Interestingly, in the Mozarabic rite, in which the new fire was also borne into church by means of the Easter candle, the use of the lamp was also retained.² In Appendix 11 we have shown that in the twelfth century in Central Italy almost the same ceremonial involving the procession with the lighted Easter candle was still in use. In that latter rite the Easter candle was subsequently taken to the ambo for the singing of the *Exultet* and for the Prophecies. At Naples in the fourteenth century the *cimiliarcha* carried the Easter candle into the church lit;³ whilst the same practice at Bourges as late as the eighteenth century is almost certainly a survival of the same tradition attested in Ordo 28 and Ordo 31;⁴ for

¹And after the Easter candle has been lit, they all accompany it in procession into the church in silence. There is no singing. The Candle is placed in a candelabrum in front of the altar.' O.R. 28.59. 'The practice is also attested in Ordo 31 (§63).
²For the Mozarabic rite, see Appendix 13. The custom of using a lamp, probably the result of Mozarabic influence, was also maintained at Ripoll (Sacramentary p.92).
³Mallardo p.33.
that Gallican rite contains other primitive elements, such as the litany before the *Exultet*,
and the blessing of the Easter candle with the original form of the *Veniat quaesumus*.¹
The revival of this tradition following the liturgical reforms of 1955 was part of the
attempt to emphasise the importance of the Easter candle and to restore it to its former
position of centrality within the Vigil liturgy. The claim that the Easter candle ceased to
be carried in procession because in some churches it had become too large and too
heavy cannot be sustained.²  (a) In some rites, such as the Ambrosian, it seems unlikely
that the Candle was ever carried in procession.  (b) We shall see in a later chapter³ that
very large candles were carried during the course of the old Roman liturgy.  (c) The evi-
dence would suggest that the Easter candles began to assume massive proportions long
after the custom of bearing them in procession had generally fallen into desuetude.

(ii) *The bearing of the Easter candle: 2. Unlit*

The custom of bearing the Easter candle in procession unlit appears to be a syn-
thesis of traditions: for the small candle, lit with the new fire, was also carried in the
same procession. The earliest mention of the bearing of the unlit Easter candle is found
in the Sacramentary of Corbie and in *PRG*, both of the tenth century.⁴ It is not clear
from the former document how the fire was taken to the altar where it was blessed. The
evidence of *PRG* is discussed below. At Aquileia the unlit Easter candle was borne
along with the triple candle ablaze;⁵ and at Palencia two small candles on spears
accompanied the unlit column of wax from the cloister.⁶

(iii) *The evidence of PRG*

The composite character of the Pontifical is apparent from the variant rubrics
recorded by its Manuscripts C and K; and the task of identifying the separate strands
and elements which make up its new fire ritual is not made easy by the fact that the new
fire ceremony took place on each day of the Triduum.

Sections 342 and 346 of *PRG* are of principal concern for our study. The former
records that after the procession had assembled outside the church

cereus ponitur in loco mundo, 'the candle is set in a clean place'.

¹See Part IV Chapter 10, especially p.290.
²Bugnini and Braga p.189.
³Part IV Chapter 16.
⁴PL 78.336B and *PRG* II §§342 and 346 pp.94 and 98.
⁵1519 Missal fol.91.
⁶1568 Missal fol.c.

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Since we are informed later that the *cereus* was lit with the new fire and put on a reed (§345), it would seem to follow that this was the candle which was placed *in loco mundo*. There are, however, two difficulties over this interpretation. The sign of the cross is made over the candle and the benediction-formula, *Deus mundi Conditor*, is pronounced over the new fire. The ascription of undue importance to the small candle with this formula, is not only unique to *PRG*, but recalls the blessing of the Easter candle according to the Gelasian sacramentaries.1 This fact and the setting of the candle 'in a clean place' strongly suggest that in §342 *cereus* is to be identified with the Easter candle, and that the rubrics of this section relate to its consecration outside the the church and presumably close to the source of the new fire. The structure of the ritual differs from that found in the Gelasian sacramentaries in that, whereas the latter comprises the bringing of fire, the sign of the cross, the lighting of the candle, and the blessing, *PRG* omits the kindling at this stage. It is not difficult to believe that at a former time the Easter candle was lit outside the church, and borne thus in procession into the building; and that, with the merging into a combined ritual this practice and the tradition in which the new fire was carried on a reed-candle, the bearing of the Easter candle, also ablaze, was seen as a superfluous duplication. Hence it came to be borne unlit.

Now it is true that the rubrics of *PRG* do not actually state that the Easter candle was borne unlit into church. However, after the procession had entered the church, we are informed:

Et illuminantur ex eo VII lampades ante altare quae tamen prius sine lumine erunt ita compositae, ut abscue ullo impedimento possint accendi. Cereus vero Magnus qui benedicendus est, ponitur in canedlabro ante altare in medio ecclesiae...2

At first sight it might appear as though *ponitur* relates to the position of the Easter candle as a result of its being set in position prior to the start of the ceremony; and such a descriptive sentence would not be out of place within the context. However, *ponitur* bears a passive verbal force which relates to an action and not to a state, and should be interpreted 'they place'. Confirmation of this translation is provided by the use of another verb in the passive voice, also from the same rubric of §342: *illuminantur*. This can only mean 'are lit', or expressed actively, 'they light'. Moreover, the use of the periphrastic verb *erunt compositae* to describe the lamps prior to their being lit,

1See Part IV Chapter 10 p.289.
2*The seven lamps in front of the altar are kindled from it [the reed-candle]. They had previously been placed unlit in such a way that they could be lit without any hindrance. The great candle which is to be blessed is placed in the centre of the church and in front of the altar.* (The writer's italics.)
makes it very likely that *erit positus*\(^1\) or some equivalent expression would have been used instead of *ponitur*, if the Easter candle had already been in position before the start of the service.

We conclude that *PRG* contains sufficient information for the attestation of Stage 2 in the development of the use of the Easter candle, which is summarised below.

Stage 1: Easter candle lit outside church with new fire.  
Easter candle carried into church in procession.

Stage 2: Reed-candle lit outside church with new fire.  
Easter candle carried into church unlit.

Stage 3: Reed-candle carried into church lit with new fire.  
Easter candle already in position inside church.

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\(^1\)Literally 'will have been placed'.
PART IV

The Easter Candle and the Paschal Vigil
Chapter One

THE ORIGIN OF THE EASTER CANDLE

It is generally believed that the lighting and blessing of the Easter candle was a liturgical development of the Lucernarium of Holy Saturday. It not only ensured the survival of that service, admittedly in an altered form; but without destroying the traditional structure of the Lucernarium the incorporation of the new element transformed the old ceremony, and, combined with the ritual of the new fire, became integrated into the Paschal vigil to produce the liturgy of Holy Saturday. Elsewhere we have referred to the elements in the Paschal vigil which survived from the Lucernarium. These were:

- the bringing in of the lamp
- the officiating deacon
- the offering of light to God

The carrying of the lamp survived unchanged in the Milanese and Mozarabic rites, and in other western rites as the bearing of either a candle, lit with the new fire and placed on a pole, spear, or reed, or the Easter candle itself. It is the deacon who still officiates at the service; and the offering of light is a feature of the formula for the blessing of the Candle in all the western rites.

It is difficult to disagree with Gregory Dix’s description of the Lucernarium as an ‘originally utilitarian ritual’ in which the purpose of the lamp was ‘to give light to the lector’. The functional use of the lamp or the candle, which later replaced the lamp in most rites, was first pointed out by De Vert. However, a number of scholars have denied the utilitarian origin of the Easter candle. Berlière, either unaware of the antecedents of the Easter candle or choosing to ignore them, claimed that its purpose was never functional because it could not provide enough light for illuminating the rest of the church building; and that its origin was symbolic. Likewise Thurston, in an

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1The basic structure of new fire, blessing of Easter candle, Vigil-readings, and Baptism, which still obtains today, had been achieved in some parts of Gaul by AD 800.
2See p. 219 and p. 287.
3For the Dialogue and the Blessing of the Light, see Part IV Chapter 10.
4Shape p.23.
5Paschal col.328.
6Le cierge pascal p.107.

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uncharacteristic lapse of scholarship, asserted that the ceremony involving the Easter candle was designed from the beginning with a strictly mystical and symbolical meaning.¹

It hardly needs to be mentioned that it was unnecessary to illuminate the rest of the church during the proclamation of the *Exultet* and the Preface. Indeed in the Roman rite it was intended that the *Exultet* and part of the Preface should be chanted in semi-darkness.²

To argue that the beeswax candle replaced the lamp of the *Lucernarium* as the source of light for the reader is correct to a point. It is true that the small taper or the Easter candle itself replaced the lamp as the means by which the light was introduced into church. In the Mozarabic and Milanese traditions the lamp continued to feature in the ceremony. In the latter rite it was present at the blessing of the font.³ In the Spanish ceremony, however, it was carried into church along with the Easter candle, and continued to burn throughout the remainder of the Paschal liturgy, maintaining almost parity with the Easter candle.

In the next chapter we will show that the Easter candle emerged as the principal feature of the *Lucernarium* of Holy Saturday in the region of Northern Italy as early as the fourth century. Before we survey the early evidence for the Candle, two questions remain to be considered. (i) Why was the lamp of the *Lucernarium* replaced by a candle of beeswax as the means of illumination for the reader? (ii) Why did this development first take place in Northern Italy?

Since the origin of the Easter candle is shrouded in obscurity, it is perhaps understandable why liturgical commentators in the past without exception have avoided addressing themselves directly to answering the first question. It seems unlikely that the Easter candle was borrowed from a pagan religious milieu with a comparable ritual, or that it was suggested by such features of pre-Christian worship such as sky-pillars⁴ or sacred trees.⁵ The view that a large candle was used in order to provide a great light for

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¹*Lent and Holy Week* p.408.
²After the Vigil came to be held in the earlier part of Holy Saturday, a sufficient amount of natural daylight, especially on a sunny day, would render the flame of the Easter candle unnecessary for the provision of light by which to read. (For the provision of light at the Paschal vigil, see Chapter 15.)
³1768 Missal p.125.
the reader of the lessons merely side-steps the issue. For apart from the fact that there is no evidence to suggest that in the fourth century the Easter candle was especially large, a lamp of considerable dimensions would have been equally suitable for this purpose.

A clue to the solution of this problem may be provided by the internal evidence of the songs composed in honour of the Easter candle, the Prefaces. ¹ Now it is true that there are prominent references and allusions to the Passover, to Baptism, and to the Resurrection in all the Prefaces; but the pre-eminent theme is the praise of the Candle itself and the significance of this source of light. When we turn to study the two surviving benedictiones cerei of Ennodius, we discover that in addition to the allusion to the bees and the generation of beeswax, which is common to all the Prefaces, the composition of the Candle is for him of profound significance. In both laudes he identifies the three constituent elements of the Candle viz. the wax, the wick, and the light.

(a) species trino conpaginatae consortio societatis propemodum mysticae glutino coniunguntur, quarum ceram paravit nectareis partubus feta virginitatis, papyrus ad alimenta ignium lympha transmisit, lumen adhibetur e caelo.

(b) venerandis compactam elementis facem tibi, Domine, mancipamus in qua trium copula munerum...unum, quod de fetibus fluminum adcedunt nutrimenta flammarum : aliud quod apum tribuit interemerata fecunditas...ignis etiam caelo infusus adhibetur. ²

For Ennodius it is not the physical elements in themselves which are important; it is the hallowing of them by the direct intervention of God in the historical process of redemption recorded in Scripture. For the wax, produced parthenogenetically by bees - so it was believed - symbolised Jesus’ birth from a pure virgin; the papyrus, which served as a wick in the Candle, grew in river-water, the element hallowed by Jesus through his own baptism; and the silent flame recalled the Burning Bush with its foliage still intact. The Easter candle, therefore, represents the God-hallowed material world, and by extension the whole of creation, which as a result of the Incarnation and

¹These are discussed more fully in Chapter 10.
²(a) ‘Elements, joined together in triple partnership, are united by the bond of an almost mystical fellowship. The virgin-born bee has prepared the wax for her nectareous parturition; the water has produced the papyrus for the sustenance of the fire; and light is admitted from the sky.’ (b) ‘We offer to you a torch composed of elements to be revered, a union of three gifts: one, which from the plants of the rivers enables the fuel for the flames to burn, and another, which the unsullied fertility of the bees provides. Fire, sent from the sky, is also added.’ The excerpts are from Preface I and Preface II, respectively. Pinell, La Benedicció p.93 and p.95. (The writer’s italics.) The text is also in Hartel pp.415-22. In the latter passage fetibus fluminum, ‘the produce of rivers’, refers to the papyrus, which was obtained from the River Nile and the marshes of Egypt.
the advent of end-time following the Resurrection, has now become potentially redeemable. Therefore, the offering of the Candle, this microcosm of the world, would symbolise and once more re-enact the union of heaven and earth in anticipation of the final redemption of all creation at the close of the Age; and reinforce the eschatological theme of the Paschal liturgy. This union of human and divine is twice referred to explicitly in the Romano-Gallican Preface of the Tridentine Missal:

Nox in qua terrenis coelestia, humana divina coniuguntur.

Ut Cereus iste...supernis luminaribus misceatur.\(^1\)

The latter reference, of which there is also an echo in the Beneventan Preface,\(^2\) underlines and reinforces the importance of the Candle; and the eschatological significance of this particular source of light largely explains why a candle composed of beeswax was used in preference to an oil-lamp, as the medium for the offertory of light in the Vigil liturgy.

It is very likely that its shape was not an inconsiderable factor in the adoption of a candle for the provision of light at the liturgy of Holy Saturday. For in contrast with a lamp the column of wax provided a much more vivid and realistic symbol of the pillar of fire that featured prominently at the Paschal vigil.

Any attempt to account for the Northern Italian provenance of the Easter candle must remain speculative in our present state of knowledge. This part of Italy was not especially noted for apiculture or for the production of a superior quality of beeswax.

\(^{1}\) 'A night in which heavenly things are united to those of earth.' and 'That this Candle may be mingled with the heavenly lights.'

\(^{2}\) Pinell, *La Benedicció* p.96.
THE EASTER CANDLE: EARLIEST REFERENCES

It would seem that the lighting and blessing of the Easter candle is a purely western liturgical development; and the earliest references to the ritual strongly suggest a geographical provenance in Northern Italy. The earliest reference to the Easter candle occurs in a letter, written by Jerome in AD 384, to a deacon named Praesidius in the church at Piacenza. Praesidius had previously asked Jerome to compose a *carmen cerei* for him; but Jerome is unwilling to comply for two main reasons. His first objection is to the style of language which he is expected to use in composing this song of praise. Previous writers had used a florid form of language reminiscent of the fourth book of Virgil's *Georgics.* This is all very soothing on the ear, says Jerome, but it is not in keeping with the office of a deacon, especially as on these occasions ecclesiastical superiors are listening in silence to a minister who does not possess sacerdotal authority, nor with the sacraments of the Church, nor with the season of Easter. His other and principal objection is to the whole notion of the ceremony involving the Easter candle. Anticipating in a way some of the reformers of the sixteenth century, he claims that the ceremony and some of its features are unscriptural. 'Read the Old Testament', he fulminates. 'There is no instance of the use of wax.' And where can you find a reference in the New Testament to a wax taper.' Elsewhere in the letter he refers to the whole proceedings as a 'rather vulgar ritual'.

We must bear in mind, when assessing the evidence of Jerome, that in many ways he was not typical of his age. Therefore, we must disregard his undisguised antipathy to this ceremony and try to evaluate the evidence in an unbiased way. Four conclusions emerge. (i) At Eastertide in Piacenza there existed a ritual involving the use of a wax candle, at which a *carmen cerei* was sung by way of a benediction. (ii) It had become traditional to compose the song in a recognised poetic style. (iii) The allusions in the *carmen* to bees and honey and beeswax, to which Jerome took so much exception, strongly suggest that the content and theme of these fourth-century *laudes cerei* were similar to those of the later extant examples. (iv) It was the officiating deacon who was responsible for the singing, though not necessarily the composition, of the *carmen*, and who occupied a position of prominence during the ceremony, a feature of the rite that has survived to this day.

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2 Interestingly, Virgil was born near Mantua, only 55 miles from Piacenza.
3 The use of candles in Palestine was not widespread in pre-Christian times.
The existence of a recognised style of composition shows that the use of the wax-candle at the Easter vigil was well-established at Piacenza, and almost certainly at Milan into whose liturgical orbit Piacenza and other cities in Northern Italy came. Indeed Jerome, who was himself born at Strido near Aquileia, is clearly familiar with the ceremony, even if he found it distasteful. His sneer suggests that the rite was popular; and this may well indicate that it had been in existence for a number of years. Lack of evidence, however, prevents us from assigning even a rough date to the first appearance of the ceremony. Moreover, the situation is complicated by the fact that the use of the Easter candle emerged within the context of the well-established Lucernarium; so that even a date in the earlier part of the fourth century must remain conjectural.

The next firm evidence for the ceremony comes from St Augustine. His own words that he had written a short carmen in praise of the Easter candle clearly shows that he was familiar with this Paschal ritual and may well have actively participated in it on one occasion. The composition of his laus cerei must have been undertaken before AD 391 when he was a deacon, since in that year he was consecrated bishop. We are not told where the carmen was sung; but it may have been on the occasion of his visit to Milan, where we have suggested this Paschal ceremony was well-known. However, it may have taken place in North Africa. It is unfortunate that we possess no evidence for the Easter candle in that region, unless Augustine’s words are applicable to North Africa.

Indicative of the popularity of the ceremony and also of its early appearance in Central Italy is the decree of Pope Zosimus (AD 417-18):

Per parrocia (sic) concessa licentia cereum benedici.2

It was generally believed in subsequent centuries, solely on the strength of this statement, that the ceremony surrounding the Easter candle had been instituted throughout the churches of the West, except Rome, by this pope. However, we have already observed that the rite was well-established in Northern Italy in the fourth century. It was assumed that parrocia referred to the dioceses outside Rome, and that the Church

1Quod in laude quadam Cerei breviter versibus dixi. De Civitate Dei 15.22.

2Permission was granted to bless the Candle throughout the parishes.4 (The writer’s italics.) Liber Pontificalis I p.225.

3Amalarius, Lib.Off. I.18.1; Sicardus, Mitrale PL 213.323B; PR XII I xxxii.8 p.240; Durandus, Rationale VI.80 p.350. 

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of Rome at this time was powerful enough to influence and even sanction the liturgies of other churches in the West. The earliest evidence for the blessing of the Easter candle within the Cathedral of St John Lateran dates only from the tenth century.

As additional evidence for the continuity, if not the provenance, of the ceremony in Northern Italy, there survive the two laudes cerei, written at the beginning of the sixth century by Ennodius who became Bishop of Pavia in AD 517. Pope Gregory also, writing c. AD 595 to Marinianus, Bishop of Ravenna, has occasion to refer to the blessing of the Easter candle as performed in that northern Italian city.

Evidence for the use of the Easter candle in the East is wanting. Feasey produces no corroborative evidence to support his extravagant claim: ‘The rite [of the Easter candle] undoubtedly came from the East, either from Jerusalem or Antioch’. Dendy would see a possible origin for the Easter candle in the East. He adduces in support of his suggestion the statement of F.C. Burkitt: ‘The Saturday of Annunciation has been the name of Easter Eve or Holy Saturday among the Jacobites ever since the middle of the sixth century: no doubt the name is derived from some ‘announcement’ of Easter tidings corresponding to the Western Exultet.’ All this is clearly conjecture and guesswork. Neither can attempts to see any connection between the Easter candle and Constantine’s lavish display of street illumination in Constantinople be taken seriously. It is true that Egeria’s evidence is ambiguous; for she wrote c. 380 of the liturgy of the Church in Jerusalem that ‘they keep the Vigil like us’. If it could be shown that the Easter candle was known in Spain, Egeria’s probable homeland, in the last quarter of the fourth century, it could be argued, as Thurston does that it was a feature of the Jerusalem liturgy at that time. However, there is no mention of the Easter candle by the Christian Spanish poet Prudentius, who wrote some twenty years after Egeria’s visit to Jerusalem, in any of his poems; and in view of the fact that the Easter candle is so significant a liturgical feature, whose symbolism readily lends itself to poetic composition,

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1 For the attitude of the Church of Rome towards local customs elsewhere during the pontificate of St Gregory, see p.175. For other interpretations of paroccia, see Appendix 15.
2 PRG II p.97. Interestingly, the institution of the Easter candle according to the 1507 Missal of Salzburg (fol.xciii), which derives directly from PRG, is attributed to Pope Gelasius (AD 492-6).
3 Pinell, La benedicción pp.92-95 (Hartel’s text). Also in PL 63.258-262.
4 Epistle XI.33. PL 77.1146.
5 The Paschal Candle p.353.
6 The Use of Lights p.131.
7 In JTS (1923) p.425.
8 Eusebius, Vita Constantini 4.22. PG 20.1169.
10 The Exultet p.514.
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his silence would seem to be conclusive for its absence from the rites of Spain at that time. The earliest firm evidence for the Easter candle in Spain comes from the year AD 633.¹

¹Fourth Council of Toledo, Canon 9  PL 84.369B.
Chapter Three

THE PREPARATION, COMPOSITION, AND COST OF THE EASTER CANDLE

Our sources tell us little about the preparation of the Easter candle. At Gembloux it was set up after Sext on Holy Saturday. However, at Barking Abbey the Candle was prepared on Good Friday, and at Fleury on Monday of Holy Week. At the two last-mentioned monasteries it was necessary to inscribe the insignia on the Candle in readiness for the Vigil.

Traditionally the Easter candle has been made of beeswax, as the Preface following the Exultet proclaims. However, the advantages of beeswax, a more pleasant odour and a slower rate of combustion than tallow, are matched to some extent by its scarcity and inevitably its cost. In the following chapter we shall show how the use of the Judas to some extent curtailed excessive expense. At Lyon the use of a wooden or metal Easter candle with a bougie inserted in a socket at its upper end was forbidden. However, in some of the large churches of Paris in the last century, two Easter candles were used: one made of wax which was taken to the font, the other being a tin or wooden candle-like fixture of great height placed in the choir, which was supported by a large candlestick.

The problem of obtaining candles of pure beeswax became acute during the last century. For instance, in 1857 the Bishop of Charleston in South Carolina asked Pope Pius IX for permission to use tallow candles because of the scarcity and price of beeswax. ‘Let the recent malpractice of making candles from tallow be stopped,’ came the reply. However, a decree of the S.C.R., dated 14 December 1904, permitted the addition of other substances to the beeswax provided that the proportion of beeswax was in maxima parte. Even then, some authorities still insisted on a beeswax content of 75%7 In the remote missions of Oceania the use of whale oil or blubber was allowed.

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1Albers II p.99.
2HBS 65 p.101 and Novarinus p.17, respectively.
31832 Ceremonial p.479.
4Paschal col.333.
5Van der Stappen p.92: Inductus abusus adhibendi candelas ex sevo eliminetur.
6DACSR. Maxima pars was interpreted 65%.
7Van der Stappen p.89.
In England during the later Middle Ages, mention of the charges for the preparation of the Easter candle is ‘to be found in every book of church accounts’.¹

¹Gasquet, *Parish Life* p.181. A useful list of churchwarden’s accounts is to be found on page xi of that work.
Chapter Four

THE SIZE OF THE EASTER CANDLE

It is not unreasonable to suppose that from its earliest appearance within the Paschal liturgy the Easter candle was always distinguishable from other candles by its size, however modest the differential may have been. The first indication not simply of its size but of its unusual size appears in the account of the fire that occurred in the Church of St Stephen in Naples in the eighth century:

Ecclesia Salvatoris, quae de nomine sui auctoris, Stephania vocitatur divino - quod flens dico - iudicio igne cremata est. Moris enim fuit, ut cereus sanctus, inormi mensura porrectus, propter dominicae resurrectionis honorem a benedictionis exordio usque ad alterius dies missarum expleta sollemnia non extingueretur. Nocte igitur quadam ipsius festivitatibus, cum solito dimitteretur accensus, cunctis quiescentibus, ignis per aranearum forte congeriem in laquearia ipsius ecclesiae pervenit, et sic demum aestuavit in omne aedificium.¹

Mallardo refers to the both the ‘extraordinary length of the candle’ and the height of the surviving column which had supported the Candle, and which he presumably had seen. However, even if the column does date back to the eighth century, there is no corroborative evidence to substantiate the claim that the Candle which caused the fire was of similar dimensions. The Easter candle at the not-too-distant Monastery of Monte Cassino was quite small; yet being atop a very tall stone column,² it could be said to be ‘inormi mensura porrectus’ and was certainly impressive enough to honour the Lord’s resurrection. In later Neapolitan practice it was small enough to be carried in procession by the cimiliarcha, the cathedral treasurer.³ Moreover, it is unlikely that the

¹'The Saviour’s church, which is named after its founder, Stephanus, was destroyed by the fire of divine judgement. I weep as I write this. The Holy Candle stood extremely high as a mark of honour for the Lord’s resurrection. It was customary for it to burn from the beginning of the blessing until the solemnities of the Masses on Easter Day were completed. During the night of one Holy Saturday, when the Candle was unattended as usual and all were resting, some drapery in the church caught fire; and after the fire had reached the roof, the whole building was eventually engulfed in flames.' Gesta episcoporum Neapolitanorum (Waitz’s edition p.426). Text in Mallardo, La Pasqua p.22.
²Zamecki p.17.
³The ceremonial of Holy Saturday according to the fourteenth-century Constitutions of John Orsini, in Mallardo, La Pasqua p.33.
size of the candle envisaged by Mallardo had shrunk to quite the proportions of the portable wax column of Orsini’s *Constitutions*, even allowing for a reduction in its size as a result of the conflagration.¹

An interval of more than 200 years separates the incident at Naples from the palaeographic evidence of the *Exultet* rolls of Southern Italy. Even making allowances for some artistic licence in the execution of the detailed liturgical scenes, these eleventh-century and twelfth-century drawings record a considerable range in the size of the various Easter candles depicted. The above-mentioned Candle at Monte Cassino appears to measure between 18" and 24" in height,² and those at Bari and Mirabella about three feet;³ whilst the Easter candle at Gaeta stands at about five feet from the ground.⁴ All the Candles depicted in the rolls taper towards their apexes. Candles shaped in this way give the columns which support them a more aesthetically-satisfying termination; their lower centre of gravity gives them greater stability; and their almost pointed ends render the wicks more accessible for kindling and less prone to inopportune failure and embarrassing extinction.

The practice of fashioning Easter candles of very large and, to the modern way of thinking, excessive proportions is well documented throughout the later Middle Ages and beyond, in both the cathedral and monastic (mainly Benedictine) liturgical traditions. Not all Benedictine houses, however, were extravagant in this respect. The Roman Church encouraged the use of a Candle of considerable proportions.⁵ Feasey’s statement⁶ that the Easter candle had of necessity to be of great size so as to last throughout the night vigil, is manifestly untrue. Some candles of very small proportions are able to burn for twenty-four hours.

At Lincoln the Easter candle weighed 42 lbs,⁷ and those at Bury St Edmunds and in the Lateran Basilica both contained 80 lbs of wax,⁸ whilst the use of *desuper* in the rubric of the Ordinal of Barking in connection with the fixing of the great candle in its

¹For us the cause of the fire is a matter for speculation. The drapery or curtains (*ara­nearum congeries* - the meaning is uncertain) had caught fire and set the ceiling alight. The cloth could just as easily have been set on fire closer to the floor as at a point near the roof.
²Zamecki p.17.
³Avery Plates XII and LVI, respectively.
⁴Avery Plate XXX.
⁵The *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* prescribes : Praeparetur cereus Paschalis praegrandis (II.27.1). The writer’s italics.
⁶Ancient English Holy Week Ceremonial p.192.
⁷Bradshaw and Wordsworth II p.291.
⁸HBS 99 p.53 and Gavantus/Merati IV p.154, respectively. A solid beeswax candle of this weight could have the dimensions of 9’6” x 5”.

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candelabrum, seems to imply the hoisting and lowering of a great weight.¹ We are informed that at Westminster in 1558 the Paschal column consisted of three hundred-weight of wax.² The massive Easter candle which Emperor Maximilian presented to the church at Echtemach in Luxembourg in 1512 weighed 354 lbs.³ A seventeenth-century manual of Rouen, which recommended⁴ that the Easter candle should be 'grandioris formae', was given a generous interpretation in that city. For at the beginning of the eighteenth century it is recorded that not only was the Candle in Rouen Cathedral twenty-five feet in height, but that those in the Churches of Saint-Ouen, Notre-Dame de la Ronde, and Saint-Sauveur were also of a similar dimension.⁵

It is recorded that the Easter candle at Salisbury stood thirty-six feet high;⁶ but the claims made for the colossal height of those at Durham and Norwich cannot be substantiated. The Candle at the former cathedral was probably not as tall as is generally believed;⁷ whilst the assertion by Feasey that the Easter candle at Norwich was as tall as that at Durham, that is, it almost reached to the roof of the cathedral, was based on the mistaken belief that the circular aperture at the junction of the vault-ribs in one of the bays was used for lighting the wick of the Easter candle.⁸

Great care must be exercised when interpreting the statistical information relating to the height and weight of Easter candles. For instance, we learn that the Easter candle at Rouen stood twenty-five feet high and weighed forty pounds;⁹ yet that at Seville, which stood only two feet higher, weighed 1500 lbs.¹⁰ It is clear from a comparison of these two sets of statistics that a number of factors must be taken into consideration in assessing the authenticity and value of the recorded data, before any firm conclusions can be reached. (i) There may be errors in the transmission of the text; or descriptions may contain oft-repeated mistakes which have not or cannot be verified. (ii) Heights, and sometimes weights, may be based on a visual assessment. (iii) Human nature is often prone to exaggeration, especially in situations in which large numbers are involved. (iv) Errors may occur when converting from one system of measurements to another. (v) The method of its manufacture and its composition must be known.
Of the six above-mentioned points for consideration the last two probably account for most of the seeming discrepancies and exaggerations. Strictly speaking, the Easter candle consists only of a column of wax. However, a false candle-stock or Judas¹ may have been added below the Candle so as to increase the height of the Candle, and in some instances, to double its overall vertical dimension, thereby giving an impression of considerable loftiness. On the other hand the candlestick may have been included in the estimation of the height of the Easter candle, especially if the former was columnar in design and of similar diameter to the Candle.

Two aspects of the manufacture of the Easter candle deserve our attention. (i) The ratio of a candle's diameter to its height is disproportionate in that the halving of the former does not result in the doubling of the latter. For instance, the height of a candle measuring 9'11" x 5" becomes 20' 0" when the diameter is reduced by only 1'/2" to 3'/2". (ii) The manufacture of very tall candles, especially those with a diameter insufficient to maintain the rigidity of the wax column, necessitated the insertion of a wooden² or metallic core for a large section of its length in order to ensure its continuing vertical position.³ It follows that the weight of the Candle would be substantially increased if its core were a metal rod of considerable diameter.

The great height of some Easter candles is also confirmed by a description of the manner in which they were lit. At Seville a chorister climbed a gilt-iron mast which stood close to the Easter candle. At its summit was a railed-in platform, similar to a ship's crow's-nest, on a level with the top of the Candle. From this platform the Candle was both lit and trimmed; and the melted wax was also drawn off with a large iron ladle.⁴ At the Lateran Basilica a portable pulpit was wheeled into the church so that the deacon could light the Candle;⁵ whilst at Durham, where we are informed that the Easter candle was square, a long pole was kept in the triforium above the choir for the purpose of kindling.⁶ At St Leonard's, Leau also, where the candleholder was 5.68m high (18'7"), the deacon had to climb to the triforium for the same purpose.⁷

Since the Easter candle came to be fashioned in large dimensions either to represent the importance of the Resurrection or to symbolise the pre-eminence of the light of Christ, it is not surprising that the size and sturdiness of the holder were increased to

1See also below, pp.239-40.
2As at Bourges (Paschal col.333).
31838 Ceremonial of Lyon p.479. The insertion of a core also had the advantage of reducing the expense incurred by the use of beeswax, a costly raw material.
⁴Doblado p.299.
⁶The writer's interpretation of Fowler, Notes on the Rites of Durham p.9.
⁷Callewaert p.141.
counteract the increased weight superimposed thereon and to provide additional support. It also ensured that from an aesthetic point of view the Candle and the candlestick maintained a satisfactory relationship with each other; and at the same time underlined even more forcefully the importance of the person and the event it commemorated.

The Easter candle was either supported by a metal candelabrum, frequently of exquisite craftsmanship, or it rested on the top of a stone column, often embellished with suitably-appropriate sculptures and other decorations.¹ The use of the column to elevate the Candle is first reliably attested at Monte Cassino in the eleventh century;² but, as we have suggested at the beginning of this chapter, a column may have been in use at Naples in the eighth century. There can be little doubt that its use in the Paschal liturgy of the Romano-Gallican tradition was suggested by the reference in the Preface following the Exultet to the pillar of fire³ in the Book of Exodus, and by the identification of the Easter candle with that pillar.⁴ The significance of the column in this respect is noted by Macri.⁵

The great height of the column⁶ or candelabrum, rendering the Easter candle beyond of the deacon’s reach, may in some instances account for the absence of the five grains of incense in the ritual - at Durham possibly, for example - or explain why the grains were inserted into the Candle during the preparations for the Vigil, as, for example, at Barking.⁷ However, the problems created by the use of a lofty support for the Candle were not insuperable. The Gilbertine Ordinal and the Sarum Missal both permitted the choice of inserting the grains of incense either into the Easter candle or into the candleholder;⁸ whilst a Parisian handbook of ceremonial and a Polish manual both enjoin that ladders should be provided for this ritual act.⁹

Without specifying a maximum size for the Easter candle the Roman Church recommended moderation in smaller churches, chiefly, one suspects, for the avoidance of unnecessary expense. Commentators on the Roman liturgy stated that the Easter candle should appear larger than ordinary candles, and suggested a weight of between eight

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¹Perhaps the finest are those at St Paul's-outside-the-Walls in Rome, and in the Baptistery in Florence.
²Zamecki p.17
³'Columnae illuminatione'.
⁴'Iam columnae huius praeconia novimus.' In the Ambrosian Preface we read: 'ecce iam ignis columna resplendet.'
⁵Hierolexicon p.142.
⁶At St-Maurice, Angers it stood above 12' high. De Moléon p.60.
⁸HBS 59 p.40 and 1515 Missal fol.cxi, respectively.
and ten pounds.1 Somewhat paradoxically the Easter candle in the Mother of Cathedrals weighed 80 lbs, as we have already noted. At Paris 12 lbs of wax was used;2 whilst in some churches it weighed 33 lbs to commemorate the traditional age of Jesus.3 The above-mentioned Polish manual of Roman ceremonies also mentions the use of a ‘rather long rod’ for lighting the Easter candle in the event of its being very tall. However, since the candlestick is presumably included in the height, we can gain no indication of the vertical dimension of the Candle itself. In the Cistercian rite, whose ceremonial was characterised by austerity, the recommended weight of the Easter candle was 3 lbs.4 It need hardly be added that in many instances the size of the Easter candle would have reflected the wealth of a church or monastery; and at times would have been determined by the availability of beeswax.

Today the Easter candle is distinguishable from other liturgical candles by its size; but both in height and in diameter it is generally of very modest proportions. In Great Britain and Ireland the Easter candle rarely exceeds 36” x 2”. In parts of France, however, the tradition of tall candles is still perpetuated to some extent, although the giant columns of old are no longer to be seen. Of the thirty-six cathedrals for which the writer has information, a Candle of at least one metre (39”) in height is used in thirty, and in eleven of these the Candle stands at 1.5m (58’’).5 The reduction in the size of the Easter candle in modern times has rendered some of the tall marble columns obsolete. Moreover, since the Candle is now borne into church in the procession from the new fire, the placing of it on the top of the tall shaft during the ceremony is now impracticable, as at Lyon. In that church a portable iron candlestick is also used for the ease of carrying the Candle to the font for Baptism.

The Judas

In some churches a desire to increase the height of the Easter candle either to enhance its significance, or to offset to some extent the need to use a small beeswax candle, or simply to render it more conspicuous resulted in the utilisation of a device known as the Judas. This was a shaft of wood,6 shaped and painted to resemble a candle, and attached to the base of the Easter candle, thus forming a lower false stock and so increasing the height of the Candle. The latter was attached to the Judas by

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1Desideri p.150; Gavantus/Merati IV p.154; DHCR I p.470 (about 10 lbs).
21662 Ceremonial p.374.
3Grancolas p.318; Gavantus/Merati IV p.154.
41689 Ritual p.244.
6The use of metal for this purpose is unknown.
means of a spike protruding from the end of the Judas, or by a spring of wire,¹ or, one might reasonably suppose, by inserting the end of the Easter candle, neatly chamfered, into a socket at the top of the Judas. Sometimes the lower false candle of wood was coated with wax rather than painted. The Judas at St Mary-at-Hill in London in 1511 weighed 7 lbs.²

There is much uncertainty about the origin of the term Judas. W. Cooke³ traced the origin of the word to Hebrews 7:14: Christ, typified by the Easter candle, sprang out of (the tribe of) Judah. Alternatively, since it is said that the stocks of other candles were also called Judases,⁴ the connection, if it is biblical, is more likely to have been with Judas Iscariot: his false nature and his sham relationship with Jesus.

¹As at East Cheap in the fifteenth century. Feasey, Paschal Candle p.364.
²Peacock p.163. He refers to the destruction of these Judases in the early years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (pp.106,163,164).
⁴There is a reference in the accounts of St Christopher-le-Stocks in 1488 to the wooden stocks for processional candles: ‘vi judas staves for torches painted’ (Freshfield p.119). The decorated Judases at Epworth in 1566, mentioned by Peacock (p.77), were probably stocks of this type, and not intended for use in supporting the Easter candle.
THE POSITION OF THE EASTER CANDLE

Apropos of the position in which the Easter candle stood prior to the chanting of the *Exultet*, two main traditions can be identified during the later Middle Ages. Both are discussed regardless of whether or not the Candle was borne in procession. For if the Candle had previously been carried in procession, it continued to be placed in the same position it had formerly been set in, once it was no longer borne into church.

1. The Gallican tradition.

The placing of the Easter candle in front of the altar is implicitly attested in three Gelasian sacramentaries and in two other documents. The relevant rubric, quoted at the beginning of Chapter 6, which describes the arrival of the archdeacon *ante altare*, leaves us in little doubt that the Easter candle was also in this position. Since it is also known from five *ordines* that there were seven lamps in front of the altar, it is not clear whether the Easter candle was placed between them and the altar, or whether it stood to the west of those lamps. However, the slightly later *PRG*, which also mentions the seven lamps, expands the rubric by adding *in medio ecclesiae* and clarifies the description of the Candle's position by adding that the clergy and the people gather around it. Presumably the seven lamps remained outside the circle formed by the congregation. A number of documents state that the Easter candle is placed in front of the altar without indicating whether the location was in the sanctuary or in the choir. At Soissons it was placed in the sanctuary, and according to the Cistercian rite it stood on the sanctuary step. It is possible that in some instances the rubric was left deliberately

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1 GeV p.68; GeAng p.52; GePr p.55; OR 30A.15; Gradual of St Gregory, cited in Schelstrate II p.142.
2 OR 26.9; OR 28.30; OR 29.17; OR 31.13; OR 32.5.
3 The suburbicarian variant of *PR XII* has a similar phrase qualifying *ante altare* (I p.240).
4 The twelfth-century Ritual of Soissons would appear to be exceptional in this respect (*DAER* 4.24 p.161, M 305). According to this service-book the Easter candle stood in the middle of the sanctuary, and the seven-branched candlestick was placed on the sanctuary step (*ad ascensum presbyterii*). It is unlikely that the middle candle of this menorah and the Easter candle were one and the same, since we are informed that a lectern was placed next to the Candle; but its position between the altar and the menorah poses the interesting question of how visible the Easter candle and the officiating deacon were to the congregation, assuming that the seven-branched candelabrum was of no mean proportions. The rite of Soissons was unusual in other respects - see p.129 and p.165.
5 See Note 4 above.
6 1689 Ritual p.244. In fact the middle step from which the Abbot gave his blessing.

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vague so as to allow some flexibility of position. Martène, writing at the beginning of
the eighteenth century, mentions the sanctuary steps as one of the possible locations for
the Easter candle.¹

The practice of placing the Easter candle in the centre of the choir survived in
France well into the nineteenth century, as Table 47a shows; and was re-established in
the Roman rite following the liturgical changes of 1955. It is usual today to leave the
Candle in the choir only for the duration of the Vigil; and subsequently to remove it to
the sanctuary or to the ambo if one exists. However practice is flexible. Sometimes the
Candle remains where it was blessed. At times it is placed conveniently near the font to
be lit at the ministration of Baptism.

2. The Italian tradition.

Although the practice was not confined exclusively to the churches of Italy - see
Table 47b - the placing of the Easter candle next to the ambo almost certainly had its
origin in that country. The earliest evidence is palaeographic: the Exultet rolls of
Southern Italy provide graphic testimony for the practice from the tenth to the twelfth
centuries.² Indeed, the medieval ambo, together with its column or holder for the Easter
candle, survives in a number of Italian churches, especially in the South. The choice of
this position was perhaps inevitable, since the prophecies, an important element in the
Paschal vigil, were read from this raised platform; so that the juxtaposition of the
Candle and the Bible emphasised the link, and visibly expressed the close rapport that
existed between the Light of Christ and the Word of God.

Documentary confirmation for the ambo-position of the Easter candle is found in
an eleventh-century Beneventan ritual,³ and in the twelfth-century Monte Cassino A
and Monte Cassino B. Its position by the ambo is also enjoined by PR XII and other
Roman service-books, including the Roman Missal of 1570, and by Guéranger in the
nineteenth century, even though in some churches custom was at variance with official
directives. For the Pian Missal of 1570, though in theory mandatory for most churches
which acknowledged the primacy of the see of Rome, did not make recognition of or
allowance for the fact that not all churches possessed an ambo. Ordo XIV, Ordo XV,
and the 1474 Missale Romanum make mention of the ornatum pulpitum on which the
missal was placed and next to which stood the Easter candle. The term almost certainly
refers to the ambo, which in many Italian churches was elegantly constructed and

¹DAER 4.24.8 p.147.
²Avery Plates XII, XXX, XLIV, LXXVIII.
³Odermatt p.273.
### Table 47a. The Easter candle in the centre of the choir.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRG</td>
<td></td>
<td>II §346 p.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corbie</td>
<td></td>
<td>PL 78.336B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcuin</td>
<td></td>
<td>PL 101.1216B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
<td>1662 Cerem. p.374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maison du Roy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sem.Sainte p.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sées</td>
<td></td>
<td>1742 Missal p.185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 47b. The Easter candle at the ambo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneventum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Odermatt p.273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Beroldus p.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome (12 C)</td>
<td>PR XII I</td>
<td>p.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monte Cassino A</td>
<td>PR XII I</td>
<td>p.292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monte Cassino B</td>
<td>PR XII I</td>
<td>p.293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apamea</td>
<td></td>
<td>DAER 4.24 p.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo XIV</td>
<td></td>
<td>PL 78.1218C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo XV</td>
<td></td>
<td>PL 78.1322A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR 1474</td>
<td></td>
<td>HBS 17 p.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strasbourg</td>
<td></td>
<td>DAER 4.24 p.162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalons</td>
<td></td>
<td>1748 Missal p.178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 47c. The Easter candle at the Gospel side of the altar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sauisby</td>
<td></td>
<td>HBS 91 p.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td></td>
<td>1482 Missal fol.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vallombrosa</td>
<td></td>
<td>1503 Missal fol.xcii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camaldolese</td>
<td></td>
<td>1634 Cerem. p.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amiens</td>
<td></td>
<td>1745 Missal p.182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soissons</td>
<td></td>
<td>1745 Missal p.163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcassonne</td>
<td></td>
<td>1749 Missal p.194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seville</td>
<td></td>
<td>Doblado p.299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coutances</td>
<td></td>
<td>1825 Cerem. p.329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verdun</td>
<td></td>
<td>1832 Cerem. p.313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 47d. The Candle in the choir or at the Gospel side.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reg.Conc.</td>
<td></td>
<td>PL 137.494C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gembloux</td>
<td></td>
<td>Albers II p.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vallombrosa</td>
<td></td>
<td>Albers IV p.249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome (Suburbic.)</td>
<td>PR XII I</td>
<td>p.240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soissons</td>
<td></td>
<td>DAER 4.24 p.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naples</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mallardo p.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainz</td>
<td></td>
<td>1507 Missal fol.xcii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquileia</td>
<td></td>
<td>1519 Missal fol.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cistercians</td>
<td></td>
<td>1689 Ritual p.244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angers</td>
<td></td>
<td>De Moleon p.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cahors*</td>
<td></td>
<td>1760 Missal p.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vienna†</td>
<td></td>
<td>1782 Missal p.214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* or outside the sanctuary
† outside the sanctuary

### Table 47e. The Easter candle in front of the altar.

exquisitely adorned, and not to the legile or reading-desk, which was used of necessity for the Exultet and prophecies in churches which possessed no ambo. At Milan the ambo was known as the tribunum (Beroldus p.110).
3. The later development.

In the same way that the Book of the Gospels is regarded in the Orthodox tradition as a verbal icon of Christ, the column of wax and the flame of the Easter candle that symbolised the Word of God in the Trinity came to be identified closely with the reading of that Word in the Gospel lection. Hence, at the Gospel of the first Mass of Easter, the customary honorific lights accompanying the written Word were, and indeed still are, dispensed with, since the Light of the Gospel was held to be visibly present in the flame of the Easter candle. In churches which possessed an ambo from which the Gospel was read, this had always been the practice. Elsewhere, the Gospel was read to the north of the altar - to its left as one faces it. The earliest evidence for the Easter candle being set in this position is found in the Sarum rite of the thirteenth century.\(^1\) Attestation of the practice in the Dominican rite, though from a later period, would suggest that the ceremonial of the Black Friars had influenced the English rite in this respect.\(^2\)

The Gospel position is also found in Spain at Seville, and was also a feature of the Mozarabic rite;\(^3\) and Baldeschi and De Vert both mention that this was the usual position for the Easter candle.\(^4\) The position is also found in a number of French diocesan rites, some permitting the alternative position of *in medio choro*. Paschal, commenting on this very aspect of the ritual, states that the position on the Gospel side was found in country districts.\(^5\) It is likely that in many small country churches a central position in the choir was not always suitable. This consideration may have been in the minds of the compilers of the Ordinal of Nidaros, which prescribes that the Easter candle should be set ‘in a convenient place’.\(^6\)

The Easter candle was also set at the Gospel side of the altar at the conclusion of the Preface at Limoges,\(^7\) at Milan,\(^8\) and at Biasca and other Swiss towns which followed the Ambrosian rite.\(^9\) In some churches, of both the Roman and Milanese traditions, in

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\(^1\)See *Table 47c* for reference and other instances of this position.  
\(^2\)The Sarum rite contained other Dominican influences, for example, the reckoning of Sundays after Trinity, rather than after Pentecost as in the Roman rite.  
\(^3\)Martène, *DAER* 4.42 p.164.  
\(^4\)Ceremonial p.271 and *Explication* IV p.133.  
\(^5\)*La Liturgie* col.329.  
\(^6\)*ONE* p.232. This directive may partly have been determined by the existence of small churches in the more remote parts of this far-flung diocese, which in addition to the whole of Norway included Iceland, Greenland, and the Isle of Man.  
\(^7\)1830 Missal p.227.  
\(^8\)Beroldus pp.111-2; King, *LPS* p.359.  
\(^9\)King, *Holy Week* p.98.
which the use of the ambo fell into desuetude, the Easter candle was set in this position before the start of the service,¹ and the *Exultet* was proclaimed and the prophecies read from a sanctuary lectern.

Paschal also mentions that the Candle was sometimes placed at the Epistle side of the altar.² Examples of this position occur at St Mary-in-Trastevere in Rome, and in the Florentine baptistery. Other authors record only slight variations of position. De Vert refers to the Easter candle at the altar rail in some churches; and De Moléon informs us that at Rouen Cathedral the Candle formerly stood between the Tomb of Charles V and the three sanctuary lamps.³

²*La Liturgie* col.329.
³*Explication* IV p.133 and *Voyages* p.318, respectively.
Chapter Six

THE EASTER CANDLE AND THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

(i) *The sign of the cross made with a gesture of the hand*

The consecration of the Easter candle is first attested in the eighth-century Gelasian Sacramentary:

\[
\text{Veniens archidiaconus ante altare, accipiens de lumine quod vi feria absconsus fuit, faciens crucem super cereum, et illuminans eum Et completur ab ipso benedictio cerei.}^1
\]

This rubric is found with only slight variations of wording in two other Gelasian sacramentaries and the Sacramentary of Reims,\(^2\) and in two other documents.\(^3\) That the act of consecration was achieved by making the sign of the cross is not in doubt; what is not clear is the manner in which this was done. Rabotin, followed by Capelle, suggested that it was achieved either by the archdeacon’s hand raised in the act of benediction, or with his hand holding the small candle which had been lit from the reserved fire and with which the Easter candle was kindled.\(^4\) Both cite the practice at Poitiers\(^5\) c.AD 900 and the custom observed by a number of bishops of the Greek Orthodox Church of performing this act of benediction with a lighted candle in their hand.\(^6\) However, the absence of any reference in any of the above-mentioned documents to a small candle and to the sign of the cross being made in this way make this argument difficult to sustain; although the silence of the rubrics is not conclusive in view of the fact that there are other details of the ritual which are unrecorded.

There is no good reason to doubt that the primitive practice was to make the sign of the cross with a simple gesture of the hand. An alternative reading in Ordo 30A adds *manu sua* to the phrase *faciens crucem super cereum* by way of clarification.\(^7\)

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\(^1\)The archdeacon comes in front of the altar, takes a light from the fire that was hidden on Good Friday, and, after making the sign of the cross over the candle, lights it. Then he completes the blessing of the Candle.\(^* GeV, Mohlberg p.68 §425. The document is a Frankish recension of a Roman book, and the ceremonial described here relates to the Gallican Church.

\(^2\)Angoulême p.52; Prague p.55; PL 78.336B, respectively.

\(^3\)OR 30A.15; and the Gradual of St Gregory, cited by Schelstrate II p.142.

\(^4\)Les Grains d’Encens p.224 and Le rite de cinq grains p.5, respectively.

\(^5\)Poitiers p.215.

\(^6\)Rabotin, however, had reservations: ‘J’hésite cependant a interpreter le geste Gelasien par la rubrique poitevine’ (p.225).

\(^7\)OR 30A.15, Manuscript R.
ever, it is possible that the latter phrase without the additional *manu sua* in some instances came to be interpreted as an injunction to incise a cross into the wax of the Easter Candle. For (a) the incision of a cross did eventually replace the tracing of one manually in most churches; and (b) the very fact that the adjectival phrase in the above-mentioned reading of Manuscript R is qualified by *manu sua* may suggest that *super cereum* was capable of two interpretations. In classical Latin *super* bore the meaning of 'above', 'over', or 'on top of' regardless of whether or not physical contact was involved. The preposition *in* on the other hand was normally employed to convey the notion of one object resting upon another. In later Latin *super* was regularly used to express the higher position of one object in relation to another with physical contact, as in *super virgam, super caput,* and *super candelabrum.* Even in modern French *sur* may mean 'on' and 'above' or 'over'. The incision of a cross on the Easter candle, therefore, may have been partly the result of this somewhat ambiguous rubric. The writer has suggested below an instance of where the Candle may have been marked with a visible cross.

In the rubric quoted at the beginning of this chapter there is no indication of any formula of benediction before the Easter candle was lit and prior to the chanting of the *Exultet.* Now in addition to this initial consecratory gesture the Sacramentary of Prague also records that the sign of the cross was made with the hand once during the *Exultet* and once during the Preface. The performing of the two additional gestures raises the possibility that the initial cross was actually cut into the surface of the beeswax, the two subsequent gestures serving to reinforce or confirm that which had been visibly incised. *PRG* with its synthesised ceremonial records a hand-gesture over the candle at the new fire (II p.95 §342) and an incision prior to the lighting of the Candle (p.97 §346) followed by a hand-gesture at *incensi sacrificium vespertinum* during the Preface (p.98 §347).

Although the incision of the cross in the Easter candle was adopted by most churches, the tracing of a cross with the hand in the air survived at Vallombrosa, and at Basel where a choice of performing or omitting this act of benediction was given during the Preface. On the other hand at Nidaros in the early thirteenth century the deacon was forbidden to raise his hand during the Preface, either because this action was

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1 The use of *super* in the latter sense is found in Gregory's letter to Marinianus: *preces quae super cereum...dici solent.* PL 77.1146.
2 At *sancti + huius* and *cereus + iste,* respectively. *GePr* p.55 §95. The Sacramentary of Gellone also attests the latter gesture. *GeGe* p.95 §678C.
3 1503 Missal fol.xcv: at *in honore nominis tui* of the Preface.
4 1488 Missal fol.xcii: at *cereus iste sit benedictus* of the Preface.
5 *ONE* p.233. At the words *cereus iste sit benedictus.*
considered to be a superfluous duplication of the act of benediction, or perhaps the deacon was held to be acting *ultra vires* in appropriating to himself the sacerdotal authority of which the making of the sign of the cross was expressive.

(ii) **The sign of the cross made by incision**

In the same way that there is some uncertainty over the interpretation of the phrase *super cereum*, so there exists some doubt about the precise meaning of the preposition *in* as it occurs in the phrases *in cereo* and *in eo [=cereo]*. For in classical as well as in medieval Latin this preposition may be translated into English either as ‘in’ in the sense of ‘existing within’ or ‘inserted in’, or as ‘on’ in the sense of ‘lying on’ or ‘on the surface of’. The sign of the cross made *in cereo* in the latter sense implies either a tracing with the finger or thumb which leaves no visible mark upon the wax, or a cruciform anointing with oil or chrism which leaves a visible cross on the candle, however feint, against the pale background of the beeswax. A cross made *in cereo* in the former sense ensures that a permanently visible mark will be incised into the candle.

In the tenth-century Antiphonary of Leon we read: (After he has been given the candle)¹

\[ Faciens episcopus in ipso cereo \ A \ et \ \Omega \]

Now whilst the possibility should not be ruled out completely that this cross was traced with chrism, the addition of the two Greek letters would suggest that both the cross and the letters were designed to be visible to the faithful, once the Candle had been mounted in a prominent position, and that all three markings were incised into the wax of the Candle. This view is reinforced by the omission of any reference to the use of chrism in the rubrics, which are quite detailed.

According to the contemporary *Pontificale Romano-Germanicum* a cross was the only marking on the Candle.² Again there is no mention of chrism, and its use for the purpose of making the cross seems unlikely. It is tempting to see the rubric as evidence for the *incision* of a cross as opposed to one effected by chrismation, in view of the contemporary practice at Corbie, described below, and in view of the subsequent practice of the Roman Church, as recorded in later service-books.³ It must be borne in mind,

¹Page 280. ‘The bishop, making this cross on the Candle....’ For the use of this cross elsewhere, see Chapter 9 p.276.
²*Archidiaconus...facit crucem in eo,* ‘The archdeacon...makes a cross on it.’ *PRG* II §346 p.97.
³*PR XII* I xxxii.10 pp.240-1 (Suburbicarian variant); *OEL* p.60.
however, that liturgical practice in the tenth century varied markedly even within the confines of a small area; and the later Roman evidence of the twelfth century should not necessarily be regarded as corroborative for the practice of two centuries earlier.

The tenth-century Sacramentary of Corbie also records:

Faciant crucem de incenso in cereo et scribatur annus Domini, atque A et Ω.¹

In the next chapter we will argue that a cross had been incised prior to and in readiness for the reception of the five grains of incense. At Gembloux in the eleventh century it is difficult to believe that the pre-traced cross on the Candle was not incised.² Similarly, the Customary of the German Monasteries and Alcuin both record the presence of a cross on the Candle, which is almost certain to have been incised.³ Apropos of the above-mentioned Mozarabic evidence from Léon there is no mention or suggestion of the use of chrism for this purpose; and the incision of other marks on the Candle makes it almost certain that the cross had also been engraved.

The earliest indisputable references to the incision of the cross are to be found in the two Roman documents referred to above. That contained in PR XII relates to the ceremony as observed in the suburbicarian churches of Rome. They state:

cum stylo facit crucem in ipso cereo (PR XII) and (erigat cereum) scribatque in eo crucem (OEL).⁴

In both instances it is the duty of the officiating deacon to carve the cross during the ceremony and in the presence of the congregation, in the same way that the sign of the cross was made by the archdeacon according to the Gelasian sacramentaries, or by the bishop at Léon. According to an alternative tradition the cross was incised before the ceremony began. This is attested in three of the documents we have already met,⁵ and it can also be inferred with confidence at Rouen in the eleventh century, and in those Benedictine monasteries which followed strictly the regulations prescribed by Lan-

¹Let them make a cross on the Candle out of incense, and let the year of the Lord be inscribed and the letters A and Ω.² PL 78.336B
²Albers II p.99.
³Albers V p.38 and PL 101.1216B, respectively. Both date from c.AD 1000.
⁴'He incises a cross in the Candle with a stiletto' and '(let him set the Candle in position) and let him inscribe a cross on it.'
⁵Viz. Sacramentary of Corbie, the Customary of Sigibert, and the Customary of the German Monasteries. (PL 78.336B, Albers II p.99 and V p.38.)
franc. At Barking at the beginning of the fifteenth century the cross was incised on Good Friday along with the chronological information. This would suggest that it existed as much to provide guidelines for the insertion of the grains of incense as to convey to an onlooker the fact that the Easter candle had been consecrated. For the cruciform arrangement of the five grains now provided this indication of the Candle’s consecration, and so rendered the incision of a cross a preliminary act prior to the insertion of the grains. Moreover, the practice of gouging the five holes in the Candle for the reception of the grains made the cutting of a cross completely dispensable even for the purpose of providing guidelines.

In the Milanese rite the presence of a cross upon the Easter candle is first attested in the Ambrosian Missal of 1560 (fol.113). There is no reference to it in earlier missals of that rite. Since it was inscribed before the start of the ceremony and mentioned only in conjunction with the insertion of the grains of incense - which in that rite then occurred after the conclusion of the Preface - its primary purpose may have been functional: to indicate the spatial disposition of the grains.

The surviving evidence would therefore suggest that the incision of a cross on the Easter candle was a development of the earlier practice of tracing a cross with the hand in the air, a concretisation of the manual gesture, analogous perhaps to the materialisation of the incensation of the Easter candle, which resulted in the implantation in the wax of the five grains of incense in a cruciform arrangement.

(iii) The sign of the cross made with fire

In the Pontifical of Poitiers of c.900 we read (p.215):

Qui dum propter cereum venerit, inclinans se ad altare et ter signum crucis de ipsa harundine cum candela accensa faciens contra cereum, inluminat eum.

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1 *Acta Vetera*, PL 147.176C and Decrees, PL 150.446D, respectively. According to both documents the insertion of the grains of incense formed part of the preparation of the Easter candle.

2 HBS 65 p.101.

3 At Milan the marking of the cross was probably borrowed from the Roman rite, as were the five grains of incense.

4 See Chapter 7 especially pp.255-60.

5 'When he [the deacon] has approached the Easter candle, he bows towards the altar, and making the sign of the cross three times with the candle on the reed in front of the Easter candle, he lights it.'
Dom B. Capelle had no hesitation in finding the antecedents of this practice in the rubrics of the Gelasian Sacramentary. His claim that ‘Il est manifeste que le Pontifical s’inspire du Sacramentaire’ is based on doubtful linguistic similarities between the two sets of rubrics, and on the fact that in both rites there was no physical contact between the consecrator of the Candle and the Candle itself. Inevitably there will be elements common to both rites, such as the tracing of the cross in the air and the lighting of the Candle; but liturgical development that may have taken place over the period of about 150 years which separates the two documents, and the incorporation of elements, such as the serpent-shaped candle, drawn from different religious and cultural milieu, should make us very wary of speaking of the dependence of the Pontifical upon the Sacramentary in this respect.

Although the practice of placing a lighted candle on a reed is also found in three earlier ordines,\(^1\) in the contemporary PRG, and in many later documents,\(^2\) Poitiers alone records the use of this candle to trace a cross in the air in front of the Easter candle as a gesture of consecration. It is true that the rubrics of the Pontifical are much more detailed than those of the ordines; but in view of the silence of the latter documents on this point, we must conclude that the use of the lighted candle for forming the sign of the cross was unique to Poitiers.

(iv) The use of chrism for the sign of the cross

The marking of the Easter candle with a cross of chrism is found in two manuscripts relating to the Beneventan rite: the late tenth-century Missale Antiquum and a mid-eleventh-century gradual.\(^3\) They both record that a cross was traced on the wax after the Candle had been lit, but before the cry of Lumen Christi and the singing of the Exultet. The practice is also found in the Diocese of Valence\(^4\) where the Easter candle was anointed shortly before the insertion of the five grains of incense. It is just possible that a survival of this ritual action is to be found in the rite of the Church of Lyon.

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\(^1\) Viz. OR 26.9; OR 28.26; OR 29.15.
\(^2\) See Table 40 on p.193.
\(^3\) Beneventum MS Vi.33 and Rome MS Vat.lat.10673, respectively. The text describing the kindling of the new fire and the lighting of the Easter candle is given in R.-J. Hesbert, Antiphonale Missarum p.188. H.M. Bannister, who claimed (Miscellanea Ceriani p.135) that the Gradual was a fragment of an ordo ambrosianus, which preserved the ancient usage of the Milanese Church, has been shown to be in error (Hesbert, ibidem p.189). Hesbert’s conclusion was apparently unknown to Dendy (The Use of Lights p.132).
\(^4\) 1504 Missal fol.lvi.
There the grains of incense were first anointed with chrism before being inserted into the Candle. However, in the following chapter we will suggest that this may have been done for another reason (p.265).

\(v\) The origin and significance of the chrismal cross

It is not difficult to see in this act of chrismation a situation analogous to the consecration of a church or altar in the Romano-Gallican rite, which is attested as early as the tenth century, in which the anointing of inanimate objects formed part of the ceremonial; and just as the anointing of the altar and the walls of a church was commemorative of the blessing which they had received, so the chrismation of the Easter candle recalled its consecration by the deacon, and corresponded to the cross either incised into the wax or delineated by the grains of incense in other western traditions. At the same time the anointing of the Candle must also have been interpreted in a powerfully symbolic way in that it reinforced the intimate connection between the Easter candle and Baptism, recalling the chrismation of the baptizands.

Capelle would find a reference to the origin of this practice in Prudentius' poem *Inventor rutili, dux bone, luminis*, which dates from the late fourth or early fifth century, and which was sung at the daily, or possibly weekly, office of the *Lucernarium*. He cites lines 155 and 156:

\[
\text{Lumen quod famulans offero suscipe} \quad \text{(1.155)} \\
\text{Tinctum pacifici chrismatis unguine} \quad \text{(1.156)}
\]

and comments "The fine candle, which is going to illuminate the evening prayer, now that the sun's rays have disappeared, has therefore first been anointed with "peaceful chrism". This blessing forms part of the ritual, for it is quite difficult to understand this text in a purely symbolic and spiritual sense.

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1 PRG I : §52 p.144 for the anointing of the altar; §57 p.145 for the anointing of the walls of the church.
2 Interestingly, the Ambrosian Preface contains a reference to baptismal chrismation at the point where the grains of incense were formerly inserted: *Christi vero populus insignitur fronte...chrismate* (1934 Missal t.e. p.40 of *Repertorium*). This invites speculation that the word *chrismate* may once have functioned as an internal rubric, and the anointing of the Candle may have taken place at this juncture.
4 For a discussion of the Paschal elements in this hymn, see Appendix 12.
‘Let us mark the first stage: anointing—obviously in the form of a cross—with holy chrism on the wax itself. It concerns the ordinary candle. All the more does the same apply to the Easter candle.’¹

That the couplet refers to the office of the Lucernarium and in particular to the deacon’s offering of light, as Capelle says, there can be little doubt; but Capelle’s interpretation of the second line is open to question, and in particular the precise nature of the deacon’s offering. Moreover, he assumes that the Lucernarium, of which the Spanish-born Prudentius treats, is that form of the service as found in Spain; whereas there is no firm evidence to support a claim that the form of this service which Prudentius had in mind was exclusively Spanish.² There are a number of reasons why Capelle’s conclusions should be challenged.

(i) It is generally believed that the office of the Lucernarium derived its name from the fact that the lighting of a lamp (lucerna) and the offering of the light of that lamp formed the central features of that service. If this office was celebrated daily and if the lamp was anointed at each celebration, the use of a new lamp each day is implied, since the act of chrismation in all liturgical situations is normally performed only once.³ This difficulty and the belief that chrismation took place forced Capelle to assume that a fresh candle was used each day for this service. Although the use of a candle at the Lucernarium should not be ruled out, his description of the daily candle as ‘beau’ is somewhat extravagant.

(ii) It is unnecessary to translate lumen as ‘candle’ in line 156. It is true that the word may refer to the object from which the light emanates, and in later transalpine Latin it is synonymous with cereus.⁴ However, the translation of lumen in the couplet as ‘lamp’ or as ‘candle’ focuses undue attention on the participial phrase which comprises the whole of line 156. This phrase will then refer to the consecratory cross of

¹ Le beau cierge qui va illuminer la prière du soir, maintenant que se sont éteintes les clartés du jour, a donc été préalablement oint du "chrême pacifique". Bénédiction rituelle, car il est bien difficile d’entendre ce texte au sens purement symbolique et spirituel.


³ Thus Capelle. His discussion of the blessing of the Easter candle according to the Mozarabic rite in the very next paragraph begins ‘En Espagne encore...’ Admittedly, Prudentius was a Spaniard by birth and wrote poems about Spanish martyrs; but Capelle overlooks the possibility that what was true of the Lucernarium in Spain may well have been applicable to the form that the office took in Italy and in Gaul.

⁴ In Baptism, Confirmation, Ordination, and Extreme Unction; in the consecration of churches, altars, and bells; and in the blessing of the Easter candle.

⁵ Andrieu, Les Ordines Romani II p.266.
chrism and will bear the meaning of 'anointed with the unction of peace-bringing chrism'. To the present writer this seems to place the emphasis of the couplet on the fact that there is a chrismal cross on the lamp (or candle) rather than on the fact that the deacon is offering a lamp (or candle). If, on the other hand, lumen bears its primary meaning of 'light' in the sense of the emanation of illumination, tinctum may then be rendered 'diffused' and unguine will then refer to the impregnation of the air with balsam (chrismatis). This is the language of poetry; and in this couplet we surely have a reference to the use of scented lights in divine worship, attested elsewhere by Prudentius and by other writers. It would seem, therefore, that Capelle's attempt to establish a fourth-century precedent for the anointing of the Easter candle is unwarranted.

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1Peter of Paris mentions a porphyry candelabrum which was brought up from the font and carried a vase of gold, from which a wick of amianthus, set in balsam, 'diffused a great light'. (Cited by Gaillard, *Holy Week* p.110.)

The use of scented candles is mentioned by Prudentius:

nectar...guttatim lacrimis stillat olentibus,*

and by Paulinus:

*Lumina ceratisadolenturodora papyris,**

and is almost certainly referred to by the same author in:

*Sed quis odor nares allabitur aethere manans

Unde meos stringit lux inopina oculos.***

Later evidence for the use of scented candles is to be found in Gregory of Tours' description of the baptism of Clovis:

*Balsama diffunduntur, micant fragrantessodore cerei.****

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* Cathemerinon V. PL 59.820A.
** Poem XIV, PL 61.467B.
*** Poem XXV, PL 61.637D.
**** Historia Francorum II.31. PL 71.226B.
Chapter Seven

THE FIVE GRAINS OF INCENSE

(i) The development of the ceremony

The practice of inserting five grains of incense into the Easter candle in the shape of a cross is first reliably attested in the tenth-century Sacramentary of Corbie:

Faciant crucem de incenso in cereo (et scribatur annus Domini, atque A et Ω).\(^1\)

Doubts about the interpretation of the phrase *de incenso* have been expressed by Capelle.\(^2\) He argued that *de incenso* bore the meaning of 'with the fire'. He claimed that *incensum* here retained its primary meaning of 'fire', and instanced the use of the word with this meaning in two phrases, one in the Preface following the *Exultet* and the other in the prayer, *Veniat quaesumus*.\(^3\) In both instances it had undergone a shift in meaning from 'fire' to 'incense'. He also cited, as corroborative evidence, the practice at Poitiers in the ninth century of tracing a cross with a lighted candle in front of the Easter candle.

The interpretation of *incensum* as used in its original meaning in the Preface and in the *Veniat quaesumus* is generally accepted by scholars and is not in dispute here. However, it is difficult to accept Capelle's interpretation of *de incenso* within the context under discussion and to believe that the sign of the cross was made with a lighted candle, as at Poitiers. For this adjectival phrase will then have to bear the meaning of 'with the fire', a translation of *de* which is, to say the least, forced. Similarly the phrase *in cereo* will have to be rendered 'in front of the Candle' instead of 'on the Candle'.\(^4\) Apart from the fact that the clause appears to have the literal meaning of 'let them make a cross of incense on the Candle', the close association of this rubric with the directive, quoted in parenthesis, in the second half of the sentence, strongly suggests that the cross also was physically imposed upon the wax of the Candle. Moreover, the use of the impersonal *faciant* makes it difficult to envisage the tracing of a cross in the air by one

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\(^1\) 'Let them make a cross on the Candle out of incense, (and let the year of the Lord and the Greek letters A and Ω be inscribed).’ PL 78.336B (= M 106). The evidence of the Pontifical of Egbert is discussed in the next chapter, p.272 n.2.

\(^2\) *Le rite de cinq grains* p.8.

\(^3\) *Suscie incensi huius sacrificium vespertinum and super hunc incensum*, respectively. The latter phrase is found in the original version of the prayer. See also Chapter 8 passim.

\(^4\) Compare the corresponding phrase in *Poitiers* (p.215): *contra cereum*.
individual using a lighted candle. Again, the sign of the cross in *Poitiers* is made with the fire on a reed. In the absence of evidence to the contrary and in the light of later practice, it must be assumed that the cross was formed by the insertion of five grains of incense at the salient points familiar from later practice, as opposed to the embedding of two continuous lines of incense grains into the wax at right angles to each other.¹

The insertion of the grains of incense as a preliminary act prior to the blessing of the Easter candle is also enjoined in Lanfranc’s *Decrees*, in the contemporary *Acta Vet­era* of Rouen, and in the Customary of Sigibert.² It was performed at Essen in the four­teenth century; and at Barking, also in that century, the grains were inserted into a pre-incised cross on Good Friday.³ In all these instances there is no suggestion of any benediction-formula prior to their insertion, and, as decorations, they were commemorative in a way which we shall discuss presently.

Two traditions existed relating to the point in the ceremony at which the grains were inserted : (i) before the blessing of the Easter candle - already noted in the previous paragraph - and (ii) during the Preface following the *Exultet*.⁴ On account of the close rapport that existed between the insertion of the grains and the censing of the Easter candle, and because the Candle came to be censed during the Preface for the reasons we will advance in the next chapter, the latter practice became by far the more common and eventually the norm throughout the Western Church.

The censing of the Easter candle vis-à-vis grains of incense is found in three traditions, referred to, for convenience, as *modes*, and summarised below in Table 48.

At first sight the insertion of the five grains of incense into the Easter candle, immediately followed by the censing of the same (Mode C), appears puzzling; for the first action was in a sense an honouring of the Candle with incense, so that the second action would seem to be a superfluous reduplication of the first. A similar claim could be made for the ritual according to Mode B where the two actions were separated by an unspecified interval of time. Bearing in mind that liturgical practice did vary from rite to rite, it is not difficult to see in the modes three stages in the development of the incensation of the Easter candle; and to recognise that in the course of liturgical development anomalies and duplications do arise : either as a result of

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¹That this method may have been used, however, still remains a possibility.
²PL 150.466D; PL 147.176C; Albers II p.99, respectively.
³Ordinal p.66 and HBS 65 p.101, respectively.
⁴Hereafter referred to simply as the ‘Preface’. 256
misinterpretations or reinterpretations of language, or as the result of attempts to harmonise biblical symbolism with liturgical practice, or as the result of synthesising or attempting to synthesise into one ritual ceremonial actions drawn from varying liturgical milieux.
The most likely explanation for this double ritual act is perhaps to be found in the parallel development of another consecratory action involving the use of incense, which provides a credible analogy to the ritual of the grains. The Gelasian Sacramentary prescribes ‘an offering of incense upon the altar’ at the suggestion of and to underline the spiritual incense in the prayer for the consecration of an altar.¹ In practice this offering entailed the tracing with the thurible of a cross above the altar according to ninth-century and tenth-century sources. By the twelfth century the ritual had undergone a transformation: a cross made of incense grains was burned upon the altar.² Rabotin called this ‘a kind of materialisation of a primitive rite’.³ The writer believes that the censing of the Easter candle underwent a similar materialisation at an earlier period, but resulted in a transformed outcome. For, whereas the dedicatory cross of incense upon the altar was made to burn, the incense inserted into the Easter candle was, for obvious reasons, diverted from its natural use, and transformed into a permanent and visible symbol; and it is not difficult to discern the two main contributory factors which helped to bring about this change. (i) From a distance the visibility of a cross incised into a candle of bleached wax would be greatly enhanced if the arms of the cross were highlighted either by two continuous lines of incense grains arranged at right angles to each other in the incision, or by the insertion of single grains of incense at the five salient points of the cross. (ii) The identification of the Easter candle with the body⁴ of Christ, and the association of the cross, already incised into the Candle, with his suffering and death may have invited the insertion of the five grains of incense, as symbols of his wounds, at the points of the cross just referred to.

We therefore believe that the insertion of the grains of incense does comprise a duplication of the first act of incensation with the thurible in that the second ritual action both reinforced and expressed the latter in a more permanent and material way; and that this duplication of censing, attested by the six documents of Mode D, represents an intermediate stage in the development of the rite. We now tentatively suggest an outline history of the ritual, showing the stages by which the development may have occurred.

Stage 1. The censing of the Easter candle before the Exultet. There is no documentary evidence for the censing of the Easter candle at this stage of the ceremony. However, a number of observations may be made in support of our view that at an earlier period an initial act of incensation took place before the Candle was blessed. (i) We know that the

¹Mohlberg, GeV §692 p.108.
²Small heaps of incense were placed in the four corners and in the middle of the altar during the consecration, and ignited. PR XII I p.200.
³Les Grains d'Encens p.225.
⁴Medieval writers compared the wax of the Candle with the human substance of Christ. See Chapter 14 pp.307-8.
censing of other inanimate objects took place prior to their consecration, for instance, at the above-mentioned dedication of an altar in the Gelasian Sacramentary. (ii) According to the three Gelasian sacramentaries, Ordo 30A, and the Reims Sacramentary the cross is traced super cereum and the Candle is lit before the blessing. It is difficult to believe that the Candle was not censed also. (iii) The relevant descriptions in the above-mentioned documents are short and contain only a minimum of detail. Mention of a routine action, such as incensation, is almost likely to have been omitted. (iv) It is difficult to account otherwise for the insertion of the grains of incense in the rites of those churches listed in Mode A, and to believe that they were originally inserted merely as decorations.

Stage 2. We suggested above that the insertion of the grains of incense represents a materialisation of the act of incensation. The presence of the grains of incense on the Candle, therefore, prior to its being blessed (Mode A) presupposes that an act of incensation had already occurred. The grains thus embedded as a permanent and visible indication that the Easter candle had been honoured with incense, the action of censing with the thurible was either seen to be superfluous, since in effect the Candle had been censed twice, with the result that it disappeared from the ceremonial; or it was transferred to another point in the ceremony - a situation which we find in Stage 3.

Stage 3. The censing of the Easter candle during the Preface and the reasons which led to the occurrence of that ritual act midway through the laus cerei are dealt with at length in Chapter 8. In some churches the grains of incense continued to be inserted prior to the blessing of the Candle; but, having lost their close rapport with the former initial act of incensation, now assume an almost-decorative function. This stage in the development of the ritual of the grains vis-à-vis the censing of the Easter candle is to be identified with Mode C (p.257). (In the churches included in Mode B the cruciform materialisation of the act of censing the Easter candle had not taken place.)

Stage 4...Here the censing of the Easter candle and the materialisation of that action in the form of the insertion of the five grains of incense into the Candle both occur during the Preface. This corresponds to Mode D.

Stage 5. We now reach the final phase in the development of the ritual. Here we must envisage a situation in which the incensation of the Easter candle during the Preface was regarded as an unnecessary duplication, as it were, of the insertion of the five grains of incense. Since the presence of the grains in the wax provided visible and permanent

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1For references, see Chapter 6 p.246.
evidence that the Candle had been honoured with incense, the censing of the Candle with the thurible ceased to be carried out. We believe that this development had occurred in the earlier Romano-Gallican rite from which the later medieval Roman rite derived.

(ii) The significance of the five grains of incense

It is possible to identify three main traditions relating to the use of the five grains of incense.

1. The negative use of the grains of incense.

Since liturgical development was never uniform and variety of practice could and did occur even within one small geographical area, it is perhaps not surprising to find that the ritual of the grains did not feature in the ceremonial of a considerable number of churches during the Middle Ages. Table 49 lists some of the churches in whose service-books there is no mention of the grains of incense.

The insertion of the grains of incense was unknown in the ancient rites of Beneventum, Braga, Milan, and Toledo; and it is clear from the table below that the absence of this feature was not confined to any particular geographical area. The Missal of Breslau contains a prayer for the blessing of the incense (fol.lxxix). Interestingly, this prayer, Veniat quaesumus, is the second of the four prayers prescribed in that missal for the blessing of the fire, and occupies the same position as the corresponding prayer in the Durham Missal. In the latter church this was a prayer for the blessing of the incense in the thurible. It should be borne in mind that the absence of rubrics relating to the grains of incense does not necessarily imply that the ritual was unknown in that rite. The presence of eight Benedictine houses in the above list shows that liturgical practice was not uniform in the monasteries of that order, a fact not unnoticed by Lanfranc.

2. The cross of incense grains as a decoration.

We noted above on page 259 that in churches in which the grains of incense had been inserted into the Easter candle before the ceremony began, they had come to be regarded almost as markers highlighting the five salient points of the cross, rather than

1It is just possible that the reason for the silence of some of the documents in the above list lies in the fact that the grains of incense had been inserted before the start of the ceremony.

2Decrees. PL 150.467B
Table 49.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Document/Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leon*</td>
<td>10 C</td>
<td>Antiphonary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainz</td>
<td>c.950</td>
<td>PRG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ripoll</td>
<td>1038</td>
<td>Sacramentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneventum</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Missale Antiquum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evesham</td>
<td>c.1250</td>
<td>Ritual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>c.1265</td>
<td>Customary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marseille</td>
<td>13 C</td>
<td>ILEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westminster</td>
<td>c.1370</td>
<td>Missal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Germain des Prés</td>
<td>1394</td>
<td>DAMR 3.15 p.142 (M 1165)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary's, York</td>
<td>c.1400</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>14 C</td>
<td>Missal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongres</td>
<td>14 C</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan*</td>
<td>1475</td>
<td>Missal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braga*</td>
<td>15 C</td>
<td>King, LPS p.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saintes</td>
<td>c.1500</td>
<td>Missal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passau</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>Missal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambrai</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>Missal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamburg</td>
<td>1511</td>
<td>Missal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breslau</td>
<td>1519</td>
<td>Missal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumièges</td>
<td>†</td>
<td>Ordinal (De Vert II p.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontivy</td>
<td>†</td>
<td>Ritual (&quot;&quot;&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Vincent, Metz</td>
<td>†</td>
<td>Ordinal (&quot;&quot;&quot;)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† De Vert does not mention the date.

* The ritual of the grains was subsequently introduced as a result of Roman or monastic influence into the rite of Toledo in 1500, of Braga in 1512, and of Milan in 1560, according to the respective missals for those years.

as visible symbols recalling the incensation of the Candle. This is almost certainly borne out by the fact that there is no instance from those places where the grains were inserted prior to the blessing of the Easter candle that they themselves received a blessing. It is also significant that in five of the six\(^1\) medieval instances in which the insertion of the grains featured as a preliminary act, other insignia were also placed on the Candle as part of its preparation. Only the *Acta Vetera* of Rouen is silent on this point. A number of churches, listed in Table 50a, record the insertion of the incense grains during the Preface as a decorative and commemorative act. There is no benediction-formula for these grains, which seem to serve chiefly as the means of delineating the cross on the Easter candle, and only secondarily as reminders that in former times the Candle had been censed during the Preface.

\(^{1}\)The documents are listed in Mode A and Mode C on p.257.
The documents in Table 50b prescribe the insertion of the grains during the Preface and do not include a prayer for their blessing. However, since they also omit any prayers for the blessing of the fire, they have been listed separately. It should be noted that the first, second, and fourth documents in Table 50b also enjoin the inscribing of other insignia on the Candle as part of its preparation.

3. The representational function of the incense grains.

In Chapter 14 we shall discuss the symbolism of the Easter candle, and the shift in emphasis regarding the nature and significance of the Candle. In the same way that the whole Candle - flame, wax, and wick - came to represent different aspects of the human nature of Christ, in addition to symbolising his divine light, so the grains of incense, decorative attachments recalling the incensation of the Candle, assumed a more realistic function and became vivid representations of the wounds of Christ in the wax that was his ‘flesh’. This developed from a modification or change in two aspects of the ritual (i) A blessing came to be pronounced over the grains prior to their insertion into the Candle. (ii) It became the practice in places to bear the incense grains in procession along with the new fire. As a result they acquired greater prominence within the ceremonial, achieving an importance almost on a par with the new fire. At Lyon the anointing of the grains almost certainly recalled the treatment of Christ’s wounds.

The ritual involving the blessing and insertion into the Candle of the five grains of incense developed along three different lines.
Mode I. The grains are:
(a) blessed shortly after the commissioning of the new fire;
(b) carried in procession (in churches where a procession is held);
(c) inserted into the Candle at the words *suscipe, sancte pater...incensi* of the Preface.

This is the mode that was ultimately adopted by the great majority of churches in the West mainly through Roman or monastic influence. It is first attested in the twelfth-century *Pontificale Romanum*,¹ though there is no procession according to that document, and in a contemporary Premonstratensian sacramentary.² The aspersion and censing of the grains, though absent from the 1474 *Missale Romanum*, featured in the Roman Missal of 1570 and entered the Ambrosian rite in the revised Missal of 1902.

Mode II. The grains are blessed and inserted *during* the Preface. This mode is found in the following rites:³

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evesham</td>
<td>(c.1250)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Vedast, Arras</td>
<td>(c.1300)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seville</td>
<td>(1507)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braga</td>
<td>(1512)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rennes</td>
<td>(1523)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troyes</td>
<td>(1736)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At Braga the first of the two prayers used for the blessing of the grains began during the Preface at the words *in huius igitur noctis*; the second presumably finished in time for the grains to be inserted at the usual place (*suscipe, sancte pater*). At Rennes the incense was also aspersed at this point. We are not told the precise point at which the incense grains were blessed in any of the other churches.

Mode III. The grains are blessed and inserted before the *Exultet*. This third tradition occurred in the rites of the group of churches in France, listed in *Table 51*.

This variant recalls the practice of inserting the five grains of incense prior to the blessing of the Easter candle, which was attested in the six medieval instances in *Table 48 (Modes A and C)*; but derives from an older tradition in which the Easter candle was

¹*PR XII* I pp.238-40.
²Weyns p.69 (Manuscript B).
³Respective references: HBS 6 col.91; HBS 86 p.160; Missal fol.lxxviii; Missal np; Missal fol.lxxiii; Missal p.27.
was kindled before the singing of the *Exultet*. All five churches, listed in Table 51, preserve this feature; and in all, except Meaux, the Easter candle was lit prior to the insertion of the grains.

The reformed Mozarabic rite, as authorised by the *Missale Mixtum* of 1500, strictly falls into this category, *Mode III*. However, since the ceremonial it prescribes was the result of an attempt to harmonise two different traditions, the insertion of the grains before the lighting of the Easter candle was deliberately contrived and not the result of normal liturgical development.

(iii) *The insertion of the grains of incense*

The implantation of the grains of incense into the Easter candle prior to the commencement of the Vigil, or even prior to the chanting of the *Exultet*, enabled those involved in the preparation of the Candle to ensure that the grains were embedded securely in the wax. With the insertion of the grains during the *laus cerei* the possibility always existed that one or more of the grains might fall from the wax through the failure of the resin to adhere to the Candle for one reason or another. We therefore find that the directions in a number of service-books⁴ state that the five small holes should previously have been gouged out of the side of the Candle in readiness for the reception of the grains; and until 1955 this practice was officially sanctioned by the Church of Rome. Desideri adds the sensible advice that the holes should be lower than the part of

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1 Bourges, Le Puy, and Périgueux belong to a subgroup whose ceremonial is characterised not only by the use of the prayer *D.D.N.qui suscepisti* for the blessing of the grains of incense, but by the survival of the *Veniat quae sumus* as a preliminary blessing of the Easter candle. Amiens too might be classed with these three churches, except that in the former church the grains were inserted into the Candle *more Romano* during the Preface.

2 For the text of these formulas (V) and (a), see Appendix 5.

3 The use of the *Veniat quae sumus* for the blessing of the Easter candle belongs to the same ancient tradition.

4 Ordo of Nidaros p.232; Strasbourg Ordinal (*DAER 4.24* p.162); Besançon Ceremonial p.314; Paris Ceremonial p.374; 1488 Missal of Basel fol.xcii; 1498 Missal of Prague fol.xci.
the Candle which will burn.\(^1\) A rubric from Magdeburg states that the incense should be inserted \textit{sub signo crucis}.\(^2\) This may be interpreted ‘in the form of a cross’ or ‘under the sign of the cross’. The former interpretation is to be preferred in view of the almost-universal observance of the cruciform arrangement.

At Lyon the grains were first warmed so as to soften the wax, and then anointed with chrism before being affixed.\(^3\) Rome also allowed the application of heat.\(^4\) It is recorded that at Valence the grains were embedded into the salient points of an incised cross which had first been anointed with chrism.\(^5\) This oil in the above-mentioned instances may also have acted as an adhesive; although we have suggested an alternative origin for the use of the chrism at Lyon.\(^6\) It was also recommended that the grains should be large, or that several grains should be fused together so as to be conspicuous at a distance. In more recent times the grains have sometimes been held in wooden or metal cases to which a spike has been attached for their insertion into the wax. As a result the devices have been referred to as \textit{nails}. The term is also used of the small spike of red wax with a grain of incense in its head, which is infixed into a specially-prepared cavity. Both the word \textit{nail} and the colour of the wax which highlights the grains against the pale background of the Easter candle, appropriately reinforce the symbolism of the incense. (See Section (v).)

As a result of the liturgical reforms of 1955 the primitive practice was restored: the grains were thenceforth to be inserted immediately before the Easter candle was lit, and subsequently blessed.\(^7\) In the Roman Missal of 1970 there is no reference to the insertion and blessing of the grains. All markings on the Easter candle have now been made optional.\(^8\)

Traditionally the grains of incense have been inserted by the officiating deacon or the priest who acts for the deacon. According to the Customary of St Bénigne, Dijon\(^9\) the \textit{armarius} performed this task while the deacon was censing the Easter candle. At

\(\begin{align*}
1^{\text{Praxis}}\text{ p.150.} \\
2^{\text{1503 Missal fol.xciii.}} \\
3^{\text{1838 Ceremonial p.481.}} \\
4^{\text{Fortescue and O'Connell (6th ed.) p.343.}} \\
5^{\text{1504 Missal fol.liii.}} \\
6^{\text{See p.252.}} \\
7^{\text{Diekmann p.129.}} \\
8^{\text{1970 Missale Romanum p.267; Harbert p.236. The Milanese rite follows Roman practice in this respect (1981 Missale Ambrosianum p.243), as does the recently-revised Anglican service (Lent, Holy Week, Easter p.229).}} \\
9^{\text{Martène, DAMR 3.15.7 p.142 (M 1150).}}
\end{align*}\)
St Vedast, Arras and at Cordoba the sacristan gave the deacon one grain to insert, and himself infixed the other four.¹ At the Cathedral of St John Lateran the grains had to be of the purest incense.²

According to the rubrics of the vast majority of provincial and diocesan rites the grains began to be inserted following the words curvat imperia in the Preface. In the next chapter we shall observe why this was thought to be an apposite juncture for carrying out the insertions. It also provided a suitable point in the Preface at which to pause. In some sources³ the break is prescribed at the words in huius igitur noctis, in others⁴ at sacrificium vespertinum; whilst in a number of service-books⁵ it is enjoined at suscipe, sancte pater. These slight variations did not substantially affect the performance of this ritual action, and different interpretations based on these variations are not justified. Since there is no indication to the contrary in the rubrics of any service-book, we must assume that the deacon interrupted his singing at the point indicated by the words, in order to insert the grains into the Candle; and that on the completion of this duty he resumed his chanting of thelaus. At Cologne, however, the rubrics in the Missal of 1495 specify a fixed point in the Preface for the insertion of each grain (fol.cxxv). Within the sentence beginning in huius igitur noctis the following arrangement is found:

1st grain inserted at suscipe
2nd grain inserted at vespertinum
3rd grain inserted at oblationem
4th grain inserted at solenni
5th grain inserted at apum

Subsequent missals of Cologne present a difficulty; for whilst they specify the moment for each insertion, they refer to only four grains.

¹HBS 86 p.160 and 1561 Missal fol.cix, respectively.
²OEL p.61.
³For instance, Haymo (OM), HBS 85 p.205 and Customary of St-Germain-des-Prés, DAMR 3.15.7 p.142 (M 1165).
⁴For instance, PR XII 1 p.240 and 1561 Missal of Cordoba fol.cix.
⁵Ordinal of St Vedast, Arras (HBS 86 p.160); 1481 Missal of Verdun; 1519 Missal of Aquileia fol.91.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1514 Missal</th>
<th>1525 Missal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st grain at <em>suscipe</em></td>
<td>1st grain at <em>suscipe</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd grain at <em>vespertinum</em></td>
<td>2nd grain at <em>vespertinum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd grain at <em>solemnis</em></td>
<td>3rd grain at <em>per ministrorum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th grain at <em>manus</em></td>
<td>4th grain at <em>de operibus</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reduction in the number of grains from five to four is inexplicable from the evidence of the missals alone. The only other known instance where only four grains of incense were used occurs in a fourteenth-century ordinary of the Collegiate Church at Essen. Here four grains of incense occupied the outer points of the cross. However, although some connection could be argued on the grounds of the geographical proximity of the two cities, additional evidence is required before a liturgical link between the two churches can be established. Moreover, the central grain at Essen consisted of myrrh, not incense.¹

Now the 1518 Missal of Ratisbon records that the grains of incense were inserted at the words *in odore(m) suavitatis* (fol.xcvii). In the next chapter we shall argue that the lighting of the Easter candle at *suscipe, sancte pater* indicated that *incensi* (the following word) had retained its original meaning of ‘fire’ within this context. It is, therefore, just possible that the Ratisbon Missal preserves the original point in the Preface at which the Easter candle was censed, since these words invited the incensation of the Candle almost as an internal rubric.

We have shown that the five salient points of the incised cross provided the obvious places at which to impress the grains into the wax of the Candle. Contemporary practice is to insert them in the form of a Greek cross; and illustrations from manuals² of the past, which prescribe the order for the insertion of the grains, would suggest that this shape has long been traditional. However, at Le Puy, Nantes, and La Rochelle a Latin cross was used.³ The grains were normally inserted in the order shown below, regardless of the shape of the cross. This corresponds to the personal sign of the cross in the Western Church in which the cross-stroke is made from left to right.

```
    1
   4 2 5
    3
```

¹Ordinary p.66.
²For example, Martinucci II p.242 and Merati p.81.
³1783 Missal p.160; 1837 Missal p.203; 1835 Missal p.191, respectively.
At Auch\(^1\) and at Toulouse\(^2\) the grains were arranged in the form a five-pointed star. This shape was, according to De Vert (II p.37), suggested by the occurrence of *vespertinum* in the above-mentioned phrase from the Preface, the word being the adjectival form of *vesper*, ‘the evening star’.

At Salisbury, Exeter, and in the Gilbertine houses there existed a choice of affixing the grains either to the Easter candle or to the candelabrum which supported it.\(^3\) The phrase *si attingi potest* in the Gilbertine Ordinal suggests that the Easter candle might be beyond the reach of the deacon’s hands if the candlestick was very tall. The practice of affixing the grains to the false stock of the Candle was forbidden according to a nineteenth-century ceremonial of Lyon.\(^4\) It maintained that the union of the grains with the wax was a prerequisite of a valid benediction of the Candle; and that the drops of wax that fell into the baptismal waters were inefficacious, since the Easter candle had not received an authentic blessing. At Salisbury, Angers, and in the churches of the Diocese of Lyon, grains were also inserted into the *cereus minor*, the smaller Easter candle that was carried to the font.\(^5\)

(iv) *The grains of incense at Milan*

The ceremony of the grains of incense in the Ambrosian rite has an interesting history in that we plot its gradual adoption from the Roman rite in three stages. (i) In the Missal of 1475 the Easter candle is censed at the conclusion of the Preface (fol.1xxxi). There is no mention of the grains of incense. (ii) According to the Missal of 1560 five grains of incense are inserted into the salient points of a pre-traced cross after the incensation of the Candle which follows the deacon’s song (fol.113). (iii) In the Missal of 1594 we find that the grains are now inserted during the Preface at the words *chrismate, non cruore* (fol.95). This is almost certainly the result of Roman influence; for the

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\(^1\)Feasey, *The Paschal Preconium* p.252.
\(^2\)De Vert II p.37. He refers to some other churches without specifying them.
\(^3\)Sarum Missal (Warren) p.270; HBS 37 p.322; HBS 59 p.40, respectively.
\(^4\)1838 Ceremonial p.479.
\(^5\)Sarum Missal (Warren) p.270; 1731 Ceremonial p.261; 1838 Ceremonial p.479, respectively.
Candle, formerly lit before the singing of the *Exultet*, now receives its flame also during the *laus*. The Preface in the Roman rite had been characterised by these ritual interruptions since the twelfth century.¹

(v) The symbolism of the grains of incense

Medieval commentators were not slow to find biblical echoes in the use of the five grains of incense, and to attach symbolic interpretations to them. We therefore encounter symbolism at two levels: that recalling and suggested by two incidents in the Gospel narrative, and that which had wider theological implications.

(a) Writing c.1111 Rupert of Deutz,² followed by Sicardus and later Durandus,³ saw represented in the grains of incense the spices and ointment which the women brought to the grave of Jesus. In general detractors of medieval symbolism, such as Capelle,⁴ have not been slow to point out that the body of Jesus was anointed with myrrh and aloes, and not with incense (John 19:39). Their criticisms, however, have been largely unjustified on two counts. (i) A symbol is but one object representing another object, and by the very nature of a symbol cannot be that which it represents. The incense was understood to represent the women's myrrh because of the redolent properties characteristic of both substances; and its use was all the more apposite in those churches in which the grains of incense were carried in procession from the new fire to the Easter candle. (ii) Incense and myrrh are not dissimilar substances. In fact, in some types of incense myrrh is an ingredient. The correspondence between the incense, and the myrrh and aloes brought by the women, was further suggested by the relative points during the Roman Preface at which the grains were inserted and the Easter candle was lit. For the Resurrection, symbolised by the lighting of the Candle, did not take place until after the embalming.

¹Unlike the interruptions in the Roman Preface, which follow each other at fairly short intervals and which are largely determined by words acting almost as internal rubrics (p. XXX and p. 316), those in the Ambrosian Preface occur at the end of well-defined sections, and divide the *laus* into four more or less equal parts. The wording of those phrases in the Preface at which the three actions occur (viz. the lighting of the Candle, the affixing of the grains, and the illumination of the church lights) is not unrelated to the nature of those actions. Of particular relevance here is the action involving the grains and the sentence from the Preface which invites that action: *Christi vero populus insignitur fronte, non inguine; lavacro, non vulnere; chrismate, non cruore*. Here this Roman-derived ritual action of inserting the grains bears little, if any, relationship to the post-prefatiorial act of incensation that occurred in the Milanese rite. The cross formed by the grains of incense is symbolic and anticipatory of the chrismal cross of Baptism.

²*De Div.Off.* V, PL 170.173C.

³*Mitrale*, PL 213.324A and *Rationale* VI.80 p.351, respectively.

⁴Le rite des cinq grains p.11. Van Doren on the other hand was equally dogmatic: 'Ils ne doivent pas représenter les clous de la croix. Ils signifient, d'après les liturgistes, les onguents précieux dont on entoura le corps du Seigneur.' *Le cièrge paschal* p.75.
The infixing of the five grains of incense into the Candle also recalled the five wounds of Jesus. The symbolism, which is still associated with the grains, is first mentioned by Durandus c.1280;¹ but it is difficult to believe that the identification of the grains with the wounds was not made much earlier. For the increase in the ceremonial importance of the grains, noted earlier in this chapter, is almost certainly linked with the symbolic identification of the wax of the Easter candle with the human flesh of Christ. Again, Capelle’s objection to the symbolism on the grounds of the lack of positional correspondence is somewhat unjustified. A symbol does not necessarily mirror an object in every small detail.

(b) At a theological level the grains of incense had a more profound and also a double significance. For, since they were inserted at the words sacrificium vespertinum, they not only recalled the evening sacrifice in the Temple under the dispensation of the Old Law, which itself prefigured the sacrifice of Christ;² They also vividly suggested the sacrifice of Christ himself for three reasons. The grains were inserted into his body; they were disposed in a cruciform arrangement and recalled the Cross; in the Middle Ages the ceremony had come to take place at the time of day corresponding to the hours of the Crucifixion. From a less objective point of view but still within a sacrificial context, the grains of incense together with the flame of the Candle symbolised the sacrifice or offering of the people to God by the people and on behalf of the people.³

¹Rationale VI.80 p.351.
²Beleth, Rationale, PL 202.11D; Zazzera p.299.
³Parvio, Manuale, p.213.
Chapter Eight

THE INCENSATION OF THE EASTER CANDLE

The use of incense in the ceremony of the Easter candle belongs strictly to a study of the history of that element; but the prominence of the five grains of incense in the ceremonial necessitates some study of the use of incense in order to account for presence of those grains within the ritual. The attempt to trace the history and development of the use of incense within the ceremonial from the surviving documentary evidence is fraught with difficulties. Practices involving its use, inherited from differing liturgical traditions, could vary markedly even throughout one small geographical area. At times a document has few rubrics and much has to be understood. At times the rubrics, because of their brevity, are either vague or ambiguous. With regard to the latter type of directives perhaps the greatest difficulty has been in deciding how to interpret the stark instruction 'A prayer for the blessing of the incense', where it is not clear whether incense relates to the substance in the thurible with which the new fire or the Easter candle is to be censed, or whether the word refers to the five grains later to be inserted into the Easter candle.

In Chapter 7 we looked at the close and intimate connection which the writer believes existed between the censing of the Easter candle and the affixing of the five grains of incense, and traced the development that occurred in the use of the grains of incense vis-à-vis the incensation of the Candle. In this chapter we shall consider the incensation of the Easter candle, noting the three points during the ceremony when this ritual act is known or is thought to have occurred, viz. prior to, during, and following the blessing of the Easter candle.

(i) Incensation before the Exultet. Direct evidence for an initial act of incensation is wanting; but we have tried to show in the previous chapter that the insertion of the five grains of incense prior to the blessing of the Easter candle presupposes that this ritual act at one time occurred at this stage of the ceremony. Although evidence is again lacking, it is possible that an initial act of incensation of the Candle was transferred to the newly-kindled fire, if a distinction is made between the censing of the fire and the censing of the Easter candle. For, if a situation had formerly existed in which the censing of the Candle had been followed by the insertion of the five grains of incense, and if, as we argued in the previous chapter, this was seen as a duplication of the act of

* Such a transfer could explain why the new fire was censed after it had been aspersed. In all other instances of blessings incensation precedes aspersion.
incensation, it is not unreasonable to believe that the action involving the thurible was transferred to the new fire; whilst the presence of the grains on the Candle were held to be tantamount to its being censed.

(ii) Evidence for the incensation of the Easter candle *during* the Preface is plentiful,¹ and dates from the eleventh century, if not the tenth.² It must be assumed that the incense was first blessed before it was used to honour the Candle; but this is not always stated in the sources. For instance, it is not mentioned by Lanfranc. However, according to the eleventh-century *Acta VETERA*³ of Rouen the incense was blessed with the *Veniat quaesumus* after the procession had returned into church; and at Durham and St Germain des Prés,⁴ and almost certainly at Norwich and Westminster,⁵ the incense was

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¹For the 18 instances of this practice, see Modes B, C, and in Table 48 on p.257.  
²There are two documents from this century which may attest the practice. (i) According to the Sacramentary of Corbie (PL 78.336B) the bishop blesses both the new fire and the incense while the deacon is consecrating the Easter candle. Unfortunately there is no indication as to whether the incense was used to cense the new fire or the Candle, or both. (It is true that a cross of incense had been placed on the Candle prior to the start of the ceremony; but it is most unlikely that it is this incense which the bishop blesses.) (ii) The evidence of the Pontifical of Egbert is more problematical. It contains the following rubric (p.130):

*Benedictio incensi in Sabbato Sancto antequam benediceris cereum, et ipsum debes mitti in cereum in ipso loco ubi dicitur suscipe incensi.*

and is followed by Formula (b) for the blessing of the incense (Appendix 5). The rubric is generally cited as an early instance - Thurston claimed it was the earliest (*Holy Saturday* p.14) - of the practice of inserting the five grains of incense into the Candle (Rabotin p.222; Capelle, *Le rite des cinq grains* p.9); but, if so, it antedates the next oldest rubric for the blessing of the grains by about 200 years. Now it is not impossible that an isolated piece of evidence such as this should have survived from a minor liturgical milieu; but the interval of time which separates it and the evidence from Corbie raises some doubt about its authenticity. Since, however, the *terminus post quem* for this document is AD 1000, even allowing for the possibility that this rubric is an interpolation, a closer examination of the language of the rubric would not be out of place. For the use of the second person singular strongly suggests that the directive is the addition of a later hand

The second part of the rubric is generally rendered: '...and you ought to put it (*ipsum*) into the Candle at the very point where the words *suscipe sancte* occur' on the assumption that *ipseum* refers to the five grains of incense. The writer, however, would suggest that *ipseum*, which is singular, refers, not to the grains, but to the thurible of incense, since he is of the opinion that *mitti* here has its basic meaning of 'send' or 'direct', and that *in cereum* should be rendered 'towards the Candle' or 'against the Candle'. Moreover, the rubricist has distinguished carefully between the use of the preposition *in* meaning 'in' or 'on' and suggesting position, and *in* governing the accusative case and conveying the notion of forward movement.

The clause *ipseum debes mitti in cereum* will then be interpreted 'you ought to cense the Candle'. If the suggestion is correct, the Pontifical should now be cited as evidence for the *censing* of the Easter candle in the tenth century, but not for the insertion of the grains.

³PL 147.176C.  
⁴Missal p.186 and *DAER* 4.24 p.158 (M 250), respectively.  
⁵HBS 82 p.91 and HBS 5 col.576, respectively.
hallowed at the same time as the fire. At Evesham the blessing took place during the Preface. At St-Germain-des-Prés and at Evesham the deacon circumambulated the Easter candle as he swung the censer.

Apropos of the censing of the Easter candle during the laus cerei it was Claude de Vert who first drew attention to the fact that in the following invocation in the Preface

\[
\textit{suscipe, sancte Pater, incensi huius sacrificium vespertinum}
\]

\textit{incensi} had come to be interpreted ‘incense’ as a result of a shift in meaning which the word had undergone. There seems little doubt that, at the time that the Preface was composed, \textit{incensum} signified ‘fire’; and that this is how the word was originally interpreted within the above-quoted context. Confirmation of this view is to be found in the 1518 Missal of Ratisbon (fol.cxvii) in which we encounter what appears to be an intermediate stage in the development of the ceremonial. For the rubric states that the Candle should be lit at \textit{suscipe, sancte Pater}, and that the grains of incense should be inserted at \textit{in odore(m) suavitatis}. We have suggested on page 267 that the incensation of the Candle may originally have occurred at the latter point in the Preface, and may have subsequently been transferred under the influence of \textit{incensi} to the earlier position. Only at Ratisbon, it would appear, did the earlier practice survive. In the Ordinary of Tongres the Easter candle is lit at \textit{suscipe, sancte Pater}; but it contains no rubrics relating to the grains of incense.

In the \textit{laus cerei} the dominant theme of Christ’s resurrection is vividly supplemented by the contrast between the darkness of night, which symbolises the evil and wickedness of the old order, and the re-emergence and triumph of the light of Christ, of which the Easter candle with its bright flame, is the symbol. The change in the interpretation of \textit{incensi} not only detracted from the centrality of the Candle’s light, but introduced into the blessing of the Candle the offering of incense in addition to the offering of the Candle and its light - and this occurred at the beginning of a new section of the \textit{laus}. The offering of incense now having been introduced into the text of the Preface,

\begin{itemize}
\item[1] HBS 6 col.90, at the words \textit{Haec nox est in qua}.
\item[2] DAMR 3.15.7 p.142 (M 1165) and HBS 6 col.92, respectively.
\item[3] Explication II p.35.
\item[4] Literally ‘that which has been kindled’.
\item[5] The English translation of \textit{OHS} ‘this evening sacrifice of burning light’ restored the original and correct interpretation of \textit{incensi} (Diekmann p.135). Sadly, ICEL were content with ‘the sacrifice of praise’ for the Roman Missal of 1970 (\textit{PJS}M p.322).
\end{itemize}
the way was now open for an act of incensation to take place at the words which made
reference to that element; and this in turn resulted in the insertion of the five grains of
incense into the Candle at this precise point.

It was perhaps inevitable that *incensi* should undergo this shift in meaning from
‘fire’ to ‘incense’; for according to Amalarius¹ the altar at Vespers was censed at the
second verse of Psalm 140:

Dirigatur oratio mea sicut incensum in conspectu tuo: elevatio manuum meaurum
sacrificium vespertinum.

The verse was particularly apposite *vis-à-vis* the invocation in the Preface since (i) the
deacon’s prayer was being offered *in conspectu tuo*; (ii) the words of the psalm *incen-
sum* and *sacrificium vespertinum* were directly paralleled in the Preface; and (iii), as we
noted in Chapter 6, in some churches² the sign of the cross was traced in the air at the
word *incensi* - an action possibly echoing the *elevatio manuum* of the psalm.

(iii) The censing of the Easter candle *after* the Preface occurs in the Ambrosian
rite at Milan. Though not mentioned by Beroldus in the twelfth century, it is prescribed
in the Ambrosian Missal of 1475 (fol.lxxxi) and in the revised Missal of 1902.³ In the
revision of the Ambrosian rite following the Second Vatican Council, the incensation of
the Easter candle still takes place at the conclusion of the Preface.⁴ This contrasts with
the revised Roman rite in which incensation takes place prior to the *preconium*. The
Milanese practice is also found at Essen in the fourteenth century;⁵ and may also have
featured at Ripoll and at Saintes. For at the Spanish monastery a prayer for the blessing
of the incense follows the Preface;⁶ whilst at Saintes a rubric indicates that the benedic-
tion of the element occurred at the same juncture.⁷

¹*De Eccl.Off.* IV.7, PL 105.1181C.
²*PRG* II §347 p.98.
⁴1986 *Messale Ambrosiano* p.59.
⁵*Ordinary* p.66.
⁶Sacramentary p.92.
⁷Missal of c.1500 fol.lxxxi.
Chapter Nine

THE INSIGNIA ON THE EASTER CANDLE

(i) Alpha and Omega

The delineation of the two Greek letters A and Ω on the Easter candle is attested in surprisingly few documents. It is found in the Sacramentary of Corbie and in the contemporary tenth-century Mozarabic Antiphonary of Léon,\(^1\) in the twelfth-century Pontificale Romanum and in two other closely-related Roman documents,\(^2\) and in the fourteenth-century Ordinal of Essen (p. 58). Their occurrence in the so-called suburbicarian tradition recorded in PR XII and their presence in the Sacramentary of Corbie point to a Gallican provenance for the practice. In Appendix 11 we argue that the Easter candle together with the markings on the Candle entered the Mozarabic rite as a result of Gallican influence.

It is generally believed that the A and Ω were depicted on the Easter candle to indicate that Christ was Lord of the Ages and 'potentate of time'; and to a point this is true. However, the inclusion of the date, that is, the number of years from the Incarnation, also on the surface of the Candle, rendered the two Greek emblems superfluous, in that the date also came to represent the same concept and to signify Christ's sovereignty over time. It is almost certain that for this reason the depicting of A and Ω on the Candle generally fell into desuetude, surviving only in isolated instances in the later Middle Ages, such as at the Collegiate Church in Essen.\(^3\)

Although it is unknown when the two Greek letters were first inscribed on the Easter candle, it is not difficult to discern the reason for their delineation. In earlier times the Paschal vigil was observed in an expectation of the second coming of Christ, and in commemoration of the Resurrection, the event which had ushered in the New Age. Nor is it difficult to realise why, within the other-worldly context of the Paschal liturgy, the eschatological name or attribute of Christ, found in St John’s Revelation (20:6), should be chosen and used both to identify the Candle with Christ within this eschatologically liturgical context, and to indicate to the faithful the identity of the Candle.\(^4\) The depicting on the Candle of this title from Scripture is reminiscent of the

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\(^1\) PL 78.336B (M 106) and Antiphonary p. 280, respectively.

\(^2\) PR XII I xxxii.10 p. 241 (suburbicarian variant); OEL p. 60; Pontifical of Apamea (DAER 4.24 p. 160).

\(^3\) Ordinary p. 58.

\(^4\) Especially if the Candle was of very modest proportions.
practice within the Orthodox tradition of including the name or an abbreviation of the name on the icon of a saint. The inscribing of the earthly name of Jesus may have seemed inapposite within the futuristic context of the liturgy, being evocative of the inscription above the Cross, and in some way diverting attention towards the Passion rather than anticipating the Resurrection and the Second Coming.

In two manuscripts\(^1\) a pictorial representation is preserved of the two letters in a spatial relationship to the cross. Presumably they bear some likenesses to the devices actually delineated on the Easter candles. The later and more elaborately-designed device from Essen also incorporates the Chi-Rho monogram and a trio of crosses, symbolising the Trinity rather than echoing Golgotha.

\[\text{Figure 1 (Léon)} \quad \text{Figure 2 (Essen)}\]

The similarity of the position of A and Ω in both devices suggests that the two crosses derive from a common ancestor in spite of the differences in time and location which separate their respective delineations. The position of the letters at the extremities of the arms of the cross suggests that they represent the notion that time belongs to and is held in the hands of Christ, even when he is on the cross.

(ii) The Year

Earlier liturgical commentators\(^2\) cited the following passage from Bede's De Temporum Ratione, written in AD 725, as early evidence for the inscribing of the year on the Easter candle:

\[\text{Antiphonary of Léon p.280 and Ordinal of Essen p.58.}\]
\[\text{For instance, Novarinus p.17 (\text{c.1635}); Martène, \text{DAER} 4.24.7 (c.1700).}\]
Sancta quidem Romana et apostolica Ecclesia hanc se fidem tenere et ipsis testatur indiculis, quae suis in cereis annuatim scribere solet, ubi tempus dominicae passio­nis in memoriam populis revocans, numerum annorum triginta semper et tribus annis minorem quam ab eius incarnatione Dionysius ponat, adnotat. Denique anno ab eius incarnatione iuxta Dionysium septingensimo primo, indictione quarta decima, fratres nostri qui tunc fuere Romae, hoc modo se in natali Domini in cer­eis sanctae Mariae scriptum vidisse, et inde descripsisse referebant : 'A passione Domini nostri Jesu Christi anni sunt DCLXVITI' 1.

Martène's comment was : Patet inscriptionem olim in Paschate adhibitam, per totum annum in cereo conservatam fuisse. 2

The French liturgist was correct in finding the origin of the custom of inscribing the year in the practice of the Roman Church; but in the mistaken belief of his time that the Easter candle was known at Rome in AD 701, he interpreted Bede's in cerēs as though the noun were in the singular form in cero, and thus avoided a difficulty, as Dendy pointed out (p.138). Since the candles in S. Maria Maggiore, which Bede's fellow monks visited on Christmas Day, were not Easter candles - he clearly refers to the existence of more than one candle in this basilica - we must try to establish which were the candles in that church that bore the inscription. A number of preliminary observations must be made. First, we may at once eliminate this as a reference to all the candles of the basilica, since it is unlikely that all of them were made of beeswax (cera). Secondly, the candles in question were either only used on rare occasions, since the date was still visible at the end of December, or were exceedingly large, so that even with constant use they had not burned down to that part of the stock which bore the inscription. Moreover, the wording of Bede's reported inscription, if authentic, would have required the use of candles of no mean diameter. Thirdly, Bede informs us that the candles were renewed every year and, if so, lasted for the whole year, as Martène conjectured. Fourthly, the candles were closely associated with the events of Holy Week, and in particular of the Triduum.

1'The holy and apostolic Roman Church bears witness that she keeps this faith even by the very marks which it is her custom to inscribe on her candles each year. For, in order to remind the people of the season of the Lord's Passion, she registers (on the candles) the number of years less thirty-three which Dionysius calculated from the Incarnation. Accordingly, in the seven hundred and first year from the Incarnation by Dionysius' reckoning, our brothers who were in Rome at the time, said that on Christmas Day they saw written on the candles of St Mary's Church [S. Maria Maggiore] and made a note of the following : 'From the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ 668 years'. Chapter 47. PL 95.494B-495A.

2'It is clear that the inscription was formerly applied at Easter and kept on the Candle throughout the whole year.' DAER 4.24.7.
In view of these observations it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the wax candles, to which Bede is referring, are none other than the two man-sized candles which figured prominently in the Roman Paschal vigil.\(^1\) It is significant that in the Pontifical of Poitiers, which contains elements from both the Roman and the Gallican Vigil traditions, both man-sized candles bear an inscription (p.215). The writer believes that the imprinting of information on these candles was a practice of some antiquity, even when the Pontifical of Poitiers was compiled. The objection that the Paschal vigil at Rome was held only in the Cathedral of St John Lateran is not insurmountable. The early ordines Romani relate primarily to papal ceremonial in the Mother of Cathedrals; and there is no evidence to suggest that a Vigil was not held in the other basilicas of Rome, apart possibly from S. Croce in Gerusalemme.

With the fusion of ceremonial elements from both the Roman and the Gallican Vigil traditions in the region of northern Gaul and the resulting diminished importance of the two Vigil-candles, it is not difficult to envisage the transference of the inscription from the two large candles of the Roman tradition to the single Easter candle; and to understand why the date, previously reckoned from the Passion, subsequently expressed the number of years from the Incarnation. For the former were the visible symbols of the Passion that characterised the Roman Vigil; the single Candle represented the Light of the world and the moment that the Light entered the world.\(^2\)

The inscribing on the Easter candle of the year reckoned from the Incarnation is first attested c.AD 900 in the Pontifical of Poitiers. In addition to the Sacramentary of Corbie\(^3\) it is mentioned in the Customary of the German Monasteries (c.1000) and in Lanfranc's Decrees;\(^4\) whilst its appearance in three Roman documents\(^5\) may be the result of the Benedictine influence of Monte Cassino, unless we have at Rome a survival of the above-mentioned custom of dating the candles, which was described by Bede. Apart from the above-mentioned documents, but excluding Poitiers, there are very few instances in which the *annus Domini* alone was inscribed on the Easter candle. In the vast majority of instances it formed the *point de départ* or nucleus for the development of the *charta*, which provided additional chronological and liturgical information. For this reason we have deferred a discussion of its subsequent history and survival until the next section.

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1See Chapter 16 for their use and significance.
2It may be significant that in the earlier *laudes cerei* we encounter a close connection between the supposed parthenogenesis of the bee and the production of wax on the one hand, and the birth of Jesus, and the Virgin Mary on the other.
3PL 78.336B.
4Albers V p.38 and PL 150.446D, respectively.
5Viz. *PR XII* I p.241; *OEL* p.60; Pontifical of Apamea (*DAER* p.160 (M25)).
The inscribing of the year disappeared from the Roman rite sometime after 1250, probably as a result of the liturgical influence of the Franciscans, in whose service-books this ritual act did not appear; and perhaps also as a result of a wish on the part of the Roman Church that this symbol of the risen Christ should be devoid of decorative excess. It is not found in the Roman Missal of 1474. Likewise it must have disappeared from the ceremonial of churches which were influenced by or had adopted the Roman rite. The instance of Salzburg at the beginning of the sixteenth century is a rare and late survival of this practice.1

The Church has always stressed that Christianity is an historical religion and that its founder was born at a specific point in time. The dating of the candles, which Bede referred to, belongs to that tradition, first found in the gospels, of rooting the message of salvation firmly in history; and serves to remind2 the faithful of this fact within the context of the liturgy. With the development of the charta this functional purpose was underlined by means of the inclusion of additional information, as we shall observe presently. The medieval mind, however, was not slow to endow the practice of dating the Easter candle with a symbolic interpretation. John Beleth explained that the practice conveyed the notion that time belongs to Christ, and at a different level of interpretation observed, in a comparison that relates to saintliness or intensity of faith rather than to actual numbers, that in the same way that the year symbolises Christ, the divisions of the year stand for the twelve apostles, and the days represent the Christian faithful.3 Honorius of Autun designates Christ as the acceptable year of the Lord; and extends Beleth’s symbolism to include baptised children, who are equated with the hours.4 The symbolism is echoed by Sicardus, who refers to Christ as both the summation and the consummation of time, ‘the ancient and the fulness of days’.5 Sicardus in the same passage also refers to ‘fertilitas fructuum in anno’, perhaps echoing the words of Psalm 64: ‘You crown the year with your bounty’.  

(iii) The Charta

It is said that the De Temporibus of Bede ‘did much to establish the practice of dating events from the Incarnation’ (DCC). It is therefore significant that the dual method of dating events used by Bede, that is, the year from the Incarnation and the indictio, was also found on the Easter candle at Poitiers in the ninth century, and at a

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11507 Missal fol.xciii.
2‘In memoriam populis revocans.’ PL 95.667D.
3Rationale. PL 202.112A.
4Gemma Animae. PL 172.667D.
5Maximus annus antiquus et plenus dierum. Mitrale, PL 213.323D.
The inclusion of this second item of information which, it may be argued, is both superfluous and of relevance only within a fifteen year period, may be attributable to Bede. It is significant that in AD 701 the inscription on the candles at Rome, as recorded by Bede, did not mention the *indictio*.

The inclusion of the eapct from the eleventh century onwards not only provided an additional piece of chronological information, but underlined the prominence and importance of the Easter candle at Eastertide, almost as a subtle reminder. Although in this respect it recalls the purpose of the inscription on the eighth-century Roman Vigil candles, there is no direct evidence to link the recording of the eapct with the earlier Roman practice. As with the inscribing of the year, medieval commentators attached a symbolic interpretation to the *indictio* and to the eapct. Sicardus wrote that the *indictio* epitomised the actions of men, and the eapct the succession of ages and the passing of time. Both, he declared, were ordained and disposed by Christ. Later instances of churches which confined the information to the year, the *indictio*, and the eapct are rare. In the influential Roman rite the insignia were absent. Elsewhere, and especially in France, the inclusion of additional information resulted in the emergence of the *charta*. However, at Barking at the start of the fifteenth century the custom was maintained of recording only the year, the *indictio*, and the eapct; whilst at the end of that century it was still observed in the Cathedral of Prague.

The numerals and letters of the insignia may have been incised into the wax like the cross. If so, the incisions would have to have been filled in with some form of colouring, in order to make them conspicuous and visible from a distance. It is equally likely, however, that the information was painted onto the wax of the Candle. For not only could the information be then read with ease; should the same Candle be required for use the following year, the alteration of the numbers could much more easily be accomplished. At the beginning of the twelfth century Cistercian practice was to write the year, the *indictio*, and the eapct on a *cartula* or small piece of parchment. This was done in all probability because the Cistercians used only a small Easter candle, since the

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1 *Poitiers* p.215. Also at Gembloux (Albers II p.99); Essen (Ordinal p.58); and Nidaros (*ONE* p.232).
2 The age in days of the moon on 1 January of a given year.
3 According to the Customary of Farfa the *indictio* was not included. Albers I p.54.
4 Beleth also refers to it as the *aera*. PL 202.112A.
5 So also Durandus, *Rationale* VI.80 p.351.
6 *Mitrale*, PL 213.323D.
7 *HBS* 65 p.101.
8 1498 Missal fol.xci.
9 *Nom.Cist.* p.104. The number of entries was subsequently increased to eleven. It was customary for the *armarius* (treasurer) to produce the *charta* (Martène, *DAMR* 3.15.8 p.142), as at Farfa (PL 150.1203C) and Fleury (Martène, *ibidem*).
surface available for inscribing moderately-large letters was inadequate for the representation of the necessary information. This is the earliest recorded instance of the use of a *charta*.

The precedent having been set, the *charta* was not only adopted into the rites of other religious orders and churches; but within a relatively short space of time it was realised that it was possible to include more liturgical and religious information on the parchment by increasing its size. Merati informs us that the cycle of liturgical feasts for the whole year was originally incised into the wax of the Candle and only subsequently transferred to the parchment. This is borne out by the Customary of Fleury, according to which fourteen items of information were inscribed on the surface of the Easter candle, and by the 1512 Missal of Spires. Merati also tells us that the *charta* was also known as *Breve anni*, 'the summary of the year'.

*Chartae* varied enormously in length and correspondingly in the range of information they conveyed. All retained the original nucleus of the year, the *indictio*, and the epact. The Dominican chart had two additional entries relating to the order and the dominical letter; whilst the Premonstratensians displayed the names of the Pope, the abbot, the bishop, and the king as well as the movable feasts. In post-Tridentine times some of the charts became even longer; and in addition to a large amount of biblical, liturgical, and astronomical information included events of both medieval and recent history. For instance, at the Church of St Gudila in Brussels the victory of John, Duke of Brabant on 5 June 1288 at the Battle of Woeringen was recorded. As mentioned above, the chart at the Monastery of Fleury had fourteen entries; whilst there were eighteen at Reims Cathedral, thirty-five at Chalons, and forty-eight at Rouen. At the last-mentioned cathedral the deacon read aloud the contents of the chart at the conclusion of the Preface. In many churches the names of the treasurer or sacristan and

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1 Gavantus/Merati IV p.155.
2 *Officii ordo per totum annum*.
3 Novarinus p.17.
4 *Agenda Spiroensia* fol.xciii.
5 Ceremonial of 1520 in King, *LRO* p.357. The *indictio*, epact, and dominical letter have disappeared from the present-day chart. See Appendix 14.
6 Missal of 1578 cited by King, *LRO* p.190.
7 Zazzera p.300.
8 For the years 1585, 1708, and 1678, respectively. Martène, *DAER* 4.24 pp.146-7. For the full text of all three, see Appendix 14.
9 De Moléon p.318.
precentor were also written on the vellum plaques. It was also common practice to place at the head of the *charta* a formula of benediction or consecration, introduced by *benedictus est cereus*... or *consecratus est cereus*...  

The custom of affixing the *tabula paschalis* to the Easter candle survived within the cathedral tradition until recent times. At Amiens, where a *charta* was in use until 1969, it was the responsibility of the *Secrétaire Général* to make a new one each year. The custom survives in some houses of the Dominican Order; but disappeared from the Cistercian and Premonstratensian rites after the Second Vatican Council.

There were a number of reasons for the demise of the *charta*, foremost of which was perhaps its absence from the Roman rite and the growing influence of that rite over the years in France, where the tradition of affixing a chart to the Easter candle seems to have been very strong, and lasted longest. The holding of the Paschal vigil on the morning of Holy Saturday detracted from the ritual and ceremonial in general, and must also be regarded as a contributory factor in its disappearance. Beaudin’s assertion that the display of information on the parchment destroyed the ‘*rapport intime*’ between the message and significance of the information, and the Easter candle, is justified in the same way that the insertion of the grains of incense into the candlestick rather than the Candle detracted from their significance and reduced their purpose to the level of mere ornamentation. On the positive side it could be argued that this loss of rapport resulted in the chart acquiring an identity independent of the Easter candle, and an informative role comparable to the depiction of biblical scenes in stained glass windows. It must be remembered that the Cistercians used a chart for more than 800 years, and many of the French churches employed this device for centuries.

The chart was normally affixed to the lower part of the Easter candle, the central portion of the stock being reserved for the grains of incense. Paschal’s statement that the charts were not always fastened to the Candle is both vague and frustrating since he does not elaborate. Presumably some were fixed to the candlestick; and perhaps it was not unknown for some to be displayed in a prominent place in close juxtaposition to the Easter candle, for instance on the ambo. The parallel which Durandus draws between the chart and the superscription above the Cross should not be adduced in support of the view that the chart was affixed to the upper part of the Candle. Such a position would

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1Paschal col.329.  
2See Appendix 14.  
3*Le cièrge pascal* p.27.  
4*La Liturgie* col.329.  
5*Rationale* VI.80 p.351.
clearly not be practicable. The large chart at Rouen was fastened at a man's height\(^1\) to the huge column of wax that was the Easter candle, so that it could be read with ease. At Essen the chart completely encircled the Candle;\(^2\) whilst the custom at Spires recalled earlier practice. For in that latter church the four entries, viz. the year, the golden number, the day of the cathedral's consecration, and the name of the bishop or burgomaster,\(^3\) were written on the wax rather than on the parchment.\(^4\)

Evidence for the physical appearance of the chart is meagre. The rubric in the Ordinal of Essen states that the information should be written 'in large and beautiful letters' (p.58); and De Moléon referred to the chart at Rouen as a *fine parchment*.\(^5\) It would appear that the chart resembled the page of an illuminated manuscript. Those executed until recently at Amiens belonged to this tradition. From the lower edge hung two seals. One was made of green wax, the episcopal colour, and impressed with the arms of the diocese; the other, of purple wax, indicating that the status of Amiens Cathedral was that of a minor basilica, was stamped with the arms of the cathedral chapter. The seals were attached to the chart by ribbons of corresponding colours. These devices are still preserved in the Treasury of Amiens Cathedral.\(^6\) For their chart the Dominicans use the black and white shield of their order, and inscribe it with lettering of contrasting colours.\(^7\) That in use at Blackfriars in Oxford measures about eight by six inches.

(iv) *Portraits and decorations*

Bernado Bisso records\(^8\) that it was the custom of some churches to paint the likeness of the bishop, or of the patron saint, or of any saint on the Easter candle; but he does not give any indication of the extent of this practice. However, a French source in the early part of the last century informs us that the Easter candle was usually decorated with different portraits of saints.\(^9\) The same writer adds that edifying 'objects' made of gold were also used as decorations.

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\(^1\)De Moléon p.318. 
\(^2\)Ordinal p.58. 
\(^3\)It is not clear to whom *presule* refers. 
\(^4\)1512 Missal fol.xciii. 
\(^5\)‘Beau velin’. *Voyages liturgiques* p.318. 
\(^6\)The writer is indebted for this information to the *Secrétaire Général* of that diocese, L'Abbé P. Grey. 
\(^7\)See Appendix 14. 
\(^8\)*Hierurgia* I p.180. 
\(^9\)*DHCRI* I p.470.
The practice of painting candles is of long standing. It is mentioned by St Paulinus in the fifth century. Mention of colours (coloribus) in an inventory of accoutrements for the Easter candle at York in the thirteenth century probably relates to the paints that were used to decorate the Candle. Bellotte records that painted candles were frequently used in the former ceremonies of the Church of Laon; but he does not mention the Easter candle. However, at Seville we are informed that paint was applied to the newly-cast column of wax. Illustrations in some late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century missals depict zig-zags and other geometric patterns on the central portion of the Candle’s stock. It is probably these that Van Doren has in mind when he criticises the candlemakers of his day for hiding the fragrant symbol of Christ’s ‘pure and glorious flesh’ behind strips of coloured paper.

(v) Flowers

The adornment of the Easter candle with flowers is first attested in the Mozarabic rite of the tenth century. The Candle was festooned with flowers or garlands during the reading of the first prophecy. In Central and Southern Italy the surviving Exultet rolls provide pictorial evidence for the practice in that part of the world during the eleventh and twelfth centuries; and at York in the thirteenth century, flowers appear in an inventory of accessories for the Easter candle. Rock cites a reference in Pamellius’ Liturgikon to the twining of flowers around the Easter candle in an old Ambrosian missal. Their use as adornments of the Easter candle has survived to modern times - so great is the force of tradition that, although not prescribed by any of the manuals of Roman liturgy for this occasion, the Memoriale Rituum 'suggests their use "if customary" on certain days'. In former times at Dixmude, Nieuport, Veyme, and other places in West Flanders, branches were fastened to the candlestick in addition to the flowers and leaves. Known as the ‘Paschal Tree’, it was a visual expression of the arbor decora

1Candle-painting was formerly a trade in its own right. Pierin del Vaga was one such craftsman.
2De S.Felice Natalatium, Carmen VI (PL 61.491B): Ast alii picitis accendant lumina ceris.
3REL p.812.
4Doblado p.299.
5Le Cierge Paschal p.75. In a communication dated 1 August 1988 with a leading firm of candlemakers in England, the present writer was informed that the handmade-candle foreman could not recall such designs in the forty-two years of experience in his craft.
6Antiphonary of Leon p.284.
7Avery, Plates XLVI, LXV, and LXIX.
8Bradshaw and Wordsworth II p.98.
9Church of our Fathers I p.167. The present writer has failed to locate this reference in either the cited or the original work. It is just possible that it existed as a marginal annotation in one of the above-mentioned books.
10Fortescue and O'Connell (11th edition) p.29.
et fulgida. Today, at Annecy not only is the candelabrum festooned with garlands; a vase of flowers is placed in front of it to show the importance of the Easter candle. In most cathedrals and churches it is usual to leave the Candle adorned with flowers for the whole season of Easter. At Vannes Cathedral, however, flowers are used only at the Vigil itself; whilst at Lyon they remain in position only till the end of Easter week.

Their use in pre-Christian religious rites may have been a contributory factor in the adornment of the Easter candle with flowers. However, it is much more likely that the practice of decorating the Candle with flowers was an internal liturgical development, suggested by references in the *laudes cerei* to the source of the beeswax. For not only did the presence of flowers fulfil a decorative function in furnishing a floral setting or foil for the Candle; it provided a physical and tangible complement to the floral allusions of the Song, a visual representation of one of the themes of the Preface, and served as a forceful reminder of the origin and source of the beeswax. In later centuries, when references to the bees and the flowers had all but been excised from the *laus cerei* in some churches, although the rapport between the wording of the Preface and the flowers was subsequently lost, the floral decorations survived.

In former times in Hertfordshire Holy Saturday was one of the great flower-gathering days of the year. Particularly sought after was the rare Pasque flower (*anemone pulsatilla*) with its purple petals.

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1 Callewaert p.140.
4 References to flowers are found in four different Prefaces in the western rites. The clause *aliae vertunt flares in ceram* of the Gallican Preface (Vich Sacramentary p.3; Miss.Gall.Vet. p.36; Bobbio Missal p.77; S.Gall 348 p.83; Jumièges Missal p.92) is particularly apposite in view of the juxtaposition of the flowers and the beeswax. In the Milanese Preface (*Manuale Ambrosianum* p.201 and subsequent Ambrosian missals) not only is the importance of the flowers mentioned; but Christ is identified with both the wax of the Candle and with the flowers: *Quid enim magis accommodum magisque festivum quam iesseico jlori floreis excubemus et ted is? praesertim cum et sapientia de semetipsa cecinerit: Ego sum flos agri, et /ilium convallium.* ('What is more fitting and more festive than that we keep watch for the Flower of Jesse with floral torches? especially when even Wisdom has sung of herself: I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valleys.') Similarly in the Beneventan Preface (Pinell, *La Benedicció* p.96) the importance of the flower to the bee is stressed: *flore utuntur coniuge, flore funguntur gener, flore domos instruunt, flore divitias convehunt, flore ceram conficiunt.* ('They use the flower as a spouse; they gain their offspring from the flower; they construct their homes from the flower; they gather their riches from the flower; they make their wax from the flower.') There is also a reference to flowers in the Mozarabic *benedictio cerei* (Pinell, *ibidem* p.117). In this latter Preface it is unlikely that the flowers, which were placed around the Easter candle during the reading of Genesis 1, represented nature or creation.

5 Jones-Baker p.133
(vi) Crucifix

C.Callewaert records that in some Belgian churches an image of the Crucified was attached to the Easter candle.¹ Like the grains of incense, this emblem of the Passion, fastened to the waxen symbol of the Resurrection, betokened the mystery of the Cross and bore witness that the Crucified had risen from the dead; in the same way that the crown of thorns, which encircles some Easter candlesticks, signifies the triumphal kingship of Christ.

(vii) Branches

At St Maartenskerk in St Ghislain there is a fifteenth-century candlestick near to the crown of which three small branches spring from the main stem so as to form candleholders vertical with and parallel to it. There is a copy in a church in Bruges. It is said that the three candles represent the three Marys who went to embalm the body of Jesus and who were the first witnesses of the risen Lord.² At Capua the three candles on a similar device were said to represent the Trinity.³ In addition to three, Callewaert also mentions candlesticks with two, four, and six branches, but does not elaborate. It is not difficult to see in the latter type the survival or development of the menorah.

¹De Paaschkandelaar p.141.
²Callewaert, ibidem.
Chapter Ten

THE BLESSING OF THE EASTER CANDLE: THE FORMULA

(i) The Romano-Gallican A and Milanese traditions

The structure of the formula found in both these traditions is tripartite:

(i) The invitatory proclamation or preconium
(ii) The Dialogue
(iii) The Preface or laus cerei

In view of the survival of other elements1 from the Lucernarium in the ceremonial surrounding the lighting and blessing of the Easter candle, it is not difficult to discern the origin of the Dialogue and Preface in the latter ritual, and to recognise that the dialogue and prayer of thanksgiving in the Apostolic Tradition2 are liturgical features expanded and transformed into the second and third sections of the later formula.

It is not known when the structure of the formula achieved its present form. The scheme of Exultet/Dialogue/Preface, which still obtains today, had already been fixed by the eighth century; but the inclusion of this non-Roman ceremony into both the Gregorian and Gelasian Sacramentaries must have been of recent occurrence in that century. The first element, the preconium proper, serves as an introduction to the Preface; but the date of its incorporation into the formula as a whole cannot be determined before the eighth century by surviving documentary evidence. An earlier date, however, can be inferred with confidence in view of the age of Ennodius' laudes cerei.3

We have seen that the Dialogue was a feature of the Lucernarium. With regard to the third element, the Preface, there can be little doubt, to judge from the surviving Beneventan, Gallican, and Milanese Prefaces, with their expansive references to flowers and bees, that poetic language was a characteristic of the laudes cerei to which Jerome took

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1See page 224.
2The Dialogue, followed by the prayer of thanksgiving for light, divine, natural, and man-made, lacks "Up with your hearts" because that is said only at the offering' (Cumming, Hippolytus p.23 §25). With the development of the Lucernarium into the blessing of the Easter candle, which included the offering of light, the omitted couplet was incorporated.
3The close similarity between the Romano-Gallican and Milanese preconia, and their omission from the beginning of both of the Prefaces of Ennodius (to be dated to c.AD 510) would suggest that the wording of the Exultet had become fixed in a formula common to a number of western rites at an early date.
exception. If so, the Prefaces must have achieved their final form and contained the same themes, familiar from later compositions, well before the end of the fourth century.

There is evidence in the fourth century that the laus cerei could be composed either in prose or in verse. Capelle has shown that the Preface of the Romano-Gallican tradition was in all likelihood written by St Ambrose. On the other hand we have St Augustine's own clear testimony that his laus cerei had been written in verse. The three extant lines of his Preface show that he had composed it in dactylic hexameters. Archdale King, amongst others, is of the opinion that the hymn Igis Creator Igneus, found only in the Antiphonary of Bangor, is the sole remaining example of a laus cerei in verse, and may have been written by St Ambrose, himself a no mean composer of hymns. There is also in existence the Escorial Preface, a laus cerei composed in verse, and the poem of Drepanius Florus, De Cereo Paschali, with its references to the composition of the wick and the apian origin of the wax.

A study of the composition and content of the Preface is strictly beyond the scope of this work; but it has to be observed that the Prefaces of the Romano-Gallican, Milanese, and Beneventan liturgies, and also the laudes cerei of Ennodius contain the same themes or motifs; and that the offering of light and the eulogy of the bees are elements peculiar to the Paschal Preface, and represent a development and expansion of the simple prayer of thanksgiving found in the Apostolic Tradition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Romano-Gallican</th>
<th>Milanese</th>
<th>Beneventan</th>
<th>Ennodius I</th>
<th>Ennodius II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passover/Resurrection</td>
<td>Lamb/Sacrifice</td>
<td>Resurrection</td>
<td>Mystery of Creation/Resurrection</td>
<td>Mystery of Renewal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering of Light</td>
<td>Offering of Light</td>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Offering of light of candle</td>
<td>Offering of light of candle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eulogy of bees</td>
<td>Bees</td>
<td>Bees</td>
<td>Bees</td>
<td>Bees (Bees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eschatology</td>
<td>Eschatology</td>
<td>Divine Protection</td>
<td>Divine Protection</td>
<td>Renewal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1L"Exultet" Pascal pp.219-46. The 1488 Missal of Basel attributes the work to the bishop (fol.xcii); but both M.Huglo and Dom B.Fischer (whom Huglo cites on p.88) contest its Ambrosian authorship (p.87).
2De Civit.Dei 15.22. On the strength of this remark the Church for centuries regarded Augustine as the author of the Romano-Gallican Preface, as is evidenced, amongst other testimony, by the Sacramentary of Fulda (Schmidt I p.425), Grancolas (p.319), and even the 1830 Missal of Limoges (p.220). Huglo (p.81) casts doubt on the authenticity of the three verses.
3HBS 10 p.11.
4LRC p.417.
5Reconstructed text in Pinell, La Benedicció pp.97-100.
6PL 61.1087-88.
Similarly the *Ignis Creator Igneus* incorporates the themes of Passover/Resurrection, the Candle, Light, and Bees. The three ritual Prefaces and the two *laudes cerei* of Ennodius differ from one another in that each seems to place a greater emphasis on one particular theme, or aspect of a theme, but without detriment to the overall structure and recognised pattern of the composition. Prominent in the Romano-Gallican Preface are the references and allusions to the Passover and the Crossing of the Red Sea. A strong eschatological tone characterises the Milanese *laus cerei*; whilst in the Beneventan Preface the theme of flowers and bees is particularly conspicuous. We have already observed that Ennodius dwells on the physical characteristics and composition of the Easter candle vis-à-vis the instances of God’s intervention in history (pp.226-7).

In what could be interpreted as a posthumous vindication of Jerome’s strictures, the Roman Church excised from the Roman Preface the offending and incongruous Virgilian language, leaving only two short references to the bee: *de operibus apum* and *apis mater eduxit*. It was left to the revisers of the post-Vatican II Missal to remove all references to that creature, in view of the modern composition of Easter candles¹ which, it was thought, rendered allusion to the bee meaningless.

(ii) The Romano-Gallican B tradition

1. The *Deus mundi Conditor*. Archdale King referred correctly, in the opinion of the writer, to two types of Preface within the Romano-Gallican tradition, which he designated Type A and Type B.² The latter has been discussed in the previous section. Type A comprises the single prayer *Deus mundi Conditor*. It is found as the *laus cerei* in the Gelasian Sacramentary, the Sacramentary of Autun, and in Ordo 30A;³ but as the sole formula for the consecration of the Easter candle it is found nowhere else. In spite of its clear reference to the Easter candle, Pinell called the formula an *oracio Romana*;⁴ and Deshusses excised it from the supplement⁵ to the Gregorian Sacramentary as one of those blessings in *codex* R ‘which are scarcely recognisable’.⁶ A brief examination of the contents of this prayer, however, reveals that its structure closely resembles that of the Romano-Gallican Preface. It is true that the offering of light is placed first; but the formula is not strictly a Preface in that the opening words do not suggest a continuity of the Dialogue, a characteristic of the standard Preface. Rather, it resembles the initial

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¹See Harbert p.240.
²LRC p.417.
³GeV (Mohlberg) p.68; GePh p.63; OR 30A.15.
⁴La Benedicció p.85.
⁵Considered by that author to have been compiled by St Benedict of Aniane c. AD810-15.
⁶Le Sacramentaire Grégorien p.42.
invocations of later prayers for the blessing of the new fire. After the prologue, there are three sections, introduced respectively by igitur, ergo, and igitur, whose themes are the Resurrection, light, and bees. It closes with a further invocation recalling the eschatological themes and language of both the Romano-Gallican Preface and Ennodius' laudes cerei.

This last pericope, here linked to the preceding section by ergo, became detached from the rest of the prayer, and came to constitute a formula of blessing in its own right, the Veniat quaesumus. The Deus mundi Conditor (without the Veniat quaesumus) subsequently became a prayer for the blessing of the new fire on Holy Saturday within the Germanic tradition.

2. The Deus mundi Conditor and the Romano-Germanic Exultet/Preface. The presence of both these benediction-formulas for the Easter candle in the Sacramentaries of Angoulême and Gellone would at first sight appear to constitute an unnecessary duplication of consecration. As with the so-called double blessing in the Mozarabic rite, the difficulty largely disappears when it is realised that the Deus mundi Conditor is an invocatory blessing; whilst the Exultet/Preface formula has much in common with the notion of berakah. In the Spanish rite an interval of time and space separated the two blessings. In the Gallican tradition, since both formulas were pronounced concurrently, it was perhaps inevitable that one of them should disappear as a prayer of consecration - as indeed did happen - or be diverted to serve some other purpose. In fact, within the Germanic tradition the Deus mundi Conditor became a formula for the blessing of the new fire on Holy Saturday, as we have already noted; though in that development it shed its final pericope.

3. The Veniat quaesumus. The final pericope of the Deus mundi Creator, once linked to that blessing by ergo, subsequently became either a prayer for the blessing of the new fire, or in the majority of churches including that of Rome, the prayer for the blessing of the five grains of incense. However, in a small number of churches within the Gallican tradition it survived as the formula for the blessing of the Easter candle, once the major portion of the Deus mundi Conditor ceased to fulfil this function. These French churches thus represented the survival of the tradition attested above in the

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1 Also found as a blessing for the new fire (pp.124-5), as a blessing for the grains of incense (p.263), and as a blessing of the cereus minor (p.291).
2 As such, it is found in PRG (II p.95), and was used at Abo (Manual of c.1522 p.238), at Mainz (1507 Missal fol.xcii), at Salzburg (1507 Missal fol.xciii), and at Ratisbon (1570 Ritual np).
3 GeAng p.52 and GeG pp.92-3, respectively.
4 According to the Pontifical of Poitiers the prayer was used to commission the three apotropaic candles lit at the 'altar of the fonts' (p.216).
Sacramentaries of Angoulême and Gellone. At Bourges, Périgueux, and Le Puy\(^1\) the Easter candle was blessed by means of invocation by the celebrant with the *Veniat quaesumus*, after it had been kindled with the new fire, but prior to the chanting of the *Exultet* by the deacon. This double benediction was comparable to Mozarabic practice.

At Amiens, where the Easter candle was consecrated according to the Roman rite, the *Veniat quaesumus* was used to bless the *cereus minor*.\(^2\)

(iii) *The Mozarabic tradition*

Mention has already been made of the double blessing of the Easter candle in the Mozarabic rite, reminiscent of the practice attested in the Sacramentaries of Angoulême and Gellone. In the former rite the lamp was also blessed with the use of both an invocatory formula and a *berakah*-type benediction. Neither the blessing of the lamp nor the blessing of the Candle are preceded by a *preconium* corresponding to the *Exultet*, and the Dialogue appears as the detached triple acclamation of *Deo gratias*. The themes of the Candle-Preface are light, Baptism, and the composition of the Easter candle. The latter recalls the *laudes cerei* of Ennodius.

(iv) *The Exultet/Dialogue/Preface as a blessing*

Within the Roman rite the chanting of the *Exultet* and the Preface by the deacon is analogous to the reading of the Gospel. During the performance of this blessing, which has thus acquired the status of a Gospel-passage, the congregation remains standing,\(^3\) those in the choir turning to face the deacon. At Milan, prior to the liturgical revisions that followed the Second Vatican Council, a lengthy interruption occurred at the end of the first pericope of the Preface. During this a subdeacon and the sacristan withdrew to the sacristy to fetch the lamp containing the new fire. On their return the Easter candle and the two Vigil-candles were lit.\(^4\) This in effect divided the Preface into two distinct blessings, as is clear from the rubric which follows the words *in veritate proveniunt* at the end of the first pericope: *hac benedictione finita*,\(^5\) and from the fact that at that juncture the congregation sat down and remained seated until the conclusion of the Preface.\(^6\)

\(^1\)1741 Missal p.225; 1782 Missal p.159; 1783 Missal p.159, respectively. Apropos of this prayer used in the same context Atchley (p.139) cited the 1845 Missal of Parniers. (The copy which he consulted was destroyed during Hitler’s war.) He was in error, however, to include the Pontifical of St-Germain-des-Prés. For this document, see above, Pt II Chapt.3 p.125.

\(^2\)1752 Missal p.182.

\(^3\)Fortescue and O’Connell (11th ed.) p.306. It is also prescribed in the 1669 Cistercian Missal p.155.

\(^4\)1560 Missal fol.110.

\(^5\)‘When this blessing is finished.’ 1475 Missal fol.lxxx.

\(^6\)1560 Missal fol.110.
At Lyon the *Exultet* was chanted after the reading of the prophecies.¹ This practice recalls the arrangement attested in Ordo 29.² Immediately prior to the *Exultet* the first litany was sung.³ This also occurred at Paris, Besançon, and Luçon,⁴ and at Bourges.⁵ At Coutances, Bayeux, Rouen, and Norwich an antiphon preceded the *Exultet*.⁶

There may be some link between the Milanese ritual and the practice attested in *PRG*. According to the rubrics of the latter (II p.97), the *Exultet* was termed the first blessing of the Candle and was *read* by the archdeacon *quasi in modum legentis*.⁷ He then raised his voice for the Dialogue and presently began to chant the Preface.⁸

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¹1771 Missal p.226.
²OR 29.48.
³1510 Missal of Lyon fol.lxix.
⁴These three churches are cited by Jounel, *La Semaine Sainte* p.147.
⁵1741 Missal p.226.
⁶1557 Missal fol.lxviii; *Semaine Sainte* p.495; 1497 Missal np; and HBS 82 p.91, respectively.
⁷Literally, ‘as if in the manner of one reading’.
⁸*Inde vero accedit in consecrationem cerei, decantando quasi canonem*: ‘Then he began the blessing of the Candle in the same way that he would chant the Canon (of the Mass)’.
Chapter Eleven

THE LIGHTING OF THE EASTER CANDLE

(i) Before the Exultet

Two traditions are found within the primitive practice of lighting the Easter candle before it was blessed. (i) The procession into church with the Candle previously kindled at the new fire has been discussed in Part III.1 (ii) Within the second tradition the Easter candle was lit just prior to the commencement of the Exultet, and to this tradition belong all those churches in which the Easter candle was either borne into church unlit, or was already in position by the altar or the ambo, prior to the start of the ceremony. The tradition is attested in a number of early sacramentaries and pontificals,2 in Alcuin and the Regularis Concordia,3 and is mentioned by Micrologus and Honorius of Autun.4 The latter adds that the kindling occurred at this point because 'Christ has the light from the beginning'. The practice was also observed at Monte Cassino in the twelfth century.5 At the beginning of the eighteenth century De Vert found that the Easter candle was lit prior to the start of the blessing in a large number of churches;6 and this is borne out by the rubrics of a number of French diocesan missals.7 Thurston drew attention8 to the fact that the clause in the Roman Preface

(columnae)...quam in honorem Dei rutilans ignis accendit9

is a form of internal rubric, and implied, at the time that the laus was composed, that the Easter candle was already lit. The lighting of the Candle prior to the blessing meant that the Exultet and Preface were sung without interruption. For in the older documents, cited below in Note 2, the ritual involving the grains of incense was unknown; whilst in the rites of the first four French cathedrals mentioned below in Note 7, the grains of

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1Chapter 5 §1.
2GeV p.68 §425; GePr p.55; GeAng p.52; OR 29.48; PRG II p.97 §346; Poitiers p.215. It can be inferred in Ordo 26 with confidence.
3PL 101.1216B and PL 137.494C, respectively.
4PL 151.1016B and Gemma Animae, PL 172.668C, respectively.
5PR XII I p.293 (=M 1139).
6Paschal col.330.
7Carcassonne (1749) p.196; Périgueux (1782) p.159; Le Puy (1783) p.159; Meaux (1849) p.169. Additional evidence for the practice comes from Albi (DAER 4.24.8 p.147 and Lyon (1487 Missal cited by King, LPS p.61), and from Ordo XIV (PL 78.1218).
8The Exultet and the Paschal Candle p.517.
9'Which the ruddy fire has kindled to the honour of God.' Another interpretation of the word italicised by the writer is discussed below in the next section.
incense were inserted before the deacon began the *Exultet.* Reference to *Table 52* shows that in these four French cathedrals the lighting of the Easter candle prior to the *Exultet vis-à-vis* the insertion of the grains of incense, also at a point before the blessing of Candle, represents the first stage in the development of these two ritual actions as features which subsequently interrupt the Preface in most western rites.

According to two twelfth-century Roman pontificals\(^1\) the Easter candle was also lit before it was blessed. These documents are representative of Stage 2 in *Table 52,* since they both attest the insertion of the grains of incense *during* the Preface. The evidence of later Roman service-books, however, is confusing. The twelfth-century Ordo of the Lateran Church, Durand's pontifical, and the slightly later *Bindo Fesulani* place the kindling and insertions during the Preface,\(^2\) as does the *Missale Romanum* and all subsequent Roman Missals up to and including the Tridentine Missal of 1570. Ordo XIV and CA 1706, on the other hand, concur with *PR XII.*\(^3\) As we noted when we discussed the triple *Lumen Christi,* a certain fluidity of ceremonial existed within Roman ceremonial up to 1570.

One of the most noticeable alterations to the Paschal ceremonies, resulting from the liturgical revisions of 1955, was the restoration of the primitive practice, which had survived in the four above-mentioned cathedrals as late as the eighteenth century, of singing the *Exultet* and Preface without interruption, the lighting of the Candle being transferred to the beginning of the ceremony, its position of old.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1.</th>
<th>Easter candle lit before <em>Exultet.</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incense grains inserted before <em>Exultet.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2.</td>
<td>Easter candle lit before <em>Exultet.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incense grains inserted <em>during</em> Preface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Easter candle lit <em>during</em> Preface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incense grains inserted <em>during</em> Preface.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 52*

(ii) *During the Preface following the Exultet*

The practice of lighting the Easter candle at *ignis accendit* in the Preface is first attested in the tenth-century Sacramentary of Corbie.\(^4\) In almost all other rites which

\(^{1}\) *PR XII* I xxxii.8 p.240 and the Pontifical of Apamea (*DAER* 4.24 p.160, M25).
\(^{2}\) *OEL* p.61; *PGD* III p.588; and *ZRKM* p.214, respectively.
\(^{3}\) *PL* 78.1218C and *ZRKM* p.214, respectively.
\(^{4}\) *PL* 78.336B.
perpetuated this tradition, it is at this same point that the Candle is lit.\(^1\) Mention of the practice at Rouen in the following century,\(^2\) and its inclusion by Lanfranc in his Decrees and by Ulric in the Customary of Cluny,\(^3\) together with the evidence from Corbie, strongly suggest a monastic provenance in Northern France. Its adoption and use within the monastic tradition\(^4\) ultimately led to its appearance in most of the cathedral rites in the Romano-Gallican tradition, including that of Rome, and in the rite of Milan.\(^5\)

It is not difficult to see why the practice developed of kindling the Easter candle during the Preface. Elsewhere\(^6\) we observed that the censing of the Easter candle and the insertion of the five grains of incense during the Preface were the result of the ambiguous interpretation of *incensi huius sacrificium*, a phrase which invited the opportunity to match word with action. The intrusion of the ritual action into the Preface was further facilitated by the fact that the words which had come to be regarded as an internal rubric occurred at the start of a new section of the Preface, introduced by *igitur*. The break having occurred in the Preface for the incense, the precedent was now set for a further interruption, suggested, so the writer believes, by another ambiguity of language. For at the conclusion of the very next sentence occurs *accendit*, 'has kindled', which, as we have already seen, indicated that the Easter candle was alight before the start of the *Exultet*. Since, however, *accendit* could equally be construed as being in the present tense of the verb, it is the belief of the writer that the alternative translation 'kindles' invited the lighting of the Easter candle at this point, and created a materialisation, as it were, of the primary concept inherent in this verb. It thus became an internal rubric or cue for the deacon or official who applied the fire to the wick of the Candle

(iii) *The Agent*

As a rule the Easter candle was lit by the officiant, usually a deacon, who chanted the *Exultet* and Preface; and it is likely that the deacon performed these two duties in the fourth century, when the ceremony is first recorded. According to some early sacra-

\(^1\) In Haymo's *Ordo Missalis* (Van Dijk II p.246) the Candle is lit at *divisus in partes*; in the 1543 Missal of Bayonne (p.46) at *sed iam columnae*; in the 1568 Missal of Palencia (fol.cvi) at *reddid ecclesias*; in the 1543 Missal of Paris (fol.lxxx) at *praecoina novimus*; and in the Ordinary of Tongres (p.165) and the 1518 Missal of Ratisbon (fol.cxvii) at *suscipe, sancte pater*.

\(^2\) *Acta Vetera*, PL 147.176C.

\(^3\) PL 150.467C and PL 149.663B, respectively.

\(^4\) By the eleventh century it featured at Fruttuaria and Vallombrosa in Northern Italy (Albers IV p.65 and p.249, respectively).

\(^5\) Beroldus p.110. In the Milanese rite the opening words of the second pericope *ecce iam ignis columnae resplendet* were acclaimed three times by the deacon, the congregation responding *Deo gratias* after each cry. Martène, *DAER* 4.24.11 p.148. For four Gallican exceptions, see Section 1 above.

\(^6\) Chapter 8 pages 273-4.
mentaries and other service-books\(^1\) the officiant was the archdeacon. This dignitary also functioned in this capacity at Vienne and Soissons;\(^2\) whilst at Troyes it was the senior archdeacon.\(^3\) At Naples\(^4\) and in the Mozarabic rite\(^5\) the bishop lit the Easter candle; whilst Beneventan practice allowed either the bishop or a priest to perform the task.\(^6\) In the churches listed below in Table 53 the Candle was lit by a variety of other officials and clerics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acolyte</th>
<th>Monte Cassino</th>
<th>(DAMR 3.15.10 p.143, M 1139)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subdeacon</td>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>(HBS 17 p.175)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacristan</td>
<td>Lanfranc</td>
<td>(PL 150.467C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost</td>
<td>St-Germain-des-Prés</td>
<td>(DAMR 3.15.7 p.142, M 1165)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precentor</td>
<td>Premonstratensians</td>
<td>(King, LRO p.190)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 53

In none of the above-listed rites and documents is there any indication as to why the officiating deacon did not light the Easter candle. In some instances it may have been thought that the deacon would be distracted from his chant if he performed this duty. In other churches the height or location of the Easter candle would have rendered this task difficult for the deacon.\(^7\) However, according to the service-books of the vast majority of the churches within the Roman, Gallican, and Germanic traditions, as well as in the Milanese rite, the lighting of the Easter candle was performed by the officiating deacon. In the papal ceremonial the task fell to the junior cardinal deacon.\(^8\) Although the Roman Missal of 1474 mentions a subdeacon,\(^9\) the Tridentine Missal specifies the officiating deacon.

\(^{1}\)GeV §425 p.68; GePr p.55; GeAng p.55; OR 30A.15; PRG II p.97.
\(^{2}\)De Moléon p.23 and Martène, DAER 4.24 p.161, M 305, respectively.
\(^{3}\)1736 Missal p.228.
\(^{4}\)Mallardo p.33.
\(^{5}\)Leon Antiphonary p.280.
\(^{6}\)Hesbert p.188.
\(^{7}\)As at Durham and Leau (p.237). Both Gavanti (p.166) and Bauldry (p.191) state that the Easter candle could be removed from its holder to allow its being kindled. The Polish Manual also permitted this concession to facilitate the insertion of the grains of incense (p.477). In the Hereford Missal accendit is sustained for several notes, thus allowing time for the Candle to be lit at that very word (p.102).
\(^{8}\)PR XII I.xxxii.7 p.239; C.A.1706 (ZRKM p.213).
\(^{9}\)HBS 17 p.175.
(iv) The Means

In the Milanese rite the bringing in of the lamp lit with the new fire was almost certainly a survival from the Lucernarium. Within the Romano-Gallican tradition the Easter candle was lit with either the serpent-candle, the reed-candle, or the triple candle. In France the practice emerged of transferring the new fire from the single processional candle or one of the triple candles to the wick of the Easter candle by means of a sulphur-coated splint (*sulphuratum*). None of the missals which attest this procedure\(^1\) states the precise point at which the fire was transferred. The mention of the triple candle in two of the missals (Auch and Nantes) again demonstrates how this functional means of bringing in the new fire had developed into a vivid and symbolic presentation of the Trinity with an almost separate existence and purpose of its own.

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\(^1\)Besançon (1707) p.317; Toulouse (1832) p.211; La Rochelle (1835) p.191; Auch (1836) p.192; Nantes (1837) p.203; Meaux (1845) p.169.
Chapter Twelve

THE EXTINGUISHING OF THE EASTER CANDLE

In the history of the rite before 1100 two traditions existed relating to the length of time the Easter candle continued to burn following the Paschal vigil: (i) that in which the Candle burned either continuously or intermittently until it was disposed of at the end of Easter week, and (ii) that in which the Candle was lit at certain services throughout the whole of the Easter season.

We shall have occasion to refer to the evidence of Micrologus and Honorius in the next chapter when we consider the fragmentation of the Easter candle at the end of Easter Week (pp.303-4). Suffice it here to state that neither writer gives any indication as to whether the Easter candle burned continuously or intermittently during that period. At Rouen in the eleventh century the Candle was lit at every mass in Easter Week.1 It is very difficult to know whether or not the practice at Vienne2 c.1700, where the Easter candle was kept alight day and night until Easter Saturday, had survived over the centuries, or whether the custom was a recent neo-Gallican revival.3 The alternative tradition in which the Easter candle was lit at every major feast until Ascension Day is first encountered c.1150 in the Gilbertine rite;4 but may have been known in the Cistercian rite some fifty years earlier.5

The disastrous results of leaving the Easter candle at Naples unattended during the night of Holy Saturday were described above at the beginning of Chapter 4. Evidence elsewhere for the continuous burning of the Easter candle during the remainder of Holy Saturday and throughout all of Easter day is plentiful; and though the majority of it is late, it is likely that in nearly all instances it attests a centuries-old tradition. The custom became established of extinguishing the Candle after Compline on Easter Day. Some of the churches where this practice is attested are listed in Table 54 below.

1 Acta Vetera, PL 147.176C.
2 De Vert II p.38.
3 At Tours Cathedral and the Collegiate Church of St Martin, also in Tours, the Easter candle burned continuously until Low Sunday. (Guyet p.294.)
4 HBS 59 p.40.
5 According to Guignard (p.117) the Easter candle should remain where it was blessed until Ascension Day. It is difficult to believe that it remained unlit during the whole of this period.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rouen</td>
<td>11 C.</td>
<td>PL 147.176C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cistercians</td>
<td>1119</td>
<td>Nom.Cist. p.105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilbertines</td>
<td>c.1150</td>
<td>HBS 59 p.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Augustine's, Canterbury</td>
<td>13 C.</td>
<td>HBS 28 p.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salisbury†</td>
<td>13 C.</td>
<td>HBS 91 p.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>1337</td>
<td>HBS 37 p.322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursfeld</td>
<td>c.1500</td>
<td>DAER 3.15.7 p.142, M 1179</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>1662</td>
<td>Ceremonial p.379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amiens</td>
<td>c.1700</td>
<td>DeVert II p.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angers</td>
<td>1731</td>
<td>Ceremonial p.261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evreux</td>
<td>1740</td>
<td>Missal p.194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourges</td>
<td>1741</td>
<td>Missal p.233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Séles</td>
<td>1742</td>
<td>Missal p.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisieux</td>
<td>1752</td>
<td>Missal p.194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poitiers</td>
<td>1767</td>
<td>Missal p.253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reims†</td>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Missal p.213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyon</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>Missal p.203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tours</td>
<td>1784</td>
<td>Missal p.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coutances</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>Ceremonial p.329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Rochelle</td>
<td>1835</td>
<td>Missal p.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nantes</td>
<td>1837</td>
<td>Missal p.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autun</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Missal p.247</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† According to the Sarum Missal (Warren I p.270) it was extinguished at Vespers on Easter Day, the office also prescribed by Lanfranc (PL 150.476C) and enjoined in the Premonstratensian rite (Missal of 1578 cited by King, LRO p.190).

‡ The rubric of this missal banishes any doubt that the Easter candle burned throughout the night of Holy Saturday: ‘The Easter candle should burn during the whole of Saturday, the night which follows, as well as on Easter Day continuously until Compline.’ Direct evidence for the burning of the Candle during the night of Holy Saturday also comes from Laon (Bellotte p.814) and the 1597 Missal of Metz in which the rubric was a quotation from the Preface: *flammae eius Lucifer matutinus inveniat*, ‘let the morning star find her flames’.

Table 54

At Vallombrosa it remained lit usque mane;¹ and the Ordinal of St Mary’s, York refers to the Candle being extinguished the following day without specifying at which service this took place.² At Naples in the eighth century we learn that it was put out after Mass on Easter Day.³ The 1845 Missal of Meaux enjoins that the Easter candle should burn at each service on Easter Day (p.173). This could be interpreted to mean that the Candle was extinguished after every service on that day; but the significance of the Easter candle vis-à-vis the importance of Easter Day makes this unlikely. Moreover there is no other recorded instance of such a practice.

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¹Albers IV p.220.
²HBS 75 p.292.
³Mallardo p.22.
In some churches the Easter candle remained alight beyond the evening of Easter Sunday. At Sens it was extinguished after Lauds on Easter Monday, whilst it burned continuously until Tuesday, presumably until after Compline on that day had been sung, at Verdun and Clermont-Ferrand. The Sarum rite, followed by that of Exeter, prescribes that the Candle be lit for Mass, Matins, Vespers, and Compline on Easter Day, Monday, and Tuesday. Roman practice, defined in the decree of the S.C.R. dated 19 May 1607, stipulated that the Easter candle should be lit on the three days of Easter only at Mass and at Vespers.

In the period between Easter and Ascension Day universal practice, which included the Roman as permitted by the above-mentioned decree, was to light the Easter candle on all intervening Sundays. The decree of 1607 added that other customs, if occurring during Eastertide, should be kept. A considerable number of churches did in fact light the Candle on all major feast days between Easter and Ascension Day. After Compline on Easter Day in the Cistercian rite the Easter candle was not lit again until Vespers of Ascension Day.

It was perhaps inevitable that the time which the Easter candle remained in church should be increased from seven to forty days, seeing that the Candle had come to represent the visible presence of Christ on earth after his resurrection. Its removal from church symbolised his disappearance from human sight. In the majority of churches, including those of Rome, Lyon, Braga, and Milan, the Easter candle was extinguished at the end of the Gospel on Ascension Day, and removed from church at the end of the service. In some churches variant traditions had grown up over the years, so that we find that the Easter candle was extinguished finally at other times:

1. End of Mass on Ascension Day - Old Carmelite rite (King, LRO p.268).
2. Friday after Ascension Day - Salisbury (Warren I p.270) and Exeter (HBS 37 p.322).

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1Missal of 1715 p.244.
2Albers V p.123. The Customary of St Vitus states that the Easter candle is not extinguished 'until the third day'. De Vert mistakenly interpreted this 'Wednesday' (Explanation II p.38).
3De Vert II p.38. See also previous note.
4HBS 37 p.322.
5Warren I p.270.
6DACSR and Philippeau p.146.
7For instance, Exeter (HBS 37 p.322); Gilbertines (HBS 59 p.40); Bursfeld (DAMR 3.15.7 p.142, M 1179); St Augustine's, Canterbury (HBS 28 p.284); Poitiers (1767 Missal p.253).
8King, LRO p.104.
9Desideri p.151.
3. Compline on Friday after Ascension Day - Premonstratensians (King, *LRO* p.190).
4. Compline of Ascension Day - Cistercians (King, *ibidem*).
5. After None on Ascension Day - Portuguese custom mentioned in decree of S.C.R. dated 20 December 1783.
7. Vigil of Pentecost - Albi, Paris, Rouen (Feasey, *ibidem*).
8. ‘At Pentecost’ - Bursfeld (Martene, *DAMR* 3.15.7 p.142).
10. At *assumptus est in coelum* in the Gospel for Ascension Day - Soissons (1745 Missal p.169) and Cahors (1760 Missal p.173).
11. At the 11th hour on Ascension Day - Tulle (Martene, *DAMR* 3.15.7 p.142).
12. Wednesday after Ascension Day - Durham (Raine p.9).
Chapter Thirteen

THE DISPOSAL OF THE EASTER CANDLE

Five different ways are known in which the Easter candle was disposed after it had served its purpose either at the conclusion of Easter Week or at the end of the Season of Easter.

(i) In places, such as Spires, where the Easter candle was large, or where only a small portion of the wax had been consumed, the use of the same Candle was permitted for the following and even for subsequent years. At Lyon it was prescribed that if the same Candle were to be used the following year, it should not be blessed a second time. Presumably this entailed only the omission of the Exultet and Preface from the Paschal vigil. A sentence in Sicardus' *Mitrale* should not be cited as contemporary evidence for the reuse of the Easter candle.

\[ \text{cereus renovatus et illuminatus Christum significat.} \]

At first sight *renovatus* appears to mean 'renewed' and to suggest that the Easter candle from the previous year is being used. However, the use of *renovatus* in this sense would imply that the same Candle was used year after year - possible, but unlikely; and his reference to the disposal of the Candle in a later passage shows that he does not intend us to understand that the wax of the previous year's Candle was reworked to provide the Candle for the following year. It is much more likely that *renovatus* here refers to the changed state of the Candle, from a mass of lifeless beeswax to the consecrated and spirit-charged column in the focus of the Paschal vigil.

(ii) In some places, such as at Westminster, the old Easter candle was reworked with the addition of new wax, whilst at Seville the huge column of wax was broken up and recast. This corresponds to the contemporary practice of a number of churches where the unused portion of the Candle is returned to the manufacturer for recasting.

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1 *Agenda* (1512) fol.xciii.
2 1838 Ceremonial p.479.
3 'The Candle, renewed and lit, signifies Christ.' PL 213.323C.
4 PL 213.325A.
5 Feasey, *The Paschal Candle* p.361.
6 Doblado p.299.

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(iii) According to the Constitutions of Walter Cantilupe the remainder of the Easter candle was used for the manufacture of small altar candles and of candles for the use of the poor, and for providing tapers at the funerals of paupers.1

(iv) The making and distribution of Agnus Dei's from the wax of the previous year's Easter candle is a physical counterpart or an extension in a material dimension of the practice, first encountered in the West in the Mozarabic rite, of sharing the light of the Candle with the assembled faithful. The receiving of the light on the candle of each man and woman was thus paralleled by the distribution of the wax of the Easter candle via the Agnus Dei, which imparted to each recipient whatever inherent virtue the Candle was held to possess.

The making of these medallions is attested in Rome and the dioceses outside Rome as early as the eighth century.2 However firm evidence for their production from the remains of the Easter candle is relatively late.3 It is true that Sicardus draws an analogy between an Agnus Dei and a fragment of the Easter candle; but he does not actually state that the former was composed of wax from the Candle.4

(v) An earlier form of the custom from which the above-mentioned practice almost certainly developed demonstrates the awe in which the Easter candle came to be held and the almost magical properties with which it was supposed to be endowed. It also shows clearly that the superstitious beliefs of pre-Christian Europe, far from being extinguished by the advent of Christianity, lived on vigorously as part of the subculture of medieval Christian society. In the early part of the eleventh century Micrologus records that during Easter Week fragments of the Easter candle were distributed to the people 'for the fumigation of their possessions'.5 Sicardus also states the purpose of the fragments to be 'ad fumigandos'.6 Small pieces of wax were presumably broken off the Easter candle and were burnt in the homes of the faithful to render, it was believed, through the permeation of the smoke both the house and its contents immune from the assaults of the Devil. The purificatory theory of J.G.Frazer,7 that fires were supposed to avert hail, thunder, and lightning caused by witches, was not new to that anthropologist. Grancolas wrote8 in the eighteenth century that the lighting and blessing of the Easter candle...

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1Feasey, Ancient Holy Week p.204. The funeral tapers are also mentioned by Wilkins I p.571.
2OR 26.7-8.
3Piccolomini I p.137 and Grancolas p.319.
4Mitrare, PL 213.325A.
5Ad subfumigandum rebus eorum. PL 151.1016B.
6Mitrare, PL 213.325A.
7Golden Bough 10 p.342.
8Commentarius p.319.
candle was held to be sovereign against lightnings, tempests, and the many dangers in life. In fact the apotropaic virtues of the Candle were recognised as early as the time of Ennodius. In his longer surviving Preface the request is made that a fragment of the wax candle may be sovereign ‘against blasts of wind and buffettings of storms’ and ‘a wall for the faithful should an enemy attack’.1

It is claimed2 that an allusion to the practice of distributing fragments of the Easter candle to the faithful as talismans is contained in the prayer Veniat quaesumus, which, as we already noted, was originally the concluding pericope of the Deus mundi Conditor:

in quocumque loco ex huius sanctificationis mysterio aliquid fuerit deportatum, expulsa diabolicae fraudis nequitia, virtus tuae maiestatis assistat.3

However, the evidence is ambiguous, since the medium of sanctification is not stated and could be either the wax or the fire. For the practice of distributing the new fire is well-attested.4

Honorius of Autun, who also mentions the practice, added that the possession of a fragment of the Easter candle, which represents Christ, symbolised a share in Christ for the faithful at the general resurrection.5 This teaching also gives us a small insight into how the Church achieved a sort of modus vivendi with some pagan beliefs and practices, and at the same time reveals how the Church in her turn was to some extent influenced by superstitious beliefs.

The tradition of fashioning talismans from the wax of the Easter candle survived into the twentieth century. Bisso describes the use of charms in the house or in the fields against illusiones diabolicae (amongst other evils) as a practice of the past;6 but at Bourges in the eighteenth century globuli of wax, stamped with a cross, were distributed after Mass on Ascension Day, and placed above the thresholds of houses as a protection against storms.7 More recently, wax crosses, made from the Easter candle, were fastened to the doorposts of the churches of Capua, a practice still observed at the Monas-

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1Pinell, Benedicció p.93.
2Van Doren, La cérémonie du feu nouveau p.77 note 3.
3‘Into whatever place a portion of this sanctifying mystery shall be carried, may the evil of Satan’s guile be driven thence and may the power of your majesty be present.’
4See Part II Chapter 8 p.185.
5Quia Christus in resurrectione ultima fidelibus in premio tribueretur. Gemma animae PL 172.667D.
6Hierurgia I p.180.
71741 Missal p.233.
tery of Monte Cassino at the beginning of this century. In his *History of Reims* Flodoardus (AD 894-966) records a story which further illustrates the supposed miraculous potency of the Easter candle. When the bodies of Rufinus and Valerius were being transferred to the cathedral, the Easter candle caught fire - a form of divine recognition of their saintliness.

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1Latis p.127.
2PL 135.326A/B.
Chapter Fourteen

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE EASTER CANDLE

In Chapter one we suggested that a beeswax candle was used at the Vigil of Holy Saturday in preference to the traditional lamp of the Lucernarium both because of its cosmic significance and because its shape and size vividly symbolised the column of fire in Exodus. We noted that in Ennodius' laudes cerei the lighted beeswax candle not merely symbolised, but actually existed as a tangible microcosm of creation. Although the Romano-Gallican Preface, contains two eschatological allusions, it has as its pre-eminent theme the Passover and the passing of the Israelites through the Red Sea. These events were understood to be prefigurations of the Christian Vigil and Baptism.

It was perhaps inevitable, therefore, in view of the dominant references in the Romano-Gallican Preface to the events in Exodus that the Easter candle, which provided the visual symbolic link between the Old Testament narrative and the liturgical re-enactment of that narrative at the Paschal vigil, should undergo an elaboration of symbolism which emphasised the significance of the Easter candle both in its Old Testament setting and especially within the immediate context of the Vigil liturgy.

As early as Amalarius we find an intensification of that typology, characteristic of medieval biblical interpretation, which sought to find the face of Christ present throughout the whole of the Old Testament. Apropos of the Paschal vigil the Easter candle readily lent itself to its being interpreted as a symbol of Christ, since the pillar of fire in the Book of Exodus was seen to foreshadow the coming of Christ during the Christian Passover. The identification of Christ with the Easter candle was made by a number of medieval writers who elaborated the symbolism and significance of the large burning column of wax.

Just as the Easter candle symbolises the presence of the Lord in the fiery column, which led the Israelites through the Red Sea from bondage into a new life, so within a Christian liturgical context, in which it was carried before the catechumens to Baptism, the Candle was seen to represent Christ leading the Christian faithful to a new life. The spread of light from the Easter candle imparts a share in the merits effected by Baptism,

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1See pages 226-7.
2Liber Officialis 1.1.18: Columna ista [of Exodus] Christum praefigurabat.
4Macri p.142; Thurston, The Exultet p.509.
not only to those who receive the light, but to the inanimate lamps and candles of both the church building and the hearths and homes of the faithful;¹ and foreshadows and anticipates the ultimate redemption of all creation, the doctrine familiar from the laudes cerei of Ennodius.

Beaudoin drew attention to the fact that the Easter candle symbolises both the person and the work of Christ;² and this is well borne out by the above-mentioned medieval commentators and in particular by Durandus.³ For him the Easter candle has a threefold significance. At one level it represents both the new teaching of Christ and the new life in Christ, available to all and symbolised in the sharing of the light of the Candle. Like Rupert of Deutz and Honorius of Autun before him, Durandus identifies the light of the Easter candle with the Holy Spirit. In the same way that the disciples received the Holy Spirit from Christ, so all the candles should be lit from the Easter candle.

Durandus also echoes Rupert when he writes that the light of the Easter candle symbolises the Resurrection. Since the unlit Candle conveys the notion of Christ in death and repose,⁴ so the actual kindling of the wax column's wick represents the very instant that Christ arose from the dead. We noted above⁵ that at Naples the Easter candle was fashioned to a great height in honour of the Resurrection, the size reflecting the magnitude of the one who rose. Thurston, commenting on the largeness of the Candle, added that a great light should typify the True Light.⁶

The third symbolic aspect of the Easter candle was suggested by the three physical components of the lighted candle, not according to Ennodius' conception of the Candle as a microcosm of creation, but using the analogy which Augustine drew between a candle and a human being.⁷ According to the African Doctor of the Church the beeswax, the wick, and the flame of a candle corresponds to the flesh, the soul, and the intelligence of a man. With the identification of the Easter candle with Christ, it was perhaps inevitable that the Ennodian conception of the Candle at a higher and cosmic level should yield to the more readily-grasped personal Augustinian view of the Candle. Since the analogy already existed between the supposed parthenogenetically-produced

¹For the taking home of the new fire, see Pt II Chapter 8 p.185.
²Le cierge pascal p.24.
³Rationale VI.80 pp.350-1.
⁴Rock, Hierurgia p.407.
⁵Chapter 4 p.234.
⁶Lent and Holy Week p.408.
⁷Sermones Inediti I (PL 46.819). There is some uncertainty over the authorship of this work.
wax of the bee and the human flesh of Christ, who was born of a virgin, a tripartite identification of the wax, the wick, and the flame of the Easter candle with the person of Christ was readily made.

In a wider sense the beeswax, which symbolised Christ’s flesh, was also held to represent his humanity, an analogy suggested perhaps by Clement of Alexandria, who stated that wax was symbolic of human frailty.¹ Durandus also follows Augustine in likening the wick of the Candle to the soul of Christ; but identifies the flame of the Candle with Christ’s divinity rather than his intelligence or intellect. Augustine had viewed the candle in light of human existence. In more recent times it has been pointed out that for the Christian the Augustinian view of the candle is a salutary reminder of his own position and standing vis-à-vis the Easter candle as the symbol of Christ. For he should find in the Candle an image of himself, since the wax, the wick, and the flame symbolise respectively his body, his soul, and his faith.²

Elsewhere³ we have observed how the custom of extinguishing the Easter candle on or near Ascension Day considerably narrowed its significance, and how the directing of the cries of Lumen Christi at the triple candle detracted from the importance of the Paschal column of wax. It was generally regarded that the Candle represented the visible resurrected presence of Christ,⁴ and for that reason was extinguished at Ascension-tide. One of the aims of the liturgical reforms of 1955 was to restore the Easter candle to its former status as a symbol of the timeless and universal presence of Christ.

* * * * *

Amalarius is also our earliest authority for attaching a symbolic interpretation to the smaller candle which was associated with the Easter candle.⁵ This single candle stood for the twelve apostles, who accompanied Christ during his ministry and were responsible for the spread of Christ’s light. For Christ had said to them ‘You are the light of the world’; and the second candle is a liturgical reminder of Christ’s words.

¹Stromateis 4, cited by Novarinus p.19.
²Berlière, Le cierge pascal p.114.
³Pt IV Chp.12 p.300 and Pt 3 Chap.4 p.217.
⁴DHCR I p.471
⁵Followed by Sicardus, op.cit. and Durandus, Rationale VI.80 p.352. See also below, Chapter 17 pp.338-9.
Chapter Fifteen

THE PROVISION OF LIGHT AT THE PASchal VIGIL

Little is known about the provision of light at the primitive Paschal vigil in the West. The evidence of the eighth-century and ninth-century ordines, however, shows that prior to the commencement of the Vigil, the church was in total darkness. Subsequently, it has been the universal practice throughout the western Church, even when the Vigil came to be anticipated and held in the morning light of Holy Saturday, to extinguish all the lights of the building prior to the start of the service. This is still a feature of the 1970 Roman and 1986 Church of England rites. In the Middle Ages it was sometimes the practice to extinguish the lights after the kindling of the new fire.

The darkened church provided a congruous ambience and created an appropriate atmosphere for the reading of the lections which formed the principal feature of the Vigil. At one level the reading of the Word in the gloom of night could be viewed as a liturgical re-enactment of John 1:5; and at another the darkness of the church symbolised the sin of the world soon to be dispelled by the light of the Resurrection, once the lamps and candles had been rekindled with new or rehallowed fire. With the anticipation of the Vigil in the afternoon and subsequently in the morning of Holy Saturday, these dramatic and atmospheric results were lost.

There are no grounds for believing that the Paschal vigil was conducted in total darkness. It is true that the Vigil-lections could have been memorised and recited without the aid of the written word, so allowing the service to be conducted in a complete absence of light; for we saw that in sixth-century Gaul Matins of Holy Saturday was held in such circumstances. However, a comparison between the two services is invalid, since at that office of Matins well-memorised psalms were chanted by a relatively small group of monks. During the Vigil, however, lengthy portions of Scripture were read to a congregation which included children. The difficulties attendant upon holding this service in total darkness seem obvious.

1 OR 26.9 and OR 29.17; OR 31.67, respectively.
2 Missal of Lesnes (HBS 95 p.47); MR 1474 (HBS 17 p.175).
3 With the emergence and use of the Easter candle, the symbolism became more appropriate.
4 See Part I Chapter 1 pp.3-6.
Nevertheless the service was not held in an abundance of light. In the next chapter we will show that at the old Roman Vigil illumination for the purpose of reading was provided by two man-sized candles, lit from fire either reserved on Maundy Thursday or kindled on Good Friday and reserved until the following day. We learn from the Pontifical of Regensburg that the two large candles were blessed prior to the reading of the lections (p.125). Their benediction at this point can also be inferred from Zachary’s letter and from Ordo 29. The church thus remained in semi-darkness throughout the readings and the blessing of the font, until the cry of Accendite, following the Agnus Dei after Baptism, instructed the neophytes to light their candles and the sacristans to kindle the lamps of the church. The sudden appearance of light at the conclusion of the Vigil, heralding the Resurrection and symbolising the triumph of the Light of the World over sin and death, provided a vivid contrast with the sepulchral atmosphere which pervaded the ceremonial that had just ended. The faithful were now able to participate in the milieu of both physical and eschatological light in which the first Mass of Easter was celebrated.

The incorporation of the Easter candle and its ritual into the Roman Vigil resulted in a diversification of the ceremonial relating to the provision of light vis-à-vis the reading of the Vigil-lections and the blessing of the font. Whilst in some rites the tradition persisted of reading the Vigil-lections in semi-darkness, in some churches the provision of an abundance of light occurred either at the beginning or close to the beginning of the Paschal vigil.

(i) The Vigil in semi-darkness

We have already observed that with the increasing anticipation of the Vigil in some churches in the West the dependence on liturgical light for both reading and dramatic effect had largely disappeared. The churches, listed in Tables 55, 56, and 57, which perpetuated the tradition of holding the Vigil in darkness, had the following scheme for the provision of light:

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1Letter of Zachary, PL 89.951B.
2OR 29.45.
3The large candles recalled the two angels of Luke 24:4 (p.328-9). The darkened church obviously suggested the Tomb. The aspect of death is further reinforced by the remark of St Ambrose that 'the font has the shape and appearance of a sort of tomb' (Sermons on the Sacraments III.1).
4That is, with the illumination of the whole church.
5Nevertheless there are a number of cathedrals whose unlit interiors on a dull late-March morning would have provided a fitting atmosphere of gloom.

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(a) The new fire procession.
(b) The lighting of the Easter candle at *ignis accendit*.
(c) The general illumination of the church after the blessing of the font, cued (in some churches) by the cry of *Accendite*.

The replacement or displacement of the two Vigil-candles by the Easter candle, as the principal source of liturgical light, ensured the continued supply of sufficient functional light necessary for the reading of the prophecies. However, the substitution was also a highly significant development; for, whereas the two Vigil-candles suggested sepulchral light and the mourning of the Church for the dead Christ, the light of the Easter candle was both Paschal and resurrectional. For, given the prominent Exodus-typology especially in the Romano-Gallican Preface, the fire of the Candle symbolised historically the presence of God in the Burning Bush and in the Fiery Column, and within the immediate eschatological context of the Paschal vigil anticipated the inrush of light at the dawn of the New Age, which would banish the darkness of this world's oppression and sin. At the same time, while the first chapter of Genesis was being read, the burning of the Easter candle, 'consecrated in honour of your name', demonstrated that the Word of God was in existence even at the Creation. The Easter candle ‘burning over the pages of the Old Testament is a sign of the presence of Christ from the beginning’.

Although only six of the documents listed in Tables 55-57 specifically mention the kindling of the altar lights, it is safe to assume that most of the other documents include them in their mention of ‘all the lights of the church’. Lanfranc’s injunction included the lights both *ante* and *circa* the altar, that is, both the functional and cultic lights of the choir and sanctuary. Further support for the implied inclusion of the altar lights comes from the alternative tradition, outlined in the next section, in which these liturgical lights were kindled prior to the start of Mass.

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1 Harbert p.241. The symbolism is valid regardless of when the Easter candle is lit, providing it precedes the reading of the prophecies. The weakness of the recent form of service, produced by the Joint Liturgical Group (Gray pp.76 ff.) and incorporated into *Lent, Holy Week, Easter* produced by the Liturgical Commission of the Church of England (pp.223 ff.), in which the Vigil-lections precede the ceremony of light, is the necessity of providing 'essential' light for the reading of these lessons.
### Table 55 Evidence for the illumination of the church at the conclusion of the Vigil following the triple cry of *Accendite.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Lanfranc’s Decrees*</td>
<td>c.1070</td>
<td>PL 150.468A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carcassonne</td>
<td>14 C</td>
<td>DAER 4.24 p.150, M 56</td>
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<td>Rosslyn Missal</td>
<td>c.1300</td>
<td>HBS 15 p.35</td>
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<td>Arles</td>
<td>14 C</td>
<td>DAER 4.24 p.150, M 31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
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<td>Missal p.191</td>
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<td>Mende</td>
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<td>DAER 4.24 p.150, M 187</td>
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<td>Bazas</td>
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<td>Besançon</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>Missal p.234</td>
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* Indicates that the altar lights were also lit.

### Table 56 Evidence for the illumination of the church at the conclusion of the Vigil following a single cry of *Accendite.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/Document</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 27</td>
<td>750-800</td>
<td>OR 27.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordo 28</td>
<td>c.800</td>
<td>OR 28.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poitiers</td>
<td>c.900</td>
<td>Poitiers p.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRG</td>
<td>c.950</td>
<td>II p.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Regularis Concordia</em></td>
<td>c.970</td>
<td>PL 137.494D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regensburg</td>
<td>c.980</td>
<td>Pontifical p.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcuin</td>
<td>c.1000</td>
<td>PL 101.1221C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluny*</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Albers I p.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluny</td>
<td>1510</td>
<td>Missal fol.liii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farfa</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Albers IV p.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruttuaria*</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Albers V p.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleury</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Albers V p.250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vallombrosa*</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Albers V p.101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gembloux</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Albers V p.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMG</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Albers V p.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Vito, Verdun</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>DAER 4.24 p.150, M 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Besançon</td>
<td>11 C</td>
<td>Ordinary p.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reims</td>
<td>c.1200</td>
<td>Ritual p.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St-Martin, Tours</td>
<td>13 C</td>
<td>HBS 86 p.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Vedast, Arras</td>
<td>c.1300</td>
<td>DAER 4.24 p.163, M 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strasbourg</td>
<td>1364</td>
<td>HBS 5 col.589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westminster</td>
<td>c.1370</td>
<td>Missal p.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hereford</td>
<td>1502</td>
<td>Missal fol.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camaldolese*</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>Missal fol.xcv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vallombrosa</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>Missal fol.ci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyon</td>
<td>1510</td>
<td>Missal fol.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates that the altar lights were also lit.

Table 56 Evidence for the illumination of the church at the conclusion of the Vigil following a single cry of *Accendite.*
Table 57 Evidence for the illumination of the church at the conclusion of the Vigil without the cry of Accendite.

The cry of Accendite can be traced back to the eighth-century Stational Mass of Easter Day at the Cathedral of St John Lateran, where the subdeacon issued the order to kindle the lights of the basilica before the start of the service, once the ceremonies of the Vigil had ended.1 It was heard at Lyon, Regensburg, and in other churches where a Roman-type Vigil was held;2 and survived in numerous French dioceses long after it had disappeared from the Roman rite.3

The earliest sources attest a single cry of Accendite. There is no evidence of any link between the twice-repeated order enjoined by Lanfranc and the triple acclamation of Lumen Christi when the new fire was brought into church. In the two instances4 where both the Lumen Christi and the Accendite featured within the same rite, the latter was proclaimed only once. In places the threefold Accendite was announced by the choir alta voce.5 At Bayonne the deacon held the serpent-candle; whilst at Osma the deacon ascended an altar step with each subsequent cry. In both these two churches the choir made the response of Deo gratias after each shout. At Arles and Narbonne the response of Lumen Christi followed the first two acclamations and Deo gratias the

---

1 Ordo I, PL 78.940D.
2 One of the features of the old Roman Vigil which survived at both Lyon, where the Roman rite was introduced by Leidrad c.AD 800, and Beneventum, was the position in the liturgy of the Vigil-lections. At Lyon the prophecies were read by natural light because of anticipation and without the use of liturgical light before the Easter candle was blessed. In the latter rite the kindling of the new fire and the blessing of the Easter candle took place between the eleventh and final readings (Hesbert p.188).
3 It is not found in PR XII or in subsequent Roman service-books.
4 The Customary of Vallombrosa and the Camaldolese Missal. For these and subsequent references, see the Tables.
5 In Lanfranc's Decrees and in the Missal of Bazas.
third. In Auxerre Cathedral a white-robed choir boy raised his voice with each subsequent cry of Accendite. In the rites of the churches listed in Table 57 there is no indication that the cry featured in the ceremonial.

(ii) The Vigil in the light

1. Illumination before the blessing of the Easter candle,

   (a) The Mozarabic tradition. It is generally agreed that a number of elements in the Mozarabic new fire ceremony had their origin in the fourth-century liturgy of Jerusalem;¹ Certain features, such as the striking of the new fire and the blessing of the Easter candle together with its Preface, are importations from Gaul. However, there seems to be little doubt that the following have their provenance in the rite of Jerusalem:

   - the sacristy in total darkness
   - the lighting of the lamp by the bishop
   - the lighting of the clergy candles
   - the entry of the bishop into church
   - the sharing and spread of light from candle to candle

   The initial ceremony completed, the Easter candle is consecrated and the Vigil-lections are read in a blaze of light from the candles of the faithful. This Jerusalem-derived Vigil, in which the congregation participates throughout in the newly-blessed light contrasts markedly with the type of Vigil held in semi-darkness, which was described above in Section (i).

   (b) Other traditions. The custom which obtained in the churches of Cordoba, Bourges, and Carcassonne resembled Mozarabic practice in that the Vigil-lections were read with the church lights ablaze. With these three churches should be included Uzès and Passau, where the church lights were kindled at the conclusion of the Preface (Table 58). It is possible that at Cordoba the influence of the Mozarabic rite may be detected, although somewhat strangely the Easter candle was lit only during the Preface at ignis accendit. The antecedents of this feature at Bourges and Carcassonne are more difficult to explain. Spanish influence seems very unlikely. One possible explanation is that we

¹See Appendix 13.
have in these two churches a survival and development of the ceremonial of PRG. For according to that pontifical both the seven lamps in front of the altar and the Easter candle were kindled before the archdeacon began the Exultet.\textsuperscript{1}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{(i) Church illumination before the \textit{Exultet}} & & \\
Mozarabic rite & 7 C & Leon Antiphonary pp.280-1 \\
Cordoba & 1561 & Missal fol.ciii \\
Bourges & 1741 & Missal p.226 \\
Carcassonne & 1749 & Missal p.196 \\
\hline
\textbf{(ii) Church illumination after the \textit{Exultet}} & & \\
Uzès & 1495 & all lights & Missal fol.lxiii \\
Passau & 1503 & other candles & Missal fol.lxxxiv \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textit{Table 58} Evidence for the illumination of the church either before or after the blessing of the Easter candle.

2. \textit{Illumination during} the blessing of the Easter candle.

From about the middle of the eleventh century there emerged the practice of kindling other lights during the Preface in addition to the Easter candle. It is first attested in the \textit{Acta Vetera} of Rouen\textsuperscript{2}: the two small Vigil-candles were lit during the Preface at the words \textit{divisus in partes}. The lighting of these candles at this point is also found in the 1511 Missal of Nîmes and in an Ordinary of the Regular Canons of St Rufinus,\textsuperscript{3} and in the Dominican rite.\textsuperscript{4} The practice suggests a liturgical representation and visual interpretation of the subsequent clause \textit{mutuati (tamen) luminis detrimenta non novit}.\textsuperscript{5} It is not difficult to realise why this practice was first extended to include the seven altar lamps,\textsuperscript{6} and subsequently all the lights of the church, as at Salisbury.\textsuperscript{7}

Later development, centring around the point at which the lights, both functional and liturgical, were kindled, resulted in a diversity of practice. One suspects that alternative points were adopted because the cue of \textit{divisus in partes} was separated by only three words from \textit{ignis accendit}, the point at which the Easter candle was lit. Three separate traditions developed involving this point.

\textsuperscript{1}II p.98 §346. The practice is also attested in \textit{Alcuin} (PL 101.1216B).
\textsuperscript{2}PL 147.176C.
\textsuperscript{3}Both documents are cited by De Vert, \textit{Explication} II p.37.
\textsuperscript{4}1504 Missal fol.lxxxix and 1908 Missal p.169. According to Dominican practice the two acolytes' candles were lit at \textit{divisus in partes}, and a further dissemination of light (for general illumination) occurred at \textit{apis mater eduxit}.
\textsuperscript{5}"Suffers no detriment from its light being borrowed."
\textsuperscript{6}\textit{OEL} p.61 and \textit{PR XII} l.xxxii.8 p.240.
\textsuperscript{7}For references, see \textit{Table 59}.
(i) At suscipe, sancte pater. In most other rites the five grains of incense were inserted at this point. That the following phrase incensi huius sacrificium vespertinum originally related to the light of the Candle, and not to the incense, strongly suggests that the tradition of lighting other candles at this point was very old. Regrettably, the only known instance of its occurrence is at Tongres in the fifteenth century. Here the other candles mentioned presumably included those of the acolytes, and the church lights.

(ii) In a number of churches the kindling of the other lights also occurred at the same point (ignis accendit) at which the Easter candle was lit. The kindling of these lights may have occurred here because it was felt that, once the new fire had been used to kindle the Easter candle, there was no obvious reason to delay further acts of illumination; or because it demonstrated visibly the truth of the assertion, soon to be heard by all: luminis detrimenta non novit; or possibly because it avoided a further interruption in the chanting of the Preface.

(iii) A pause for the secondary act of illumination at apis mater eduxit was favoured by an even larger number of churches, including Rome, and by the majority of the monastic orders. These words, which closed the short pericope eulogising the bee, provided a suitable break in the Preface in the same way that the insertion of the grains and the lighting of the Easter candle also occurred at the end of a section. In churches which retained the Preface containing the lengthy eulogy of the bees, the interruption for this secondary act of illumination occurred at virgo permansit. Other points during the Preface where secondary illumination is known to have occurred are listed in Table 59.

In a large number of service-books the rubrics are silent regarding the point at which additional illumination occurred. In the rubrics of a number of church rites it is not clear which lights were kindled during the Preface. The word lampades without a qualifying phrase or adjective may signify either the altar lights or the church lights or both. For instance, the rubric at mater eduxit in the 1762 Missal of Paris relates to the acolytes' candles and the lampades (p.239). The Missal of 1666, however, specifies 'the lamps hanging in the choir' (p.244).

That development and flexibility of practice could and did occur within the same rite is perhaps best exemplified in the various Roman documents which attest the various points at which the church, the acolytes’, and the altar lights were kindled in the period AD 950 to 1574. As we observed at the beginning of this chapter, in the primitive Holy Saturday rites of the Roman Church the two large Vigil-candles had
| Table 59 Evidence for illumination during the Preface |

(i) At *suscipe, sancte pater*  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tongres</td>
<td>15 C</td>
<td>'other candles'</td>
<td>Ordinary p.165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) At *ignis accendit*  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St Mary's York</td>
<td>c. 1400</td>
<td>other lights</td>
<td>HBS 75 p.292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmelites</td>
<td>c. 1312</td>
<td>acolyte and church</td>
<td>Ordinary p.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>1337</td>
<td>other church lights</td>
<td>HBS 37 p.322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langres</td>
<td>1492</td>
<td>other church lights</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seville</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>other lights</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxviii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Würzburg</td>
<td>1509</td>
<td>acolyte only</td>
<td>Missal fol.244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cologne</td>
<td>1514</td>
<td>other church lights</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coutances</td>
<td>1557</td>
<td>other church lights</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palencia</td>
<td>1568</td>
<td>church and altar</td>
<td>Missal fol.cvi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalons</td>
<td>1748</td>
<td>acolyte and lamps*</td>
<td>Missal p.183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyon</td>
<td>1771</td>
<td>acolyte and church</td>
<td>Missal p.195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayeux</td>
<td>1790</td>
<td>other candles</td>
<td>Missal p.170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaux</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>acolyte and lamps*</td>
<td>Missal p.169</td>
</tr>
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</table>

(iii) At *mater eduxit*  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haymo (OM)</td>
<td>c. 1243</td>
<td>lamps*</td>
<td>Van Dijk II p.246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>1477</td>
<td>lamps*</td>
<td>Miss. Rom. np</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Würzburg</td>
<td>1497</td>
<td>other lights</td>
<td>Ordinary np</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coimbra (AC)</td>
<td>1597</td>
<td>lamps*</td>
<td>Ordinary fol.137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camaldolese</td>
<td>1634</td>
<td>lamp of high altar and church lights</td>
<td>Ceremonial p.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouen</td>
<td>1640</td>
<td>church lights</td>
<td>Ritual p.306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmelites</td>
<td>1664</td>
<td>church lamps</td>
<td>Missal p.162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>1666</td>
<td>acolytes and hang-lamps in choir</td>
<td>Missal p.244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cistercians</td>
<td>1669</td>
<td>all the lamps*</td>
<td>Missal p.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Besançon</td>
<td>1682</td>
<td>all lights</td>
<td>Ceremonial p.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evreux</td>
<td>1740</td>
<td>lights</td>
<td>Missal p.192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amiens</td>
<td>1752</td>
<td>lamps*</td>
<td>Missal p.79 (Suppl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maison du Roy</td>
<td>1741</td>
<td>lights</td>
<td>Sem.Sainte p.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mende</td>
<td>1766</td>
<td>other lights</td>
<td>Missal p.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poitiers</td>
<td>1767</td>
<td>all lights</td>
<td>Missal p.251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capuchins†</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>nearby lamps</td>
<td>Ceremonial p.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayeux</td>
<td>1790</td>
<td>altar lights</td>
<td>Missal p.170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1819</td>
<td>(As Camaldolese)</td>
<td>Manual p.479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coutances</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>acolyte and church</td>
<td>Ceremonial p.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luçon</td>
<td>1828</td>
<td>acolyte and lamps*</td>
<td>Missal p.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limoges</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>church lights</td>
<td>Missal p.255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toulouse</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>candles and lights</td>
<td>Missal p.211</td>
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(iv) At *divisus in partes*  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salisbury</td>
<td>c. 1300</td>
<td>church lights</td>
<td>Legg p.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salisbury</td>
<td>c. 1486</td>
<td>church lights</td>
<td>Missal fol.lxxxiv</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(v) At *virgo permansit*  
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Town</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Burgos</td>
<td>1546</td>
<td>church lights</td>
<td>Missal fol.cvii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosenza</td>
<td>1549</td>
<td>all lamps</td>
<td>Missal fol.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braga</td>
<td>1558</td>
<td>other lights</td>
<td>Missal fol.xcvi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(vi) At *non novit*  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Braga</td>
<td>1558</td>
<td>2 other candles</td>
<td>Missal fol.xcvi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* lampades.  
† Actually at *O vere beata nox*.  
‡ Other lights at *O vere beata nox*. 

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been lit before the reading of the lections, and the church lights, together with the candles of the neophytes, were kindled after the cry of Accendite. Subsequent changes came about as follows.

(a) The Church Lights. *PRG* is silent on this score. The twelfth-century *Ordo* of the Lateran Church, however, states that all the lights of the church should be lit by the sacristan at the *Kyries* which introduce the Mass of Easter.¹ This procedure had also been enjoined in Lanfranc’s *Decrees*: after the cry of Accendite all the church lights should be kindled, including those in front of and around the altar.² Now according to Haymo’s *Ordo Missalis* of c.1243 ‘lamps’ were lit during the Preface at mater eduxit.³ In view of the later reference in the same document to altar lights (p.248), the *lampades* referred to during the Preface are almost certainly the lamps which hung in the choir. Late fifteenth-century and early sixteenth-century Roman missals⁴ retain the rubric: *(accendunt) lampades ante altare;*⁵ but the majority of later books, including the Tridentine Missal of 1574 omit the phrase *ante altare,* and state simply: *Hie accenduntur lampades.* The vagueis of the rubric, which may relate to the church lights, the choir lights,⁶ or even the altar lights, thus allows some flexibility of practice.⁷ In more recent times all the lights and lamps in the church, except the altar candles, were kindled at *mater eduxit.* The latter were lit after the Litany.⁸

¹*OEL* p.73: *omnia luminaria et lampades ecclesiae.*
²PL 150.468A: *ante et circa altare.* The evidence of later Roman missals strongly suggests that the phrase (in the missals) *lampades ante altare,* which formerly referred to the liturgical lights that subsequently became altar candles, indicates the functional lights of the choir. These, viewed from the nave, did indeed hang in front of the altar. Those disposed *circa altare* were the cultic lights. The evidence, such as it is, would suggest that in Lanfranc’s time lights were not placed upon the altar, rather around it.
³Van Dijk II p.248.
⁴For instance, *MR* 1500 *MR* 1501; *MR* 1506; *MR* 1520.
⁵The corresponding mid-prefatorial rubric in the Roman Missals of 1474, 1477, 1484, and 1491 (HBS 33 p.85, np, np, fol.93, respectively) seem to present a difficulty: for they state: *Hic accenditur lampas ante altare,* ‘Here a lamp is lit before the altar’. The use of the singular *lampas* may be explained in three ways. (Its appearance in successive missals seems to rule out an error.)
   (i) It is used generically and is here to be interpreted ‘light’. (ii) It refers to the first of the chancel lamps to be lit. (iii) The sanctuary lamp is intended.
   The interpretation of *lampas* as ‘light’ is poetic and would be very unusual within a rubrical context. The second explanation implies that one of the chancel lights was in some way special. Support for the third possibility is to be found in the 1634 Camaldolese Ceremonial, in which we read that, at the words *mater eduxit,* the lamp of the high altar was lit by an acolyte (p.85). The church lights were also lit at this point.
   Somewhat surprisingly the rubrics of *MR* 1477, *MR* 1484, and *MR* 1491, which form the preamble to the *Exultet,* state that at the words *mater eduxit:* *Hic accendunt lampades.*
⁶As in the 1509 Missal of Würzburg fol.244.
⁷This is further illustrated by the fact that the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* of 1600 enjoins that the church lights should be lit during the Litany (p.303) and the Ceremonial of Benedict XIII states that this should occur just before the start of Mass.
⁸Fortescue and O’Connell (6th ed.) p.344.
(b) The Altar Lights. Reference has been made in the above section to the practice of kindling the altar lights prior to the start of Mass. The Lateran Missal and Durand’s Pontifical also provide evidence for the practice in the thirteenth century. Earlier practice had been to light the seven lamps before the Exultet. Subsequently they were lit during the Preface. According to PR XII and the Lateran Ordo the kindling of these lights took place at luminis detrimenta non novit. This tradition survived at Palencia.

(c) The two candles. Custom varied regarding the moment at which the two candles, which had survived from the old Roman-type Vigil, were lit. The displacement of the two man-sized candles from the centrality of the liturgy either resulted in their assuming a very minor role in the ceremonial or in the merging of their function with the honorific episcopal candles in some churches or the acolytes’ candles in others. Largely, one suspects, because they had acquired different functions within the liturgy, it is perhaps not surprising to find a variation in the points at which they were kindled during the ceremonial. At Chartres the two bishop’s candles were lit probably during the Preface, whilst at St-Germain-des-Prés the two Vigil-candles, their status reduced, were lit immediately after the conclusion of the Preface. This is the point at which they were lit at Salzburg, where even in the fifteenth century the two candles were of considerable dimensions. At Vallombrosa, however, the two candles were lit after the cry of Accendite. The lighting of the two acolytes’ or torch-bearers’ candles is unrecorded in many documents. At Périgueux and Meaux, for instance, they were lit before the Exultet, as was the Easter candle. Elsewhere, the kindling of the church lights presupposes that these two candles were already ablaze. The Sarum Missal of c.1486 states that the illumination of the church was the responsibility of the torch-bearers: ceroferarii accendunt candelas per ecclesiam.

1Schmidt II p.610 §112 and PGD III p.588, respectively. Bauldry in the eighteenth century also prescribes this point (p.193).
2Thus PRG II p.98 §346.
3I.xxxiii.8 p.240 and OEL p.61, respectively.
41568 Missal fol.cvi.
5For these candles, see Chapter 16 pp.326 ff.
6Ordinary p.111.
7Martène, DAER 4.24 p.159, M 230.
81507 Missal of Salzburg fol.xcvii.
9Albers IV p.250.
101782 Missal p.159 and 1845 Missal p.169, respectively.
11Fol.lxxxvi. ‘The torch-bearers kindle the lamps throughout the church.’
smaller Easter candle, was lit is confined to the *Regularis Concordia*. According to this document the lighting of this candle took place at the conclusion of the Preface.\(^1\) At Salisbury it seems to have been lit as soon as the larger Candle was aflame.\(^2\)

(e) The *Sanctissimum* light. Few service-books or manuals refer to the light before the reserved sacrament. The rubric of the fourteenth-century Customary of Laon\(^3\) seems to imply that the lights before the *Corpus Christi* were relit immediately after they had been extinguished. This momentary loss of light is also attested by De Bralion and Gavantus.\(^4\) The nineteenth-century Polish Manual states that the sanctuary lamp was lit during the Preface at *mater eduxit*, but does not indicate at what point it was extinguished (p.479). The 1775 Capuchin *Memoriale* concurs with the foregoing manual, but adds that the lamp was extinguished before None (p.130). On the other hand Desideri\(^5\) and more recent liturgical handbooks\(^6\) insist that this light ought never to be extinguished.

3. *Illumination after the blessing of the Easter candle.*

At Passau and Uzès\(^7\) the church lights were lit at the conclusion of the Preface. We noted above that according to the *Regularis Concordia* the *cereus minor* and the two Vigil-candles were lit at this point during the service; but the fact that that document enjoins the kindling of the church lights after the cry of *Accendite* makes the influence of Benedictine practice unlikely.

(iii) *The rites of Lyon and Milan*

The ceremonial of the primatial church of France has undergone a number of changes in respect of the provision of light at the Paschal vigil. From *c*.AD 800, when the Roman rite was first introduced at Lyon, until 1771, the cry of *Accendite* at the conclusion of the Vigil signalled that the lights of the cathedral should be lit. In 1771 the contemporary Roman practice was adopted: the acolytes' candles and the church lights were kindled during the Preface, and the altar candles after the blessing of the *font*.\(^8\)

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1. PL 137.494C.
2. Implied from Dickinson p.341.
6. For instance, Fortescue and O'Connell (11th ed.) p.301.
7. 1503 Missal fol.lxxxiv and 1495 Missal fol.lxiii, respectively.
The traditional cry of Accendite, which had been excluded at that time, was restored to the liturgy in 1904, immediately before the Agnus Dei. Present practice is modelled on the Roman reforms of 1955 and 1970.

The earliest evidence for the Ambrosian rite dates from the twelfth century. The Easter candle and the diaconal candles were lit at the words Ecce iam ignis which introduce the second pericope of the Ambrosian Preface. According to the Missal of 1594 the lampades were kindled at the closing words of the third pericope ut coruscus adveniet (fol.97). To that rubric the Missals of 1669 and 1901 add ‘and the lights of the church’. Contemporary practice is to kindle all the church lights and candles as the procession with the Easter candle moves into church.

\[\text{1904 Missal p.221.}\]
\[\text{Beroldus p.110 and all missals up to that of 1901.}\]
\[\text{Martène, DAER 4.24 p.169 and 1934 Missal t.e. p.40 (Repert.),respectively.}\]
\[\text{1986 Missal p.54.}\]
Chapter Sixteen

THE ROMAN VIGIL AND THE GALLICAN RITE

(i) Outline description and the Vigil-candles

The evidence for the older Roman Vigil is contained in five of the ordines Romani, which range in date from c.AD 600 to c.AD 800.¹ None of these five documents describes the service in great detail - the information supplied by Ordo 11, for instance, is extremely meagre; nevertheless collectively they provide sufficient details to enable us to reconstruct with confidence the structure of the ceremony which took place during this period on the night of Holy Saturday in the Cathedral of St John Lateran.

After the clergy² had donned their vestments in the sacristy,³ they moved thence in silent procession⁴ into church escorting the two man-sized Vigil-candles,⁵ and making their way to the altar to take up their appointed positions. The two candles were borne in procession by two junior officials or clerics in minor orders,⁶ and held by their bearers who stood one either side of the altar.⁷ From the evidence of Ordo 23 it is not clear whether the two candles were lit in the sacristy. However, Ordo 24 leaves us in little doubt that the kindling took place in the main body of the church and in all likeli-

¹OR 11, OR 16, OR 23, OR 24, and OR 30B. All five documents attest papal practice. Ordo 11 contains what appears to be an anachronistic rubric relating to the blessing of the Easter candle: postea impletur <cerei> benedictio (Andrieu’s parenthesis), ‘afterwards the blessing (of the candle) is completed’. It is tempting, in view of the uncertainty over cerei, to emend the text by reading cereorum for cerei. This would accord well with the mention of the two candles in the next section and possibly account for the substitution of the singular form of the noun by a scribe who, perhaps familiar with the blessing of a single candle, had superscribed cerei above cereorum by way of a query. ²From the evidence of OR 23.24 and OR 30B.37 it would appear that only deacons (including the archdeacon and subdeacons) were present at this ceremony. OR 30B.30 adds that the archdeacon presided. According to the same authority (ibidem) the Pope only made his appearance at the Paschal ceremonies after the Agnus Dei. ³OR 16.36. ⁴OR 16.36. ⁵It is true that only OR 11.90 mentions the size of the candles (staturam hominis habentes); but this phrase describing the two candles at the Paschal vigil is also found in PRG (II p.99 §348), Poitiers (p.215), Alcuin (PL 101.1216C), and the 1507 Missal of Salzburg (fol.xcvii). It can be reasonably inferred that these lights were present at the Vigil described by the other ordines, even though they are not specifically mentioned. ⁶OR 23.24 mentions regionarii, OR 24.41 notarii, and OR 30B.37 subdeacons. The difference in title or status is here not significant. Both regionarii and notarii may well have been subdeacons during this period; and under the canons of the Roman Church, it may have been possible to hold the offices of notarius and regionarius concurrently. Alternatively, the discrepancy may be attributed to the different era which each ordo attests. Moreover, the mention of subdeacons in Ordo 30B may well be a Gallican substitution for a church where papal notarii and regionarii were unknown. ⁷OR 30B.37 adds that they stood to the rear of the altar.
hood in the sanctuary. Elsewhere, we have seen that the fire used to light the candles had been reserved for that purpose either on Maundy Thursday or in the ninth century after its kindling on Good Friday.

We shall refer later in this chapter to the size and to the significance of the size of the two baptismal candles or Vigil-candles. Regarding their physical appearance there is no good reason why the descriptive phrase *staturam hominis habentes*, 'man-sized', should not be interpreted literally. The argument that a five or six foot high candle of solid wax could not have been carried in procession because of its weight cannot be sustained. A candle, the size of a human being, can be manufactured without an excessively wide diameter, making quite feasible its transportation by one person over the short distance covered by the procession during the course of the Roman Vigil. Moreover, the very use of the phrase *staturam hominis habentes* to describe these candles indicates that they were unusually large; and there is other evidence for the existence and use in church of very large candles. At Assisi there is a thirteenth-century fresco depicting a server at Mass holding a five or six foot high candle; and in a document from Haughmond Abbey, dated 1341, there is mention of twelve candles, each weighing 6 lbs, which burned around the tomb of Richard, Earl of Arundel. However, candles half as tall as those indicated by this phrase and set in candle-holders standing two or three feet from the ground, would give the impression from a distance of attaining the height of a man. The use of the verb *tenere* in two of the *ordines* to inform us that these candles were being held during the course of the Vigil is inconclusive since these large candles would rest on the ground whilst those who held them were stationary, regardless of whether they were mounted in candlesticks or not. It is true that the Romano-Germanic Pontifical states that the man-sized candles stood in candleholders; but in view of the centrality of the Easter candle in the rite described by this document, it was perhaps inevitable that the size of these two candles should be reduced as their

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1Sabbato sancto veniunt omnes in ecclesiam et tunc illuminantur duo cerei, tenentibus duobus notariis, unus in dextro cornu altaris et alter in sinistro. OR 24.41. The evidence is also found in the *Sacramentary of St Eligius* §88. *Ecclesiam* is almost certainly referring to the main body of the church, although the inclusion of the sacristy in the term should not be ruled out.

2See Part II Chapter 1 pp.99-100.

3Modern candles measuring 24" and 36" can be manufactured with diameters of as little as 0.75" and 1.25" respectively. A tallow candle measuring 5' x 2" would weigh approximately 6.44 lbs. A beeswax candle would be slightly heavier.

4Even allowing for the fact that the baptistery of St John Lateran was a building detached, as now, from the cathedral itself.

5This phrase is not found outside the context of the Paschal vigil.


7OR 24.41 : *cerei tenentibus duobus notariis*; OR 30B.37 : *tenentes faculas*.

8PRG II p.99 §348.
role and status in the Vigil diminished. The use of holders to increase the overall height of the two Vigil-candles would continue to justify their description of ‘man-sized’ and furnish a reminder of their former size.

(ii) The Lucernarium at Jerusalem

Egeria’s mention¹ of the importance of the Lucernarium in the cycle of daily offices at Jerusalem should not be taken as evidence that her readers would be unfamiliar with the service or that the office was unknown in Egeria’s native Galicia or Aquitaine.² For the service which Egeria witnessed in Jerusalem had undergone a unique development under the direction of that city’s innovative and dynamic bishop, Cyril, who utilised its topography and historic sites for liturgical experimentation and change. The Jerusalem Lucernarium must have contrasted strongly with the lamp-lighting service familiar to Egeria in her own native land.³ That a close relationship existed in the Jerusalem rite between the Lucernarium of Holy Saturday and the Paschal vigil is clear from the Peregrinatio;⁴ but the entry of the bishop into the cave⁵ of the Anastasis, the lighting of the candle he held from the lamp that burned perpetually at the Tomb, and the sharing of the fire with the faithful were features of a Lucernarium which were peculiar to Jerusalem and which together formed a preliminary ceremony in themselves, but were not an integral part of that office. This introductory service provided an opportunity for each of the participants to have a share in the blaze of light in which the readings from Scripture were proclaimed.

(iii) The development of the Roman Vigil from the Lucernarium

When we examine the structure of the Roman Paschal vigil of the seventh and eighth centuries, we find that, whilst there are features inherited from the local Roman tradition, some elements which are common to both the Roman and Jerusalem ceremonies strongly suggest the influence of the latter church’s liturgy on the former. The most striking similarity is the sepulchral nature of the place in which the fire is reserved for the lighting of the candles at the Vigil. At Jerusalem a flame burned continuously at

¹Wilkinson pp.66-69 and 123.
²For Egeria’s country of origin, see Wilkinson p.3.
³Her statement: Vigiliae autem paschales sic fiunt quernadmodum ad nos, ‘They keep their Paschal vigil like us’ (Duchesne, Christian Worship p.512), relates only to the Vigil itself and not to any ritual that preceded it. There is no evidence that the Lucernarium in the western Church was other than a simple daily ceremony involving the lighting and blessing of a lamp.
⁴Wilkinson pp.66-69.
⁵Egeria uses spelunca to denote the Sepulchre (Duchesne, ibidem p.493).
the Tomb, symbolising the undying and unquenchable Spirit of Jesus.1 At Rome the
unique topographical conditions of Jerusalem could obviously not be reproduced;
nevertheless, it is our contention that the pattern of services at Rome during the Tri-
duum reflected the topographical and liturgical conditions that obtained in Jerusalem.
For the services at Rome during the latter part of Holy Week were not confined to one
ecclesiastical building, as they were in most other churches. The main services of Good
Friday including the night office of Matins/Lauds were held in the Church of S.Croce in
Jerusalem, with a result that no lights burned in St John Lateran from the conclusion
of the Pedilavium on the evening of Maundy Thursday until the start of the Paschal vigil
during the evening of Holy Saturday.2 The absence of illumination in the cathedral for
the duration of nearly two days perhaps inevitably suggested the gloom and silence of a
tomb, especially at this time of the liturgical year. Moreover, we have already3
observed that the fire for the lighting of the two baptismal candles (or Vigil-candles)
was reserved in secretiore loco; and in this remote chamber, where the fire was so care­
fully tended, it is possible to see a parallel derived from the cave or chapel in the Anas-
tasis in Jerusalem.4 Further evidence in support of the view that during Good Friday
and Holy Saturday the Cathedral of St John Lateran liturgically represented the Holy
Sepulchre in Jerusalem will be presented later in this chapter.

As in the Jerusalem rite the liturgy of Rome on the evening of Holy Saturday
began with a ceremony of light, which in the latter city appears to be a survival of the
primitive Lucernarium,5 the short description of which we find in Hippolytus.6 Accord­
ing to this account, after the onset of evening a deacon brings in a lamp, ‘and standing
in the midst of all the faithful who are present’, he exchanges an initial greeting with
them and utters the prayer of thanksgiving for the light.7 Allowing for liturgical devel­
opments over a period of about four centuries, the preliminary ceremony to the Roman
Vigil contains elements in common with and recognisably derived from the
Lucernarium. (i) The ceremony takes place late in the day. The start of the service at

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1 For the symbolism of lights at tombs, see Appendix 6.
2 During this period there was no illumination at the night office of Holy Saturday in St
3 Part II Chapter 7 p.172.
4 Whether the number of lamps, i.e. three, can be attributed to the influence of Jerusalem
is open to question. For, whilst Egeria in the fourth century and Antonius of Placentia
in the sixth mention that only one lamp burned at the Sepulchre (Duchesne, Christian
Worship p.493 and Geyer p.171, respectively), Arculf, writing c.AD 700, refers to
twelve (Wright p.2).
5 As a daily office this service had disappeared from the Roman liturgy as a result of the
replacement of the old cathedral tradition by the monastic one. Bradshaw p.123.
6 Cuming’s text, p.23 §25.
7 The writer disagrees with Cuming who has argued that the prayer was said by the
bishop. Both the sense and certainly the grammar demand that the understood subject
of 'shall give thanks' should be the deacon.
the ninth hour\textsuperscript{1} or at the eighth hour\textsuperscript{2} seems to confirm the generally-held view that by the eighth century the Vigil in the West had come to be anticipated.\textsuperscript{3}  (ii) Light is carried into church from without. The increase in the number of lights from one in the \textit{Apostolic Tradition} to the two of the Roman \textit{ordines} will be discussed presently. The difference does not alter the fact that light is carried. (iii) The prominence of the deacons. From Ordo 23 and Ordo 30B\textsuperscript{4} it would appear that only deacons and subdeacons were present at this ceremony. We suggested at the beginning of this chapter that the \textit{regionarii} of Ordo 23 and the \textit{notarii} of Ordo 24 were members of the diaconate. Ordo 30B.30 adds that the archdeacon presided. Even allowing for development within the liturgy the association of the diaconate with the lighting of the evening lamp seems to have been perpetuated throughout the centuries.

The similarity between the two services referred to above leads us to draw a number of conclusions. (a) The procession and the blessing of the candles prior to the start of the Roman Vigil was a development of the primitive \textit{Lucernarium} in which the evening lamp was carried and blessed by a deacon. At Jerusalem the unique conditions had resulted in the bishop's appropriation of the deacon's function. (b) The anticipated hour for the Vigil was a Roman development. In Jerusalem the Vigil continued to take place in the evening. (c) The bringing in of the light, which had been in the primitive Roman \textit{Lucernarium} both a functional and a symbolic act, had become primarily a symbolic ritual.

In the Paschal vigil according to the Ambrosian and Mozarabic rites the preliminary ceremony also preserved the central feature of the primitive \textit{Lucernarium} viz. the bringing in of light.\textsuperscript{5} The Roman ceremony differed from two of these rites\textsuperscript{6} in one significant respect: in the ceremonies of the latter one light was carried in procession; whereas at Rome, and possibly at Milan, there were two.\textsuperscript{7} The divergence of Roman practice (and possibly the Milanese) in this respect is not easy to account for in view of the likely influence of Jerusalem on all three western rites. One might have expected the use of only one lamp or candle at Rome, as at Milan and in Spain. The Roman exception may be explained in a number of ways.

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{1}OR 16.38.  
\textsuperscript{2}OR 30B.37.  
\textsuperscript{3}For the anticipation of services during the Triduum, see Appendix 10.  
\textsuperscript{4}OR 23.24 and OR 30B.37, respectively.  
\textsuperscript{5}The use of a lamp survived in both rites. See Appendix 13.  
\textsuperscript{6}That is, the Mozarabic and the Jerusalem rites.  
\textsuperscript{7}It is very significant that at Vespers in the (former) Ambrosian rite two \textit{cantari} or candlesticks were placed beneath the table next to the altar, and removed at the start of the evening hymn. (Borella p.251.)
(i) Since the two man-sized candles were carried in procession to the baptistery later the same evening for the blessing of the font, and subsequently brought back to their former position behind the altar in readiness for the start of the Easter Mass,¹ it could be argued that the number of lights was deliberately increased from one to two so as to provide the escort of two lights² for the Pope, who officiated both at the blessing of the font and at the Mass which followed. This theory presupposes a change from the use of one baptismal lamp at an earlier period to the use of two candles by the seventh century.³

(ii) The evidence of Tertullian⁴ and the Apostolic Tradition⁵ shows that in some churches in the West more than one lamp featured at the Lucernarium. Two lamps, therefore, may originally have been used at Rome; and with the fusion of the Lucernarium and the Vigil proper into a single ceremony, they may have been replaced by the two candles which escorted the Pope.

(iii) A third suggestion would also explain why they were so large - neither of the previously-mentioned theories can account for their size. The phrase describing the two candles, staturam hominis habentes, is significant. The language of liturgical rubrics and directives, unlike the language of prayer, has never been characterised by florid or poetic turns of phrase. We should perhaps have expected a term such as magni cerei to indicate in a rubric candles of great size. For this reason the writer believes that not only should the phrase in question be understood in a literal sense to indicate that the candles were as tall as a human being, but that the candles were intended to represent human beings, or, as we shall see presently, beings in the form of men; and that for that reason their height was increased deliberately in order to achieve that intention. Support for the theory comes from the ninth-century Pontifical of Poitiers:

After this (the blessing of the Easter candle) two man-sized candles are immediately lit from the Easter candle and held by two notarii on either side of the altar.

¹OR 30B.44 and .61.
²According to the solecistic Ordo 4, the Pope enjoyed two honorific lights at every liturgical occasion: Deinde oblationarius inluminet duos cereos ante secretario pro luminaria pontificis, quod est consuetudo omni tempori (§7). See also Part I Chapter 2 pp.9-10.
³A baptismal lamp was formerly used at Milan (1768 Missal p.125).
⁴Apology 39.
⁵Cuming, Hippolytus p.23 §25. This evidence, which may well relate to the Roman Church, is admittedly ambiguous. The plural lamps appears in the title of the chapter, but the direction in the text states that the deacon should bring in a lamp.
The candle on the right has been marked by the notarius who holds it 'The angel sitting at the head'. The left one is marked 'The angel sitting at the feet'. The candles symbolise the two angels in the sepulchre... (Luke 24:4).

If the use of the two man-sized candles and the symbolism associated with those candles are derived from Roman practice, then the two large candles lit at the Roman Vigil also represent the men 'in dazzling apparel'. To this claim there are two immediate objections; (i) Poitiers, a Gallican pontifical of c.AD 900 should not be used as evidence for the practice of the Roman Church nearly three hundred years earlier. (ii) The symbolism was suggested by the size of the candles and became attached subsequently.

Although both objections must be examined carefully, neither is fatal to our theory. Two observations should be made regarding the first. It is true that a period of about 300 years separates the earliest mention of the two candles in Ordo 11 and the description of them in Poitiers. However, the evidence of Ordo 30B, which is to be dated to c.AD 800, shows that the two candles still figure prominently at the Vigil; and although Poitiers itself was compiled c.AD 900, the description of much of the ceremonial would have been valid for an earlier period. This pontifical is mainly Gallican in respect of the new fire ceremony and the use of the Easter candle. Two features, however, viz. the reservation of fire from Good Friday and the use of the two man-sized candles derive from Roman practice. There is, therefore, a strong possibility that this symbolic interpretation was not only known at Rome, but that it had originated from a Roman milieu; although it must be admitted that there is no documentary evidence from the Roman ordines to support this contention.

The case for the Roman origin of the symbolism of the two angels gains support from a closer look at the circumstances surrounding the emergence of the symbolism. As a rule a symbol is attached subsequently to the object it represents; and there are many instances where the Church has found in the minutiae of Christian ceremonial allusions and prefigurations in the Scriptures. The representation of the two angels by the two man-sized candles seems to be a typical example; but the circumstances of the liturgy in which the candles were used also invites the possibility that it was not the size of the candles which suggested the symbolism. Rather, it was the mention of the two

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1Qua expleta, statim illuminantur duo cerei staturam hominis habentes de cereo beneficto, et tenentur altrinseceus a duobus notariis in dextra parte et leva. Et dexter quidem habet sibi impressum a notario Angelus ad caput sedens. Sinister vero a suo Angelus ad pedes sedens. Quique in typo duorum angelorum in sepulchro domini... (p.215).

2This is perhaps not surprising in view of the laconic style of the five ordines cited at the beginning of this chapter, and the brevity of their rubrics, compared with, for example, PRG and Poitiers.
angels in Luke 24:4 which resulted in their representation by two candles *staturam hominis habentes* and presence in the Roman ceremonies of the Triduum. Then again, it is possible that this symbolism, already attached to two smaller lights, brought about an increase in their height in order to achieve a more accurate and meaningful relationship between object and symbol.

On the other hand, if it was the size of the candles which suggested the symbolism in the first instance, it is necessary for us to ascertain not only why the candles were so large, but why they numbered two. With regard to their number we have already referred to the Pope's two honorific lights, and suggested the possibility of two *candelae lucernales*. However, it is difficult to believe that either of these two sets of lights would have attained the height of a human being, had it not been for the existence of some potentially-influential aspect of the Paschal liturgy. Later writers associated the two candles with the apostles; but the application of that symbolism in this instance is not valid, since in later times there is a clear contrast between the two candles and the single Easter candle representing Christ. The possibility that the candles stood for the two natures of Christ is both an unlikely and an unsatisfactory explanation. There is no hint of this in any of our sources; and such mystical symbolism is more characteristic of Orthodox theology. Moreover, the fact that both candles were lit with the same fire makes this interpretation awkward. In the five papal *ordines*, cited at the beginning of the chapter, there is no hint of what the candles represented; nor can any assistance be derived from the Milanese and Spanish rites in which a single light was used.

Since we cannot readily account for either the number or the size of the candles which represented the angels, we must examine the possibility that the desire to represent visually the angels at the Vigil resulted in the introduction of the two man-sized candles into the liturgy of Holy Saturday, from which illuminations had hitherto been absent. If so, this would assign the ceremony with its additional luminous feature to that category of services envisaged by Herbert Thurston, when he wrote (of the Easter candle): 'In this case we have, I believe, a ceremony that was really designed from the beginning with a strictly mystical and symbolical meaning.' However, it is doubtful if any religious ceremonies have such origins - even Thurston admitted that there were not many - and this is true of many elements and features of Christian ritual, which have a functional or utilitarian origin and subsequently become endowed with a symbolical interpretation. Such, we believe, is the origin of the presence, as opposed to the height, of the two man-sized candles. Once, however, a ritual or an element within a ritual has

1 *Lucernarium*-lamps.
3 *Holy Saturday* p.4.
been endowed with a symbolical significance, that ritual or element may undergo a
development which will result in a closer approximation between it and the object that it
represents.

Such a development appears to have occurred within the ritual involving the two
candles at the Roman Vigil. It would satisfactorily account for both their size and their
number. Two small lights were carried into church at the start of the Vigil, a surviving
feature of the primitive Lucernarium which at Rome had disappeared on every other
day of the year. These lamps or candles were placed, or more likely held, one each side
of the altar while the Vigil-lessons were read. We have already noted that the only ser­
vice to have taken place since the evening of Maundy Thursday in the Cathedral of
St John Lateran, wherein the Vigil was held, was the night office of Holy Saturday. The
latter service was conducted in darkness. We suggested above that, because of the
absence of illumination during this period, the entire church was held to symbolise the
Tomb of Jesus. The sepulchral atmosphere is further emphasised by the use of the dim
light in which the Vigil-lections were read. This would recall the time of day when the
women visited the Tomb on the first Easter morning. Furthermore, the announcement
of the two angels was of a prophetic nature, as was the content of the Vigil-lections. It
is our contention, therefore, that, suggested by the content of Luke 24:4, the two lights
which had survived from the primitive Lucernarium were increased in size to convey
the impression of human height. Moreover, if the two large candles, which were held
either side of the altar, had the same significance as those in Poitiers, the altar coming
between the two candles would have represented the Tomb; and although documentary
evidence is lacking for the altar at St John Lateran, at St Remigius' Abbey the hiding of
the fire behind or under the altar possibly shows that the notion of the altar as a tomb
was not unknown. The increase in the size of the candles would have resulted in the
provision of more light for those who read. The candles were subsequently carried in
procession to the font. Since the Pope was honoured with two smaller candles in the
normal course of events, it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that at the blessing of
the font the two man-sized candles served a dual purpose; and that, when they had been
returned to the altar for the start of the Easter Mass, they then symbolised the presence
and authority of the Pope.

* * * * *

1Apart from the reserved fire which was hidden from view.
2It would satisfactorily explain the practice at this monastery. See below, Section (iv)
p.332.
In the earlier chapters of Part IV we saw that our knowledge of the Easter candle in this early period\(^1\) was derived almost exclusively from references in letters and from surviving laudes cerei. In the period between the earliest reference to the Candle and the first mention of it within the context of a service,\(^2\) the ceremony in which the Easter candle figured prominently had been adopted by churches throughout a considerable part of Europe north of the Alps, almost certainly as a result of Milanese or Aquileian influence.\(^3\) However, during this same period Roman influence was also at work; and the results of this we shall note in the following sections. However, sufficient purely Gallican documentary evidence is extant for us to observe the main features of the Easter candle ceremony in Gaul before the importation of Roman elements.

(iv) *The eighth-century Gallican rite: Mode A*

All of our sources\(^4\) refer to the Easter candle as *cereus* without any adjectival qualification. None of them mentions its being brought into church as part of a procession, though Ordo 17 records the entry into church of the deacons ‘without lighted candles’ (§102). The possibility, therefore, should not be ruled out completely that it was carried into church, in view of the evidence of later centuries and in view of the fact the sources in question concern themselves primarily with the lighting and blessing of the Candle. The officiant at the ceremony was a deacon or the archdeacon,\(^5\) who, after making the sign of the cross, lit the Candle with the flame which had been reserved for that purpose the previous day, and began his benediction. The fire was obtained from the candle, or more likely the lamp, which had been concealed from view at the conclusion of the night office in the early hours of Good Friday morning, or from

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\(^1\) That is, c.AD 400-700.

\(^2\) That is, from the late fourth to the mid-eighth century.

\(^3\) By the fourth century Milanese jurisdiction extended as far as Rhaetia; and by the fifth century Chur, Augsburg, and Ratisbon were subject to Aquileia. As late as the eleventh century these three cities were still using Ambrosian liturgical books. (Borella p.105).

\(^4\) OR 17.103; OR 30A.15; GeV p.68; GeAng p.52; GePr p.55; Sacramentary of St Remigius’ Abbey p.328; and the Gradual of St Gregory. A fragment of this last-mentioned source is to be found in Macri, *Hierolexicon* p.142. These references also relate to the ceremony as a whole.

\(^5\) Five of the documents cited in the previous note mention the archdeacon. Ordo 17 refers to *ille qui cereum benedici (sic) debet*, ‘he who has to bless the Candle’ - presumably, a deacon. The Sacramentary of St Remigius’ Abbey states that the duty was performed by the *sacerdos*, who may have been a priest, the abbot, or even the bishop. This is the only recorded instance of the ceremony being performed by someone other than a deacon or an archdeacon. The preceding rubric rules out the possibility that *sacerdos* is here used to indicate any member of the clergy.
fire reserved on Maundy Thursday.\(^1\) It is the writer’s belief that at St Remigius’ Abbey the fire was reserved behind or under the altar. This would explain why the officiant moved to the rear of the altar:

> Deinde veniens sacerdos ab oratione vadit retro altare, accipiens de lumine quod sexta feria absconsum fuit.\(^2\)

This location would also be most convenient for the concealing of a lamp at the conclusion of the night office of Good Friday. It was observed above on page 88 that in the Roman rite the last candle at Tenebrae was hidden in this very place. As to the position of the Easter candle, all our sources except the Sacramentary of St Remigius state that the officiant stands _ante altare_. In view of this it is almost certain that the Candle was placed also in front of the altar, presumably in a central position.

(v) _The later Gallican rite: Mode B_

An alternative Gallican tradition, also free from Roman influence, is contained in the tenth-century Sacramentary of Corbie.\(^3\) Although the document relates to a period some two hundred years after that which the documents in the previous section attest, elements present in this rite are also found in the ninth-century _Ordo_ 31 and in the eighth-century _Ordo_ 26 and _Ordo_ 28, and this would suggest that the tradition recorded by the sacramentary was much older than the tenth century.\(^4\)

The ceremony described in this document differs from the eighth-century Gallican rite in the above Section (iv) in five important respects. (1) The service is presided over by the bishop with all orders of clergy in attendance. (2) The Easter candle is borne in procession into church\(^5\) before being set down _in medio choro_. (3) The Easter candle is then consecrated by a deacon who sings the _Exultet_ after he has received a blessing from the bishop. The blessing of the Candle by the deacon\(^6\) preserves the primitive practice of the Church, first found in the fourth century,\(^7\) and suggests that its performance by the archdeacon was a later development. (4) The fire for lighting the Easter

\(1\) _Quinta feria_. Thus the Gradual of St Gregory (Macri p.142). For the reservation of the fire, see Part 1 Chapter 2 p.15.
\(2\) 'Then, the prayer ended, the priest goes behind the altar and receives a light from the fire which had been concealed on Good Friday...' Sacramentary p.328.
\(3\) PL 78.336B/C = M 106.
\(4\) The blessing of the Easter candle is not contained in _Ordo_ 26, only alluded to. _Ordo_ 28 and and _Ordo_ 31 should be used as corroborative evidence with some caution because of their Roman accretions.
\(5\) Also attested in OR 28.59 and OR 31.63.
\(6\) Also attested in OR 28.60.
\(7\) See Chapter 2 p.228.
candle is that newly kindled on Maundy Thursday and reserved until Holy Saturday, unlike the fire of Mode A which was reserved on Good Friday. The reservation of fire, newly kindled with a flint is first attested in Ordo 26 (§3). The sacramentary also contains the first\(^1\) recorded instance of the blessing of the new fire (and the incense) by the bishop (or a priest), but does not include the prayer of consecration. The fire and the incense are blessed while the deacon is chanting the Exultet. (5) The lighting of the Easter candle during the Preface at _ignis accendit_ contrasts markedly with the practice in Mode A where the Candle is already alight at the start of the benediction, and marks the beginning, as far as documentary evidence is concerned, of that process of liturgical development which caused the _laus cerei_ to undergo a series of interruptions.

Although most of the documentary evidence for the ceremonial surrounding the Easter candle in tenth-century Gaul attests the presence of the two Roman Vigil-candles and the lighting of the Easter candle prior to the chanting of the Exultet, the significance of the practice at Corbie should not be underestimated; for the twin candles ultimately either declined in liturgical importance or disappeared completely from the Paschal rites, and it became universal practice to light the Easter candle at _ignis accendit_. We can attribute with some confidence to Lanfranc the triumph of these two features of the Corbeian rite: the absence of the two Vigil-candles and the lighting of the Easter candle during the Preface. For in spite of the liturgical development which took place elsewhere in the century which intervenes between the Sacramentary of Corbie and Lanfranc’s work, both these features are to be found in the elaboration of ceremonial set out in his _Decrees_; and Corbeian parentage seems very likely. For on the one hand Corbie was a very influential Benedictine centre in Northern France c.1000; and on the other Lanfranc was for a time Abbot of St Stephen’s Monastery at Caen, and the local or regional liturgical variations of the area may well have been assimilated by him during his sojourn in that part of France. Certainly, the directions for the ritual surrounding the blessing of the Easter candle according to the Benedictine _Regularis Concordia_ of the previous century are quite different from those enjoined by Lanfranc.\(^2\)

(vi) _The Roman Vigil in Gaul_

In Section 1 of this chapter we discussed the evidence of the five Roman _ordines_ in an attempt to make a partial reconstruction of the form that the Paschal vigil took at the papal court in Rome. There seems little doubt that this Roman form of the Vigil was in use in a number of churches in Gaul, since all five _ordines_ have their provenance

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\(^1\)On the assumption that the sacramentary antedates _PRG_.
\(^2\)A certain amount of ceremonial variation existed from one Benedictine house to another, a fact Lanfranc himself commented upon in his _Decrees_ (PL 150.467B).
in that country, though they attest Roman practice, and since the Roman form of services was encouraged by Charlemagne in his desire to impose liturgical uniformity throughout the length and breadth of his vast domains. In addition to these five *ordines* the Sacramentary of Autun also contains the Roman form of the Paschal vigil. Like some of the other Gelasian sacramentaries, it includes the *Deus mundi Conditor*, the benediction-formula for the Vigil-candles.¹ We do not know how widely the Roman form of the Vigil was adopted in the regions to the north of the Alps. Charlemagne's only-partial success is reflected in the emergence of the Romano-Gallican synthesis from the liturgical disorder of the eighth and ninth centuries.

¹*GePh* p.63. The Sacramentary was formerly referred to as the *Phillips Gelasian Sacramentary*. 
Chapter Seventeen

THE ROMANO-GALLICAN SYNTHESIS

(i) The diversity of practice

It was perhaps inevitable that with the importation of the Roman form of the Vigil into Gaul its fusion with the local Gallican rites not only took place but was achieved with differing results. The diversity of practice was known to Amalarius; and the recommendation in his Liber de Ordine Antiphonarii, written c.AD 830, should be seen as an attempt by him to promote the synthesis of Roman and Gallican ceremonial practices.

Hoc est quod dico: reservetur ignis de sexta feria, ut inluminetur cereus qui ponitur in vice columnae ignis benedicendum, qui ab initio benedictionis inluminatus est, et cum benedictus est, ab eo inluminetur secundus cereus.¹

However, a compromise along these lines was bound to be forced - in fact there no evidence that his suggestion was adopted by any church at the time, since the significance of the two Vigil-candles would have been lost, if one had been converted into the Easter candle and the other had been made subordinate to it. It is true that at Aquileia in the sixteenth century,² the status of the two candles corresponds to that prescribed by Amalarius; but we cannot be certain that the presence of these two candles was the result of the recommendations of Amalarius. However, it is very likely that the candle lit at the conclusion of the laus cerei in the Benedictine rite, which we shall discuss in Section (ii), corresponded to the secundus cereus, enjoined by Amalarius.

That the two candles envisaged by Amalarius were of unequal status is clear both from the symbolism which he attaches to each and from their use at the blessing of the font. For him the larger candle is Christ; whilst the smaller one, which takes its light from the larger, represents the company of apostles to whom Christ said 'You are the light of the world'.³ After the Vigil-lections both candles are to be borne in front of the catechumens to Baptism, but only the larger one is immersed in the water.⁴

¹'This is my recommendation: let fire be reserved from Good Friday to light the Candle which represents the column of fire and which is set in position to be blessed. It is lit at the beginning of the blessing, and after it has been consecrated, a second candle is lit from it.' LDÔA XLIV.8.
²1519 Missal fol.98.
³Liber officialis 1.20.2.
⁴Liber officialis 1.20.2 and 1.26.1-4.
dictine development, which we shall discuss towards the end of this chapter, took place probably as a result of the influence of Amalarius' writings; but there were practical considerations also.

The diversity of practice, which had prompted Amalarius' solution for a synthesis of ceremonial, manifested itself in a number of different ways. Again for convenience we will refer to them as modes.

*Mode 1.* The description of the lighting and blessing of the candles in the late ninth-century *Ordo* 29 shows, not a fusion of two traditions, but a juxtaposition of two quite separate services.¹ The two Vigil-candles of the Roman rite are lit with fire newly kindled on Holy Saturday, and are placed one either side of the altar. After the reading of the Vigil-lections the clergy depart together with the two candles. On their return, the Easter candle is lit with fire kindled on and reserved from Maundy Thursday. The separate performance of both the ceremonies on Easter Eve would appear to be a transitional stage in the fusion of both rituals. *Ordo* 29 is also unique in that it is the only early Roman ordo to record a separate kindling of fire on all three days of the Triduum.

*Mode 2.* This variation has features in common with the eighth-century Gallican rite² but belongs more to the Roman than the Gallican tradition. It is found in the tenth-century Pontifical of Wolfgang Bishop of Regensburg:

Diaconus...accipiat de igne qui sexta feria fuerat excussus de lapide et incendat duos magnos cereos et faciens crucem benedicat eos.³

It would appear from this pontifical that the Easter candle was unknown at Regensburg in the tenth century. Alternatively, the section relating to the Easter candle may be missing from this document. The two large candles, which later escort the bishop,⁴ and the new fire kindled from a stone on Good Friday are clearly Roman elements; but the blessing performed by the deacon and the sign of the cross would appear to come from the Gallican tradition.

¹OR 29.45-48.
²See Chapter 16 Section (iv).
³'Let the deacon receive some of the fire which had been kindled from a stone on Good Friday; and let him light the two large candles; and after making the sign of the cross let him bless them.' Pontifical p.125.
⁴'Recalling the Pope's honorific lights - see pp.9-10. Pontifical p.130.
Mode 3. Mode 1 and Mode 2 may represent isolated instances of attempts to harmonise the different liturgical traditions. In Mode 3, however, we have what appears to be a fusion of the Gallican and Roman uses of light, in which the principal features of both would appear to retain their original importance and significance. Thus in the eighth-century Gelasian Sacramentary of Gellone it is the Easter candle which is kindled and blessed; whilst at the blessing of the font only the two Vigil-candles are mentioned. Although there is no indication in the rubrics of this sacramentary, it is reasonable to assume that these two candles were also alight during the reading of the lessons. Support for this view comes from the late ninth-century Pontifical of Poitiers, which also records the very point in that rite at which these candles were lit. We learn that the two man-sized candles are held by notarii who stand one either side of the Easter candle or the altar; and that they are kindled with fire taken from the flame of the Easter candle at the conclusion of the laus cerei. Poitiers concurs with the Sacramentary of Gellone in attesting the presence of only the two Vigil-candles at the blessing of the font (ibidem p.216).

Evidence for the widespread use of the Romano-Gallican synthesis throughout Western Europe is plentiful. At Mainz in the tenth century the two man-sized candles in candlesticks stood one either side of the altar and were lit at the conclusion of the laus cerei. This arrangement is also found in the slightly-later Alcuin; but it is possible to detect in that document a decline in the importance of the two Vigil-candles, since at the blessing of the font the choice is permitted of immersing either the two large candles or the Easter candle. The placing of the two candles in candlesticks also indicates a reduction in their physical size. The use of two smaller candles placed either side of the Easter candle is documented as early as the eleventh century at Rouen; and by Beleth, Honorius of Autun, and Durandus. The latter informs us that this practice obtained ‘in most churches’.

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1GeGe pp.92-3.
2GeGe p.99.
3Poitiers p.215.
4PRG II p.99 §348.
5PL 101.1216C.
6Evidence for this is to be found in PRG and Alcuin, ibidem; PR XII I.xxxii.8 p.240; Pontifical of St-Germain-des-Prés (DAER 4.24 p.159, M 230); and at Marseille in the thirteenth century (ILEM p.84).
7Acta Vetera, PL 147.176C.
8Rationale, PL 202.110C.
9Sacramentary, PL 172.748B.
10Rationale VI.80 p.352.
At Milan in the twelfth century two small candles were held by deacons one either side of the Easter candle, and two large candles stood at the font.¹ By the seventeenth century the use of the latter had been discontinued.² At Braga the Missal of 1512 refers to the two candles lit during the Preface (np), but they are not mentioned in the Missal of 1558. We referred above to the practice at Aquileia and noted that the use of two candles in that church corresponded to the prescription of Amalarius. In the primitive Mozarabic rite no additional candles were lit to accompany the Easter candle. However, according to the Missale Mixtum of 1500 two candles are to be lit from the flame of the Easter candle.³ Of these Martène informs us that one stood to the left of the altar, whilst the other was placed behind.⁴ No reason is given for this arrangement. At the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino in the twelfth century the two additional candles were placed ad altare.⁵ Since the Easter candle stood next to the ambo, the phrase should perhaps be interpreted 'on either side of the altar’. This is the position mentioned in the contemporary Pontifical of St-Germain-des-Prés.⁶ Here the Easter candle may also have stood by the ambo.

We mentioned above the statement of Durandus that in most churches two small candles stood either side of the Easter candle. Their absence from the minority of churches may be explained in three ways. (i) As (originally) baptismal candles, they would have lost their raison d'être, if the ceremony of the blessing of the font no longer took place, as happened in some monasteries. (ii) There may have been some churches in which the use of the two candles was unknown, especially if they preserved a Gallican rite free of Roman influence in this respect. (iii) We have already observed that their function and the function of the two acolytes’ or torch-bearers’ candles may well have been merged; or they may have disappeared if the bishop was accorded two honorific candles.

(ii) The Benedictine development

There can be little doubt that at the Monasteries of Monte Cassino and St-Germain-des-Prés the ceremonial surrounding the kindling and blessing of lights at the Easter vigil followed the injunctions of the tenth-century Benedictine Regularis Concordia. This enjoined upon the houses of that order the principal features of the

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¹Beroldus p.110.
²They appear in Ambrosian missals of the sixteenth century, but not in the Missal of 1669.
³PL 85.442C.
⁴DAER 4.24 p.164.
⁵PR XII 1 p.293 and Martène, DAMR 3.15.10 p.143. See also Appendix 11.
Romano-Gallican synthesis viz. the lighting and blessing of the Easter candle, and the kindling of the two candles, which were held by acolytes one each side of the altar. In addition to these lights the *Regula* also directs that another smaller candle should be kindled at the conclusion of the *laus cerei*, but gives no indication as to its purpose. Since its function was not to provide a source of fire in an emergency, it either constituted the second candle, which we saw at the beginning of this chapter had been enjoined by Amalarius, albeit reduced in size, or it acted as a surrogate for the Easter candle, which for one reason or another remained in front of the altar or next to the ambo, while the font was being blessed. In later times it had the latter function, as is evidenced at Worcester where it was known as the *cereus fontium*, and at Barking. The Gilbertine Ordinal suggests that this small candle was only used where the blessing of the font took place. The use of the *cereus minor* was not confined to the monastic tradition. Sicardus refers to it, again in a baptismal context. For him the small candle signifies the Order of the Apostles, since Christ, who is symbolised by the larger Easter candle, addressed his disciples ‘You are the light of the world’, and since the apostles, like Christ, illuminate the Church. Durandus mentions its existence, but does not comment upon its purpose. It featured in the rites of Salisbury and Aquileia, and at the Church of St-Agnan in Orléans it accompanied the Easter candle in the procession to the font as late as the eighteenth century. There is also a reference to this candle at Reims. In the older rite at Braga this candle was lit with the serpent-candle before being dipped into the font.

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1 PL 137.494C.
2 In the event of the failure of the reed-candle or serpent-candle, an additional source of fire would have been available from the candle in the lantern or from one of the candles of the acolytes.
3 Antiphonary p.69.
5 HBS 59 p.40.
6 *Mitrale*, PL 213.324D-325A.
7 *Rationale* IV.80 p.352.
8 13 C Missal (Warren) p.270.
9 1519 Missal fol.98.
10 De Moléon p.209.
11 1770 Missal p.224. See also Appendix 9 p.358.
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APPENDIX 1 - The Omissions

Since the eighth century in the Gallican Church and the tenth in the Roman rite, the night offices of Matins/Lauds on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday were distinguished from the night offices of the rest of the days of the year by the omission of the customary versicles and responses. The *Deus in adiutorium* and the Invitatory were not said at the start of the service; no blessing was requested at the start of the lessons; and the *Kyrie eleison* was omitted at the conclusion of Lauds. Above all, the *Gloria Patri* doxology was omitted at the close of each psalm.¹ These same omissions, which are also found in the Office for the Dead and represent the funereal aspect of Tenebrae, were 'made designedly to mark the deep mourning in which the Church is plunged',² and seem to point to the great antiquity of the office.³

In the Middle Ages these omissions of the beginnings and endings were given an allegorical interpretation. According to Rupert of Deutz⁴ Christ, who is the A and Ω, the beginning and the end, is dead during this period. Hence they are omitted. This explanation is also to be found in the Ordinal of St Mary's, York.⁵ Durandus also mentions that the *Gloria’s* etc. are not said because Christ is lying in the tomb.⁶

¹Sicardus, *Mitrale*, PL 213.297A. In the now-superseded night office of Holy Saturday according to the Ambrosian rite, the *Gloria Patri* was omitted from the end of the twenty-three psalms and one canticle. *Breviarium Ambrosianum*, Pars Prima.
³Batiffol p.93.
⁵HBS 75 p.271.
⁶*Rationale* VI.72 p.331.
There has been a tendency in the past amongst some writers, when dealing with the
development of the Roman and Gallican liturgies in the period AD 700 to AD 950 to
assume the existence of a uniform Roman rite and similarly a uniform Gallican rite.
The picture of two contrasting and at times mutually interacting liturgies could not be
further from the reality of the situation. It is probably true that, as the temporal power
of the papacy increased, in the areas which were subject to the Roman Church, the pres­
sures towards conformity were considerable; but in the areas of so-called Gallican
influence, particularly in the decades before the reign of Charlemagne, the existence of
several liturgically-independent churches and the absence of a central unifying force
inevitably resulted in a variety of differing local rites.

It is beyond the scope of this work to investigate the ancestries and origins of the
Gallican liturgies. It seems quite likely, however, that the various Gallican rites, ulti­
mately deriving from the same parent ancestor as the Roman rite and developing inde­
pendently, at times under the pressure of local pagan customs, were influenced to a
greater or lesser degree by the liturgies of Aquileia and Milan, depending on their
geographical proximity to those centres, probably more than is generally recognised;
and even in the period of increased Roman influence, from AD 789 onwards, the Mila­
nese Church in all likelihood continued to be influential, especially in those areas where
the boundaries of the Gallican and Milanese churches were coterminous.

Prior to the Decree of Conformity in AD 789 it can be safely said that there was
considerable variety in the forms of service found throughout the Gallican Church.
When St Chrudegang, after a visit to Rome in AD 751, introduced the Roman rite at
Metz, that church became ‘a Roman lighthouse in a sea of liturgical disorder’
(A.A.King). In view of the state of political unrest in Gaul and Western Germany in the
preceding centuries, liturgical conformity had not been possible. It was Charlemagne
who attempted to impose throughout his vast domains the Roman rite, which he had
introduced into the royal chapel of his capital at Aachen, as part of his attempt to unify
his extensive empire.

The attempt can only be described as partially successful and slow, if his intention
was to replace completely the Gallican rites with the Roman. For it was not until
c.AD 810 that the Roman rite was introduced at Lyon by Leidrad; and in AD 832 the
night offices of the Triduum with which Amalarius was familiar were decidedly non-
Roman.
After the death of Charlemagne the Treaty of Verdun in AD 843 destroyed the political unity which had facilitated the partial imposition of liturgical uniformity. The next hundred years or so witnessed the gradual gallicanisation of the Roman rite, especially in the region at the centre of which lay Mainz, whence originated the *Romano-Germanic Pontifical*, the ancestor of the future Tridentine Missal and Breviary.
APPENDIX 3 - *The Origin of the Seven Lamps*

The presence of seven lamps or candles which stood or were suspended from the ceiling in front of the high altar is more widely attested in the Gallican than the Roman tradition. They are mentioned in five *ordines* of Gallican origin as featuring either at Lauds, where they were extinguished gradually, or at the illumination of the church on the evenings of Maundy Thursday or Good Friday. They are also attested in three other early documents. Ordo 30B, which purports to describe papal ceremonial, mentions them within the context of the extinction of light at Tenebrae (§28); but Tenebrae as such was unknown at Rome at the end of the eighth century, the date assigned to that *ordo*; so that the description of that service in the *ordo* relates to a non-Roman church. However, there is no reason to believe that seven lamps did not burn before the high altar of St John Lateran in Rome.

The seven lamps, however, must not be confused with the seven candles, borne in procession by acolytes, which were always present at any Stational Mass which the Pope celebrated. These lights were carried by six acolytes and one subdeacon or head acolyte, and were placed before the altar immediately after the Peace. They are to be distinguished from the two honorific (civic) candles which preceded the Pope on every occasion, and which at Mass were placed *behind* the altar.

The function of these seven candles and what they represented or symbolised are matters for some debate. The city of Rome had been divided by Pope Fabian (AD 236-50) into seven ecclesiastical districts, using in all likelihood as a basis the fourteen civil regions which the emperor Augustus had constituted. Ordo I records that whenever the Pope celebrated Mass, six acolytes and one subdeacon for the district 'on duty' for the day would act as candle-bearers. The candle of each of these seven ministers may well have represented one of the seven districts of Rome. That all seven ministers on any one occasion should come from the same district, and that six of them were severally representing the other six districts does seem somewhat strange. It

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1It has yet to be shown that the seven-branched *menorah*, which stood in the sanctuary of a number of larger churches, was ever substituted for the seven altar lamps. At Durham, for instance, the central holder of the *menorah* held the Easter candle. (Raine p.9).  
2*Ordo* 26.9; OR 28.30; OR 29.17; OR 31.13; OR 32.5.  
3*Poitiers* p.138; *PRG* II p.57 §213; Alcuin, *Lib.de Div.Off.*, PL 101.1205D.  
4See especially pp.11-13, above.  
5*Ordo* I records the ceremonial for the Mass of Easter Day. This description of the liturgy is applicable to any of the eighty-nine Stational Masses.  
6See above, pp.9-10.  
7*Ordo* 4.7 and OR 30B.37.  
seems much more likely that, if we are dealing with a situation which involved dis-
trict-representation, there would have been one acolyte from each of the districts. But
since we are told that the seven acolytes were all from the same region on any one
occasion, it casts some doubt on whether each candle stood for one district.

The writer believes that a much more profound symbolism was attached to the
seven papal candles. The celebration of a Stational Mass by the Pope was a time of
great importance and solemnity. He was accompanied by all the dignitaries of the
Church, since the occasion represented both the unity and the totality of the Roman
Church at its most solemn function. To a point the presence of all the Roman clergy
symbolised the fact that the Mass was being celebrated on behalf of the whole city of
Rome. In a more visible and dramatic way the presence of the seven processional
candles also symbolised the major constituent elements of the church, on whose behalf
the whole congregation had gathered, in the following way.

We read in the Book of Revelation (1:12 and 20) that the seven golden lampstands
symbolised the Seven Churches of Asia, and by extension the whole of the Church in
the Roman province of Asia. The writer believes that the symbolism was borrowed by
the Roman Church in view of the existence of the seven so-called Constantinian basil-
icas within the city of Rome; and that each of the seven processional candles in question
represented one of those seven major basilicas. At what period this feature of seven
lights first appeared in Rome we can but hazard a guess. We have already observed that
the concept of seven patriarchal basilicas arose after the time of Sixtus III. It is possible
that the use of the seven candles is much older and that they previously represented
some other ecclesiastical heptad, either in the world-wide Church or found locally in
Rome. We might consider, for instance, the seven seasons of the Christian year, the
seven suburbicarian dioceses, the seven Stational Masses at the Cathedral of St John
Lateran, or the seven martyrs, venerated at Rome, who are mentioned in the communi-
cantes prayer in the canon of the Tridentine Mass.

When we turn to consider the origin of the seven stationary lamps which stood or
hung before the high altar and which were extinguished at Tenebrae, it is not difficult to
believe that these lights were scripturally-inspired, like the seven processional candles

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1It is now known that the Basilica of S. Maria Maggiore, unlike the other six, is not of
Constantinian foundation, but dates from the pontificate of Sixtus III (AD 432-40). It
seems unlikely, therefore, that the notion of the seven major churches of Rome arose
before the second third of the fifth century.

2Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Common Time.

3It is interesting to note that of the 89 Stational Masses at Rome 49 (ie 7 x 7) were cel-
ebrated in the major basilicas: St Peter's 13, S.Maria Maggiore 12, St John Lateran 7,
St Paul's 6, S.Lorenzo 4, S.Sebastiano 4, S.Croce in Gerusalemme 3.
of the Roman rite, also from the last book of the New Testament. According to Revelation 4:5 ‘before the throne burn seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God’. Within the context of the liturgy the throne of God is represented by the altar, and the seven ‘torches of fire’, which burn perpetually and have an essential relationship with God are quite clearly portrayed by the seven liturgical lamps which burn in front of the altar. For they are permanent lights whose use is not restricted to one service. On the other hand the seven candles, which formed part of the Pope’s procession, were placed temporarily in front of the altar and their use was confined to papal High Mass. The objection cannot be sustained that two sets of seven lights would be unlikely; for there is still a simultaneous use of seven acolytes’ torches and seven altar candles at High Mass in the papal liturgy today.

In the same way that the flame of each lamp in Revelation 4:5 was perpetually burning, it is possible that the seven lamps of the earthly liturgy were never allowed to be extinguished, except once a year. The evidence of Ordo 30B would suggest that this is likely to have occurred at the conclusion of Matins/Lauds of Good Friday, the last of the lamps being removed rather than extinguished at the end of the service. Possible support for this view is to be found in the rubrics of a number of documents which relate to the entry into church on Maundy Thursday of the procession bearing the new fire. All attest the concern that the seven lamps should be rekindled speedily and efficiently.

1Another, though less likely, explanation is given by John the Deacon. He explains that seven is a sacred number, since it is the sum of four, the number of Gospels which attest the Trinity, and three, the Trinity itself. (PL 59.403B.) On the face of the tribunal above the apse in the Church of S.Prassede in Rome is a mosaic portraying the Lamb who is flanked on either side by three and four candlesticks. These are said to be ‘allegorical of the seven mysteries’ (Forbes p.257).
2OR 30B.28. See The Development of Tenebrae, Stage 2, pp.11-13.
3OR 26.9; OR 29.17; PRG II p.58 §220; Alcuin, PL 101.1205D.
APPENDIX 4 - The non-observation of the new fire and Easter candle ceremonies

In view of the simplicity and austerity of its rite the ceremonies of the new fire and the Easter candle have never been observed in the houses of the Carthusian order. Following the Second Vatican Council some members of the order felt that the Easter candle ought to be adopted; but the idea was not accepted.¹

Formerly the Easter candle was not blessed in the Church of St Stephen and the Church of the Holy Cross in Lyon, the congregations of those churches repairing to the cathedral for the ceremony.² There was a similar custom for the faithful of the parochial churches of Evreux and its suburbs to attend the mother church, and subsequently to take some of the new fire home.³

In spite of the restoration of the Paschal rites to their former times following the liturgical reforms of the Roman Church in 1955, the ceremonies are not observed in all parish churches; and only a small number of Anglican churches observe the ceremonies of Holy Saturday, which closely follow those of the Roman rite. At Amiens Cathedral they fell into desuetude in 1969, having been revived in their present form in 1955. This was mainly the result of poorly-attended services during those fourteen years.⁴

²1771 Missal p.194.
³1740 Missal p.187.
⁴Letter to the writer from L’abbé P.Grey, Secrétaire Général of that diocese.
APPENDIX 5 - The Formulas for the benediction of the New Fire

A. Deus, qui per Filium tuum, angularem scilicet lapidem, claritatis tuae ignem fidelibus contulisti: productum e silice, nostris profuturum usibus, novum hunc ignem sanctifica: et concede nobis, ita per haec festa paschalia coelestibus desidereris inflammari; ut ad perpetuae claritatis, puris mentibus, valeamus festa pertingere. Per.

* PRG has caritatis.

A 1. Deus, qui per Filium tuum claritatis tuae ignem fidelibus contulisti, novum hunc ignem + sanctifica, et concede nobis, ita per haec festa paschalia coelestibus desidereris inflammari, ut ad perpetuae claritatis puris mentibus valeamus festa pertingere. Per.

B. Exaudi nos, lumen indeficiens, Domine Deus noster, unici luminis lumen; fons luminis, lumen auctor luminum, quae creasti et inluminasti; lumen angelorum tuorum, sedium, dominationum, principatum, potestatum et omnium intelligibilium, quae creasti; lumen sanctorum tuorum. Sint lucernae tuae animae nostrae; accedant ad te et inluminentur abs te; luceant veritate, ardeant caritate; luceant et non tenebrescant, ardeant et non cinerescant. Benedic hoc lumen, o lumen, quia et hoc, quod portamus in manibus, tu creasti, tu donasti. Per haec lumina, quae accendimus, de hoc loco expellimus noctem; sic et tu expelle tenebras de cordibus nostris. Simus domus tuae lucens de te, lucens in te; sine defectu luceamus et te semper colamus; in te accendamur, et non exanguemur.

B 1. Dominus Deus, Pater omnipotens, lumen indeficiens, qui es conditor omnium luminum: benedic hoc lumen, quod a te sanctificatum atque beneficitum est, qui illuminasti omnem mundum: ut ab eo lumine accendamur, et illuminearum igne claritatis tuae: et sicut illuminasti Moysen exeuntem de Aegypto, ita illumineas corda, et sensus nostris; ut ad vitam et lucem aeternam pervenire mereamus. Per.

B 2(a). Domine Deus noster, Pater omnipotens, exaudi nos, lumen indeficiens: tu es sancte conditor omnium luminum: benedic, Domine, hoc lumen quod a te sanctificatum atque beneficitum est. Tu inluminasti omne mundum, ut ab eo lumine accendamur et illuminearum igne claritatis tuae, sicut ignem inluminasti Moysen, ita illuminabis cordibus et sensibus nostris, ut ad vitam aeternam pervenire mereamus. Per.

B 2(b). Domine Deus noster, Pater omnipotens, exaudi nos, lumen indeficiens: tu es sancte conditor omnium luminum, benedic, Domine, hoc lumen quod a te sanctificatum atque beneficitum est. Tu inluminasti omne mundum, ut ab eo lumine accendamur et illuminearum igne claritatis tuae, sicut ignem inluminasti Moysen; ita illuminatis sensibus et cordibus nostris ut ad vitam aeternam pervenire mereamus. Per.

B 2(c). Exaudi nos, lumen indeficiens: tu es sancte conditor omnium luminum, benedic, Domine, hoc lumen quod a te sanctificatum atque beneficitum est. Tu inluminasti omne mundum, ut ab eo lumine accendamur et illuminearum igne claritatis tuae, sicut ignem inluminasti Moysen; ita illuminatis sensibus et cordibus nostris ut ad vitam aeternam pervenire mereamus. Per.

B 2(d). Dominus Deus noster, Pater omnipotens, exaudi nos, lumen indeficiens: Tu es sanctus conditor omnium luminum; bene + dic, Domine, hoc lumen quod a te sanctificatum atque beneficitum est, ut ab eo lumine accendamur, et illuminearum igne claritatis tuae. Sicut ignem illuminasti in rubro tempore Moysis, ita illuminare digneris corda nostra et sensus nostris, ut ad vitam aeternam pervenire mereamus. Per.

B 2(e). Deus pater omnipotens, exaudi nos, lumen indeficiens: tu es sancte conditor omnium luminum, benedic, domine, hoc lumen, quod a te sanctificatum atque beneficitum est, tu qui illuminasti omne mundum, ab eo lumine accendamur et illuminearum igni claritatis tuae; igni ergo quo illuminasti Moysen illuminata quaesumus corda et sensus nostras ut ad vitam aeternam pervenire mereamus. Per.

B 3. Domine Iesu Christe lumen indeficiens exaudi nos tu qui es sancte conditor omnium luminum. benedic domine hoc lumen quod a te sanctificatum atque beneficitum est tu qui illuminasti omne mundum: ut accendamur et illuminearum igne claritatis tuae, sicut Illuminasti domine Moysen legiferum tuum. ita illuminare corda nostra et sensus: ut ad vitam eternam pervenire mereamus. Per.

B 5(a). The first part of this prayer is identical with B 4 above. After aeternam it continues: Et sicut illuminasti ignem Moysi famulo tuo per columnam ignis ambulantem in mari rubro: ita illustra nostrum lumen: et candela quae de eo fuerit accensa in honore maiestatis tuae semper perseveret benedicta: ut quicumque ex eo lumine portaverit sit illuminatus lumine gratiae spiritualis. Per.

B 5(b). Domine Deus Pater omnipotens lumen indeficiens, exaudi nos famulos tuos et benedic hunc ignem qui tua sanctificatione atque benedictione consecratus est: tu domine qui illuminas omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum illumina conscientias cordis nostri igne tuae caritatis. Ut tuo igne igniti et illuminasti expulsis a cordibus nostris peccatorum tenebris ad vitam te illustrante pervenire mereamur aeternam. Per.

B 5(c). Domine Deus Noster Omnipotens, lumen indeficiens, conditor hominum, exaudi nos famulos tuos et bene + dic hunc ignem, qui tua sancti + factione et bene + dictione consecratus est. Tu qui illuminas omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum, illumina conscientias cordis nostri, et conscientias nostras igne tuae caritatis, ut tuo lumine illuminati, expulsis a cordibus peccatorum tenebris, ad vitam te illustrante pervenire mereamur aeternam. Per.

B 5(d). Domine Deus Noster Omnipotens, Lumen indeficiens, conditor omnium luminum, exaudi nos famulos tuos et benedic hunc novum ignem qui tua sanctificatione consecratur. Tu illuminas omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum, illumina conscientias cordis nostri igne tuae caritatis: ut tuo igne igniti tuo lumine illuminati expulsis a cordibus nostris peccatorum tenebris ad vitam te illustrante pervenire mereamur aeternam. Per.

B 5(e). Domine Deus noster audti nos pater omnipotens lumen indeficiens qui es sanctorum splendor luminum: et bene + dic domine hoc lumen quod a te conditum est: qui illuminat hominem venientem in hunc mundum: ut a te vero lumine accendamur: et illuminemur igne claritatis tuae: illumina etiam corda et sensus nostros ut ad vitam aeternam pervenire mereamur. Per.

B 6. Domine Deus noster Pater omnipotens qui es lumen indefiensi et conditor omnium luminum, benedic et sanctifica hunc ignem: ut per te sanctificatum et benedictum, qui illuminasti omnem mundum, ab eo accendamur atque illumine claritatis tuae, quo illuminasti Moysen famulum tuum: ut, illuminatis cordibus et sensibus nostris, ad vitam aeternam pervenire mereamur. Per.

B 7(a). Dominus Deus omnipotens, lumen indeficiens et conditor omnium luminum, exaudi nos insignis famulos tuos, et benedicere huius novi ignis lumen, quod a te vero lumine nobis donatum est, ut et tui amoris accendamur illustratione, et verae caritatis illuminemur igne: et sicut Moysen famulum tuum mirabilis illuminasti splendore, ita corda et sensus nostros illuminare digneris; ut peccatorum labe expiati, ad te, qui aeterna vita es, pervenire mereamur. Qui cum Deo Patre et Spiritu Sancto vivis.

B 7(b) Dominus Deus omnipotens, lumen indeficiens et conditor omnium luminum, exaudi nos insignes famulos tuos, et benedicere digneris huius novi ignis lumen, quod a te vero lumine nobis donatum est, ut et tui amoris accendamur splendore, ita corda et sensus nostros illuminare digneris, ut expiati peccatorum labe, ut ad te vita aeterna es pervenire mereamur. Per.

B 9. Domine Deus, Pater Omnipotens, lumine indeficiens, qui es conditor omnium luminum, qui illuminasti omne mundum, benedic lumen hoc, quod a te sanctificatum est atque benedictum, ut ab eo accendamur et illuminemur lumine claritatis tuae et sicut illuminasti cor Moysi ad rubum ardentem et non comburentem, quando eum misistis in Egyptum ad Pharaonem et cum ad te ascenderis in montem Synai, ita illuminare codibus nostris et sensibus, per te qui via, veritas et vita es, ad vitam permanentem et lucem aeternam pervenire mereamur. Per.

B 10. Dominus Deus noster pater omnipotens lumine indeficiens: exaudi nos qui es sancte conditor omnium luminum et benedicere digneris hoc lumen quod a te sanctificatum est et sicut illuminasti omne mundum tuo lumine ut ab eo accendamur et illuminemur lumine claritatis tuae: ita illumina corda nostra et sensus nostros et ideo deprecamur te domine deus noster: ut sicut illuminasti ignem Moysi famulo tuo per columnam spiritualem ambulantem in mari rubro ita intelligentias nostras illustra: ut a te ad vitam aeternam pervenire mereamur et candela quae de hoc lumine fuerit accensa in honore maiestatis tuae: semper perseveret beneficita et quicumque accepserit de eodem lumine sit illuminatus lumine spiritualis gratiae. Per.

B 11. Domine Deus noster, Pater omnipotens, qui lumen indeficiens omniumque creator es luminum, hunc ignem bene dicere et sanctificare digneris, ut per Filium tuum, qui lux vera est mundum illuminans univemsum, ab isto, sicut Moyses, accendamur tuaeque claritatis igne sic intelligamur itaque illustremur, ut tamquam lucis filii ad vitam aeternam pervenire mereamur. Per.
I. Benedictio Dei + Patris omnipotens et Fi+lii et Spiritus + Sancti descendat et maneant super hoc lumen et incensum istud.

J. Omnipotens sempiterne, aeterne Deus Creator omnium rerum, te humiliter deprecamur, ut hunc ignem novum, caelo terrae largitum, sanctificare et beneficiare digneris, et sicut in adventu tuo elementa contagione peccatorum polluta purgare polliceris; ita et hic ignis novus tabernaculis fidelium tuorum habendus purgationem perfectam obtineat, et obstaculis invictus contra omnem nequitiam maligni spiritus perficiatur.

K. Rogamus te domine deus omnipotens ut digneris benedicere hunc ignem ne impediat domum hanc in qua accenditur. Per.

L. Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, etemus Deus, benedicere et sanctificare digneris in nomine dilectissimi Filii tni, et in virtute Spiritus sancti: ut nobis ad obsequium et ad lumen esse faciamus, ut ad perpetua festa purgatis mentibus pertingere valeamus. Qui tecum vivit...

O. Deus qui Moisi famulo tuo in specie ignis, rubo ardente, apparuisti: quique etiam Sanctum Spiritum tuum Dominum nostrum de caelo promissum super apostolos igneis linguis descendere fecisti: nobis quoque famulis tuis caritatis ignem tribuere dignare; et hunc novum ignem de lapide prosilitum nobis in usum profuturum sanctifica: et concede nobis ita per haec festa paschali coelestibus desideris inflammari, ut ad perpetua festa purgatis mentibus pertingere valeamus. Per.
U. Omnipotens sempiterne deus mundi conditor luminis siderumque fabricator: per cuius ineffabilem potentiam omnis claritas sumpsit exordium: te in tuis opibus invocamus: aperi nobis tuae officii: qui in hac sacratissima nocte vigilia de donis tuis cereum tuae suppliciter offerimus maestati.

V. Veniat, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, super hunc incensum larga tuae benedictionis infusio: et hunc nocturnum splendorem invisibilis regenerator accende: ut non solum sacrificium, quod hac nocte est, arcana luminis tui admixtione refulgat; sed in quocumque loco ex huius sanctificationis mysterio aliqut fuerit deportatum, expulsa diabolicae nequitha, virtus tuae maiestatis assistat. Per.

W. Domine Sancte Pater Omnipotens Aeternae Deus, lumen quod in nomine tuo et filii dei ac domini nostri iesi christi et spiritus sancti benedicimus et sanctificamus, quaesumus ut a te beoedictum sit et sanctificatum, eoque utentes exterius, interius spiritualiter calefieri mereamur. Per.

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Formulas for the blessing of the incense

a. Domine Deus noster, qui suscepisti munera Abel, Noe et Abraham, sacrificium Aaron, Samuelis, et Zachariae, et omnium sanctorum tuorum, incensum istud benedicere, et de manibus nostris in odorem suavitatis recipere digneris; ut omnes gestantes, tangentes, et adorantes illud, virtutem et auxilium Spiritus sancti percipere mereantur.

b. Deus omnipotens, Deus Abraham, Deus Israel, Deus Jacob, immitte in hanc creaturam incensi vim odoris tui vel virtutem, ut sit servulis tuis vel ancillis munimentum tutelaque defensionis, ne intret hostem in viscera eorum, editumque et sedem habere non possit.
APPENDIX 6 - The Sepulchre

The placing of a light by the Sepulchre is first attested in the eleventh century by John of Avranches, at Rouen, in Lanfranc's Decrees, and in the Customaries of Sigibert and Fruttuarii. The practice may be considerably older, although the reposition of the Sanctissimum after the Mass of Maundy Thursday is attested no earlier than the tenth century. Two traditions relating to the presence of lights at the Sepulchre may be identified: one, in which the light or lights were extinguished on Good Friday, and the other, in which the Sepulchre remained illuminated until the conclusion of the Vigil on Holy Saturday or until Easter Day.

(1) According to the tradition recorded by the five above-mentioned documents, a light burned continuously from the reposition of the Sanctissimum until the conclusion of Lauds on Good Friday. This practice survived at Notre-Dame in Rouen until at least the beginning of the eighteenth century. Subsequently it became customary to relight the candle with the new fire on Good Friday, and eventually to allow the candle to burn continuously from the reposition on Maundy Thursday to the consuming of the Sacrament on Good Friday.

A number of churches attest the use of two or more candles during the presence of the Sanctissimum in the Sepulchre. With the elaboration of ceremonial following what Jouanel called the 'eucharistic triumphs' of the Counter-Reformation the adornment of the Sepulchre with both lights and other decorations became what might today be con-

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1 Usually known today as the 'altar of repose' or 'place of reposition'. Here the Host, consecrated on Maundy Thursday, is reserved for use at Communion (the Mass of the Pre-sanctified) on Good Friday.
3 The practice of honouring the dead with lights has a venerable antiquity. For pagan practice see, for example, Dennis II p.388, Marwick p.93, Briggs p.72, and Hare, *Days* p.248. For its use in Christian worship see, for example, Canziani p.105, Lees p.168, and especially Dendy pp.99-107.
4 *Regularis Concordia*, PL 137.495.
5 *Acta Vet era* and Lanfranc (ibidem): *lumen continue ardeat.*
6 De Moleon pp.300-301.
7 As at Laon (*DAMR* 3.15.7 p.142, M 1164) and St-Martin d'Ainay, Lyon (*DAER* 4.22 p.125, M 175).
8 This occurred at Nidaros (*ONE* p.226), Lund (1514 Missal fol.lxxxiii), Magdeburg (1503 Missal fol.lxxxvii), and Cambrai (1507 Missal fol.lxvi).
9 2 candles: Canterbury (HBS 23 p.380), Coutances (1825 Ceremonial p.315), Liège (1492 Ordinary np), and Rome (Ordo XV, PL 78.1306). 4 candles: Barking (HBS 65 p.93). At Lyon, Mende, Salzburg, and Vienna four candles were held temporarily during the reposition of the Corpus Christi. An unspecified number burned at Burgos (1546 Missal fol.xciii), Cosenza (1549 Missal fol.104), Hildesheim (1499 Missal fol.xcvii), Poitiers (1767 Missal p.240), and in the Cistercian rite (1669 Missal p.139).
This emphasis on magnificence was positively encouraged by the 
*Caeremoniale Episcoporum* in its recommendations for the preparation of the chapel of repose. Surrounding the Pauline Chapel of St Peter's in Rome in the last century burned nearly 600 candles. The diarist Samuel Rogers commented that the arrangement was 'elegant in the highest degree'. Following the liturgical changes of 1955 the 'traditional simplicity of the Roman liturgy' was restored. It was enjoined that the Sepulchre should be moderately adorned, and that a single light should burn at the conclusion of the Adoration of the *Sanctissimum* at midnight on Maundy Thursday.

(2) According to the alternative tradition the Sepulchre was honoured with light until the conclusion of the Vigil on Holy Saturday. It is possible that in some churches the Sepulchre may also have served as a place of reservation for the older unconsumed Hosts. However, it had become customary in places by the thirteenth century to place a cross in the same Sepulchre as the Host. Its presence in the Sepulchre invited and resulted in its being honoured by light also. At Hereford one candle and at York two candles burned from Maundy Thursday to Easter Day. Whereas at Salisbury one of the two candles was extinguished after the removal of the *Sanctissimum*; the other remained alight until the procession on Easter Day before Matins. This procession is also attested in Hungary.

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1. At Palencia in the sixteenth century there were 'very many candles'. 1568 Missal fol.lxxxviii.
2. *Quo pulchrius magnificentiusque poterit, multis luminibus ornatum* (II.23.2).
3. Hale p.274.
5. Fortescue and O'Connell (11th ed.) p.287.
6. At York (Missal p.107) and Durham (Raine pp.10-11).
7. HBS 26 p.324.
10. 1815 Ritual pp.440-41.
APPENDIX 7 - **Illumination on Good Friday at the Passion and at the Adoration of the Cross**

Two traditions relating to the use of light at the Good Friday liturgy existed within the rites of the Western Church. The use of liturgical light when the Passion was read and the Cross was venerated in the Gallican Church is attested by documentary evidence, and can be inferred with confidence for the Mozarabic rite. Moreover, Amalarius' statement concerning the practice of the Roman Church implies that he was familiar with the use of light at the Good Friday liturgy. Both at Salzburg and in the Camaldolese rite two altar candles burned during the reading of St John's Passion.

The absence of illumination during the Good Friday liturgy of the Roman rite is attested in the ninth century by Amalarius, who wrote that in the Roman Church on Good Friday all fire was extinguished from the sixth to the ninth hour in commemoration of the Crucifixion. In its liturgical application this entailed extinguishing the altar lights before the reading of St John's Passion and rekindling them after the Adoration of the Cross. Roman practice was generally followed throughout the western rites including those of Braga and Lyon. In the Ambrosian rite, however, the altar lights and the candles of the acolytes were extinguished at *emisit spiritum* during St Matthew's Passion, and were not rekindled until after the Easter candle had been lit the following day.

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1 *PRG* II p.86 §304.
2 Léon Antiphonary pp.275 ff.
3 1507 Missal fol.lxxxvii.
4 1503 Missal fol.82.
5 *Liber Officialis* 4.22.2.
6 *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* p.278 and p.284.
7 1558 Missal fol.xciii and 1771 Missal p.178, respectively.
8 King, *Holy Week* p.98.
Many of the surviving Paschal candlesticks in the churches of Rome are twisted shafts of verd-antique with bases of gilt bronze or white marble. Amongst the most impressive are the voluted columnar candlesticks of S.Clemente and S.Lorenzo, both inlaid with mosaics and bearing a spike on their summits to receive the Easter candle, that of S.Maria Cosmedin with its cosmatesque craftsmanship, and the twelfth-century column in St Paul’s, embellished with a series of bassi-relievi depicting the Passion and the Resurrection. Other examples of Paschal pillars with well-executed sculpture are to be found in the monastic church at Farfa, in the Capella Palatina of Palermo Cathedral, in the Church of SS.Nereus and Achilleus, and in the Baptistry at Florence.

The practice of using a pillar was not confined to Italy. At Spires a choice existed between a column and a candelabrum; whilst at Angers in the eighteenth century a tall column of marble stood in front of the altar. Likewise at Lyon a tall spiral column of marble stands by the ambo. Indeed the rubrics of a number of French diocesan missals recommend that the Paschal candelabrum should resemble a column.

The Paschal candlestick has been characterised by two attributes, size and beauty. That at Barking in the fourteenth century was described as large, as was that at Besançon in the seventeenth century; whilst the Easter candle at Autun stood in a candelabrum that was both grandius and columnar. It need hardly be stated that the candlestick should be as tall, if not taller, than the Easter candle. Likewise, it is only fitting that the importance and significance of the Candle should be matched by a holder of noble craftsmanship. It was even recommended that the candelabrum of a country church should be pulchre elaboratum. We are also informed that the candleholders were artistically worked often in the form of an angel, even in smaller churches. Most of these appear to have been replaced by candlesticks of a much simpler design. At Ushaw College in England there are four angels at the base of Pugin’s elaborately-exe-
cuted eight-foot high candelabrum, the fingers of the raised right hands pointing upwards towards the light, a vertical movement which also characterises the postures of the ceramic figures of pilgrims at St John's Cathedral in Portsmouth.

There is little evidence from previous centuries to make us believe that Paschal candlesticks were generally fashioned from wood rather than metal; although it is likely that the use of the latter often reflected the financial resources of a church. Of those in use in thirty-five French cathedrals, eighteen were made of copper or bronze, four were of iron, and the rest were made of wood.¹

At Durham the central branch of the enormous seven-branched candlestick was used to hold the Easter candle.² According to a description of this candelabrum recorded in 1593, many years after its destruction, its feet were flying dragons; there were representations of the four evangelists; and it was studded with precious stones and embellished with intricately-wrought metalwork. 'The Paschall in latitude did containe almost the breadth of the Quire, in longitude that did extend to the height of the lower vault, wherein did stand a long piece of wood reaching within a man's height to the uppermost vault roofe of the church.'³

¹Survey of 1984.
²These candelabra, made in imitation of the menorah in Solomon's Temple, became common in Western Europe as a result of the Crusades. Although there were a number of them in use in the cathedrals of England, the only surviving examples are to be found in Central Europe - for instance, at Essen, Brunswick, Köstrerneuburg, and Prague (Zarnecki pp.134-5). They are still in use today at Århus, Lund, and Ribe.
³Raine, Rites of Durham p.9. It is generally believed that the 'long piece of wood' refers to a Judas which was inserted into the central holder to increase the size of the Easter candle. It is more likely, however, that this length of wood was a pole with a small candle at one end, used for lighting the Easter candle. If there was a hole in the roof of the cathedral - the description was based on the memory of an old man - it is unlikely to have been used for lighting the Candle. The writer believes that the presence of an aperture in the roof may have been linked to the use of a block and tackle, or similar device, which may well have been necessary for hoisting the large Easter candle into its holder.
APPENDIX 9 - The Blessing of the Font and Baptism

The use of light at the blessing of the font is first attested in the Roman rite c.AD 600.\textsuperscript{1} Ordo 11 informs us that the two man-sized Vigil-candles were taken in procession to the font in front of the Pope.\textsuperscript{2} Two later \textit{ordines}\textsuperscript{3} state that the two candles were lowered into the baptismal water when the Pope or presiding priest uttered the prayer \textit{Descendat in hanc plenitudinem.} The practice is also attested in two eighth-century Gelasian sacramentaries,\textsuperscript{4} and in an eleventh-century baptismal \textit{ordo} from Northern Italy.\textsuperscript{5} It is also alluded to in Zachary's letter to Boniface.\textsuperscript{6} The presence of the two large candles in the Ambrosian rite of the twelfth century is mentioned by Beroldus (p.111); but there is no evidence that they were lowered into the water.

The immersion into the font of the Easter candle, which replaced the two Vigil-candles of the Roman rite, in the churches of Gaul and Germany is first found in the tenth-century \textit{Pontificale Romano-Germanicum};\textsuperscript{7} and the practice became widespread throughout the western rites. Alcuin records a transitional stage in which the choice is allowed of immersing either the two Vigil-candles or the Easter candle.\textsuperscript{8} By the end of the fifteenth century it had also become customary for the priest to dip the Easter candle three times into the font, withdrawing it twice and sinking it to a lower level each time, and repeating in an ever-higher tone \textit{Descendat in hanc plenitudinem}.\textsuperscript{9} In many churches some of the molten wax of the Easter candle was allowed to drop onto the surface of the baptismal water in the form of a cross. At Reims the choice was allowed of using either the Easter candle or another candle. Presumably the latter was the \textit{cereus fontium}, and was used if the Easter candle was too large to carry in procession.\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{1}It is true that at the baptism of the Jews of Auvergne c.AD 500, Gregory of Tours refers to the flickering of the candles and the burning of the lamps (PL 71.326). The description, however, is too imprecise for us to comment with confidence upon the use of light from a liturgical point of view.
\textsuperscript{2}OR 11.90.
\textsuperscript{3}OR 23.24ff and OR 30B.46.
\textsuperscript{4}GeGe p.99 and GePh p.69.
\textsuperscript{5}Lambot p.xxxv.
\textsuperscript{6}PL 89.951B. See p.170 for the text of the letter.
\textsuperscript{7}PRG II p.104. Although the two Vigil-candles were present at the ceremony described by \textit{PRG}, there is some uncertainty as to whether they also were dipped into the water.
\textsuperscript{8}De Div.Ojf., PL 101.1219A/B.
\textsuperscript{9}Thus a very large number of missals. The silence of a few missals (e.g. those of Valence (1504) fol.lxiii and Narbonne (1528) fol.xcv) on this score would suggest that a single immersion obtained in a number of churches.
\textsuperscript{10}1770 Missal p.224.
The Sacramentary of Ripoll enjoins that the candles be placed in the water (p.97). It is not clear whether cer[ei]os refers to the two Vigil-candles or to the candles of the baptizands. Support for the latter type comes from the Pontifical of Poitiers, which quite clearly states that the unlit candles of the children about to receive Baptism are placed in the water.¹

At Salisbury the Easter candle, which was present at the font, was not lowered into the water. Instead drops of wax dripped onto the surface of the fontal water.² The silence of Beroldus would suggest that at Milan in the twelfth century the Easter candle was not carried to the font. Its absence on this occasion is also attested at Biasca c.AD 900,³ and at Nidaros in the early thirteenth century.⁴

The earliest reference in the West to the baptismal candles held by the neophytes occurs in a work formerly attributed to St Ambrose.⁵ Martène cites the letter of Marcus of Gaza to Arcadius on the occasion of the baptism of Theodosius the Younger;⁶ and we had occasion above to refer to the conversion of the Jews of Auvergne.

In the period from c.AD 500 to 1000 the custom of handing an unlit candle to each baptizand is recorded only three times. In the ninth century Amalarius states that the neophytes’ candles were lit after the last litany;⁷ and Alcuin records that they were lit after the precentor had proclaimed ‘Accendite’.⁸ The plunging of these candles into the font at Poitiers has been referred to above. At what point during the service or during their period of preparation the catechumens received their candles is unknown. According to the Northern Italian baptismal ordo, they brought their candles to the scrutinies.⁹

Attestation of the use of a formula, which subsequently became widespread throughout the western rites, to accompany the presentation of a candle first occurs in the Missal of Robert of Jumièges.¹⁰ It reads: ‘Receive the irreproachable candle; guard your baptism; so that when the Lord comes to the wedding-feast, you may meet him in the court of heaven for ever and ever.’ The twelfth-century Ritual of Soissons and the thirteenth-century Sarum Missal contain slight variations. The former

¹Deponunt in fontem cereos baptizandorum infantum non illuminatos (p.216).
²Missal of c.1300 (Legg) p.129.
³Sacramentary p.70.
⁴ONE p.234.
⁵De Lapsu Virginis, PL 16.372.
⁶De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus Vol.1 p.54.
⁷Liber de Ord.Ant. XLIV.8.
⁸De Div.Off., PL 101.1221C.
⁹Lambot 12, 14, 29.
began: ‘Receive the irreproachable, burning candle...’;¹ whilst the latter
starts: ‘Receive the irreproachable candle; guard your baptism; keep the command-
ments...’.²

¹DAER 4.24 p.161, M 305.
²Missal of c.1300 (Legg) p.131.

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APPENDIX 10 - Anticipation

Reference has already been made to the anticipation of the new fire ceremony and the Easter vigil in the afternoon of Holy Saturday as early as the eighth century. The singing of Tenebrae at Rome in the fourteenth century in the late afternoon of Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of Holy Week would suggest that the blessing of the Easter candle took place much earlier in the day. Evidence from the late-fifteenth and sixteenth centuries for the kindling of the new fire at noon has been presented in Table 27, and for the performance of the same ceremony at about 9.00 a.m. in Tables 24 and 26.

However, we also observed that in the seventeenth century some Benedictine houses continued to sing Tenebrae in the early hours of the morning, a practice that the Cistercians maintained until the time of the Second Vatican Council. As late as the sixteenth century at Braga the liturgy of Holy Saturday continued to be performed at night. Jounel suggests that the anticipation of the services of the Triduum was not universal in France until after 1600; but he does not instance any church where anticipation did not occur.

In the cathedrals of the Catholic areas of Eastern Europe the liturgy of Holy Saturday has always been celebrated during the late evening of that day. Patrick Leigh Fermor graphically describes the ceremony at Esztergom in 1933. The writer is given to believe by eye-witnesses that a similar situation obtained in the larger churches of Poland.

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1See p.
2Ordo XIV, PL 78.1204B.
3The writer is grateful to the Rt Rev. John Moakler, Abbot of Mount St Bernard Abbey, Coalville for this information. Letter dated 21 June 1984.
4King, LPS p.223.
5La Semaine Sainte p.146.
6Between The Woods pp.15-16.
APPENDIX 11 - Monte Cassino A

We hope to show that the first of the two twelfth-century rites of Monte Cassino, referred to here as *Monte Cassino A*, belongs to the same tradition as that recorded in the late eighth-century Ordo 28 in respect of the ceremonies of Holy Saturday. For both attest a procession which accompanies the lighted Easter candle. The evidence of *Monte Cassino A* is, however, ambiguous; and it is not immediately clear from the rubrics how the Easter candle featured in the initial stages of the ceremony. Much of the difficulty revolves around the interpretation of *cereus* in the following passage from that document:

Et accenso *cereo*, procedunt omnes de secretario cum *ipso cereo* in aeclesiam cum silentio et, posito in candelabro *cereo*, portante acolito, procedunt ad altare.

Acolitus vero portat *cereum* ad ammonem et dicit tribus vicibus: *Lumen Christi*, plane.2

From *PRG* and *Monte Cassino B* we know that *cereus* may either refer (a) to the small candle used for bringing the new fire into church, or (b) to the Easter Candle, or (c) to one of the two man-sized candles of the Roman Vigil. In view of the mention of only one candle, we may at once discount the third possibility. However, in view of the absence of any article in Latin, definite or indefinite, the first occurrence of *cereus* in the above passage could equally be (a) or (b). Likewise, the second occurrence of the word presents a choice of interpretation. The identification of *cereo*, which is the substantival element in the Ablative Absolute, depends on the interpretation of *posito*. This may be translated either (i) 'the acolyte who bears the candle places it in a candlestick', or (ii) 'an acolyte bears the candle (ie the Easter candle) which has (previously) been placed in a candlestick', since it is not clear who is carrying the lighted candle (ie the first *cereo*). Then again, the candle which the acolyte takes to the ambo may be a small lighted candle, if the Easter candle, previously unmentioned, was already in position by the ambo. The situation becomes even more complex, if a distinction is then made between the first and the second occurrence of *cereo*. For the former would refer to the small candle used to bring in the new fire, and the second to the Easter candle, especially as *ipso* seems to give some emphasis to the noun which it qualifies.

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1Printed as §1 on p.292 of *PR XII* in M. Andrieu, *Le Pontifical Romain au Moyen Age*. The contemporary *Monte Cassino B* (p.293 §2) is to be identified with the twelfth-century Ordinary of Monte Cassino, known to Martène (= M 1139). The exact milieu of *Monte Cassino A* is unknown; but its comparison with *Monte Cassino B* by the compiler of the latter, and the presence of the *Lumen Christi*, would suggest a central Italian location not far from Monte Cassino.

2*PR XII* I p.292 §1. The writer’s italics.

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Most of the difficulties disappear, however, when we compare the rubrics of Ordo 28, supplemented by those of Ordo 31, with those contained in Monte Cassino A. (Table 60).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordo 28 (§§58-63)</th>
<th>Ordo 31 (§63-67)</th>
<th>Monte Cassino A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Robing at 9th hour</td>
<td>Robing at 9th hour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Candle is lit</td>
<td>Candle to be blessed is lit in the sacristy.</td>
<td>Candle is lit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Procession from sacristy</td>
<td>Silent procession</td>
<td>Silent procession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Candle in candlestick</td>
<td>Candle in candlestick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. at altar</td>
<td>(Lessons later read at ambo)</td>
<td>Candle is taken to ambo (Cry of Lumen Christi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Deacons asks for blessing</td>
<td>(Archdeacon sings)</td>
<td>Deacon asks for blessing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Exultet</td>
<td>Exultet</td>
<td>Exultet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Two candles lit</td>
<td>Two man-sized candles lit</td>
<td>Two candles lit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. New fire taken to every home</td>
<td>New fire taken to every home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 60

The similarities between Ordo 28 and Monte Cassino A leave us in little doubt that the latter perpetuates the ceremonial of Ordo 28 in its entirety and has added to the ritual only the cry of Lumen Christi. It is remarkable that so little change had occurred in the liturgy of this tradition over nearly 400 years. Ordo 31 clearly belongs to the same tradition in spite of the smaller number of rubrics. Its importance, however, for our present argument lies in the fact that, in enlarging on the identity of the candle in Rubrics 2 and 5, it enables us to interpret cereus correctly in the above-quoted passage from Monte Cassino A, and to show conclusively that the Easter candle was lit in the sacristy and borne in procession into church, first to the altar and then to the ambo. The passage may now be translated:
After the Easter candle has been lit, they all proceed from the sacristy with the Candle into church in silence. The acolyte who bears the Candle places it in a candlestick, and they move to the altar. Then the acolyte takes the Candle to the ambo and proclaims three times: *Lumen Christi.*
APPENDIX 12 - The Inventor rutili of Prudentius

In view of the relatively late attestation for its earliest use on Holy Saturday, it would seem that this hymn, which was originally composed for use at the Lucernarium, was recommissioned for use at the new fire ceremony, when that ritual was incorporated into the Paschal liturgy of the Gallican Church, probably in the eighth century, and it is not difficult to see why the hymn came to be sung on Holy Saturday, assuming that its use had generally fallen into desuetude with the disappearance of the daily office of the Lucernarium.

The principal themes of the hymn are God's provision of light which brings salvation, and deliverance from the darkness of this world's evil. The tone of the hymn is both eschatological and strongly expectational with references to the Deliverance in Exodus, being reminiscent of the themes of the Romano-Gallican Paschal Preface. After an initial invocation to God as the source of light (1.1), the petition for the provision of light for the faithful, which looks forward to the return of that light after its disappearance, suggests an approaching conclusion to a commemoration of the Crucifixion (1.4). References to the Passover (ll.37-8), Christ's descent to the underworld (l.127), the keeping of a watch (l.137), and the Resurrection (l.132) strongly suggest the Paschal vigil of Holy Saturday. This is reinforced by a reference to the production of fire from a flint (l.7). It is not difficult to understand why the hymn was once thought to have been composed for the Vigil of Holy Saturday.

We have referred elsewhere to the highly poetic language of Prudentius. This being taken into account, it would seem that the content of the Inventor rutili related to the primitive vigil of Saturday which was held in preparation for the weekly commemoration of the Resurrection every Sunday. It is possible that the Lucernarium, being originally a daily service, had developed into a weekly office held every Saturday evening; and that Prudentius' hymn was written for this weekly celebration.

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1 Tenth century. See Chapter 4 (ii) and Table 45 on p.211.
2 Ordo 26 is our earliest evidence for that ceremony.
3 Although the hymn was written by Prudentius, who was himself a Spaniard, there is no evidence for its use on Holy Saturday in the Mozarabic rite. In Chapter 4 (ii) we have shown that its use was confined almost exclusively to the regions east and north of the Alps.
4 Mabillon II p.141.
5 Part IV Chapter 6 p.254.
6 A weekly performance of the Lucernarium is favoured by Capelle, Le rite des cinq grains p.3.
APPENDIX 13 - *The Mozarabic and Milanese Rites*

1. The Mozarabic Rite.¹

In a comparative study of the liturgies of Holy Saturday the development of the ceremony of light from the *Lucernarium* is more apparent in the Mozarabic rite than in any other western rite. For in addition to the lighting and bearing in procession of the Easter candle, the lamp, which had formerly been the principal source of light at the *Lucernarium*, continued to be accorded similar veneration. The influence of the Jerusalem liturgy of Holy Saturday was also obvious in the Spanish ritual. There is general agreement amongst scholars that the production of fire by the bishop in a sacristy from which all light had been excluded, and the procession of light into the church, to be followed by the Vigil, was derived directly from Jerusalem.

Not all the precursors of the Mozarabic rite, however, are to be found in the East, as Capelle was forced to admit.² In Chapter 10 of Part IV we have attempted to account for what Dendy saw as a superfluous second blessing of both the lamp and the Easter candle. The presence, however, of both the lamp and the Easter candle, and the blessing of both, are clear indications of the composite character of the Spanish rite. The writer believes that the three principal features of the ritual which do not have their provenance in Jerusalem, viz. the Easter candle, the striking of the fire, and the triple *Deo gratias* were elements imported into Spain from Gaul, possibly as early as the sixth century. Elsewhere we have shown that the Easter candle had its origin in Northern Italy (pp.228-30), the markings on the Candle in Rome (pp.277-8), and the kindling of fire in Northern Europe (pp.183-6). The threefold cry of *Deo gratias* is almost certainly derived from the triple *Lumen Christi*, which we have argued had its origin in Central or Southern Italy.

The influence of Jerusalem occurred in the three centuries or so which separate the visit of Egeria to Jerusalem from the Moorish conquest of Spain at the beginning of the eighth century. A date nearer the former event seems more likely. The Gallican influence may be assigned to a later date. We have suggested the sixth century, in view of the evidence of Canon ⁹ of the Fourth Council of Toledo, which was held in AD 633:

¹Léon Antiphonary pp.280-3 and Férotin pp.210-15.
²La *Procession* p.109.
³PL 84.369B.
The Lamp and the Candle are not blessed in some churches on Easter Eve....It is fitting for unity and peace that the [same] rite be observed in the churches of Galicia.1

The fact that the lamp and the Easter candle did not feature in the same ceremony in all parts of Spain by AD 633 would suggest that the combination of both these liturgical light-sources within the same ceremony was not of great antiquity in that country.

The changes resulting from the introduction in 1500 of the Missale Mixtum as the official Mass-book of the Mozarabic rite hardly affected the ceremonies involving the new fire and the blessing of the Paschal light. The insertion into the Easter candle of the five grains of incense and the introduction of the two additional candles, which were lit from the Easter candle, hardly affected the character of the ceremonial.2

2. The Milanese Rite.

Like the Holy Saturday liturgy of the Mozarabic rite, the corresponding Ambrosian ceremonial of Milan had ritual elements inherited both from the Lucernarium and from the liturgy of Jerusalem. Prominent amongst the former was the lighting of a lamp from the new fire and the carrying of that lamp for the lighting of the Easter candle. This lamp was also used to light the two large candles which burned during the blessing of the font.3

It is very likely that the use of two churches in the twelfth century for the new fire ceremony derived from the practice at Jerusalem. For it is significant that the new fire was kindled and blessed in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Milan, and subsequently taken to the 'summer' church, wherein the Paschal vigil took place.4 These buildings corresponded to the Anastasis and the Martyrium in Jerusalem.5 In later centuries the new fire was kindled in the sacristy of the cathedral, as in the Mozarabic rite, the former arrangement being preserved to a point. The use of the sacristy is perpetuated in the rite revised after Vatican II, although a location outside the church is now permitted.6

1Dendy wrongly translates 'the churches of Gaul' (p.130).
2PL 85.442C.
3Beroldus pp.110-111; 1768 Missal p.125.
5For the Paschal vigil at Jerusalem, see Bertonière pp.121ff.
61981 Missal p.242.
APPENDIX 14 - The Chartae.

The Charta at Reims Cathedral in 1585

Benedictus est hic Cereus in honorem & laudem Domini nostri JESU-CHRISTI, qui cum Patre & Spiritu-sancto vivit & regnat Deus in saecula saeculorum Amen

Annus ab origine mundi juxta Hebraeorum supputationem est V.M.V.C.LIX
Annus ab Incarnatione Domini M.V.C.LXXXV.
Annus a passione eiusdem M.V.C.LII
Annus a Nativitate B. Virginis Marie M.V.C.LXXXIX
Annus ab Assumptione ejusdem M.V.C.XXXVI
Annus Calendarii Gregoriani reformati IV
Littera Dominicalis usque ad Circumcisionem est F. & deinceps toto sequente anno erit E.
Aureus numerus est 9. anni vero sequentis est 10.
Epacta eo ipso die cui respondet in Calendario, novam lamen in singulis mensibus indicat

Epacta lunae Paschalis semper quaerenda est inter Octavum diem Martii & quintum Aprilis
Annus Cycli solaris XXVI
Annus Indictionis XIII
Annus pontificatus Sanctissimi D. D. N. Papae Gregorii XIII est XIII
Annus a conversione & baptismo Clodovei primi ex Francorum regibus Christianam fidentem complexi M.LXXXVI
Annus aetatis Christianissimi nostri regis Henrici tertii XXXIV
Annus regni ejusdem XI
Annus Archiepiscopatus Reverendissimi D. D. Ludovici a Guisia XI
The *Charta* at Chalons Cathedral in 1708

Benedictus est hic Cereus in honorem Agni immaculati Domini nostri Jesu-Christi. BB.

Virginis Mariae, BB. Protomartiris Stephani, omniumque Sanctorum & Sanitarum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anno Periodi Julianae</th>
<th>VI.M.CD.XXI.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anno Aereae Christianae</td>
<td>M.VII.VIII.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anno reparatae salutis</td>
<td>M.VI.LXXV.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anno post missos in Galliam viros Apostolicos &amp; praes-</td>
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<tr>
<td>ertim B. Memmiam hujus Ecclesiae Cathalaunensis</td>
<td>M.II.LVI.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anno post Atilam Hunno-</td>
<td>M.CC.LXXXVIII.</td>
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<tr>
<td>rum Regem a Meroveo Francorum Rege &amp; Aetio</td>
<td>V.CC.XX.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romanorum duce proli-</td>
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<td>gatum in Campis Catha-</td>
<td></td>
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<td>launici,</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Anno a Francorum Regno</td>
<td></td>
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<td>condito</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anno a translatione Regni Francorum a Caroli Magni stirpe ad Capetanos</td>
<td>M.CC.XIV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anno a baptizato Clodoveo Franciae Rege die Natali Domini 496</td>
<td>V.LXX.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anno a vastatis prima vice fortuito incendio hisce sacris aedibus</td>
<td>V.LXI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anno Dedicationis hujus Templi ab Eugenio Pontifici</td>
<td>V.XX.</td>
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<tr>
<td>fice Maximo 26 Octobris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anno Expugnationis Jero-</td>
<td>CCC.LXXXXVII.</td>
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<td>solymorum a Saladino</td>
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<td>Anno ab extinctione Ordinis Templariorum in Concilio</td>
<td>IV.XCVII.</td>
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<td>generali Viennensi 6.</td>
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<td>Anno ab Elephantiacorum</td>
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<td>CC.LXXIX.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anno ab Urbe per Armenia-</td>
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<td>cos liberata</td>
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</table>

Anno a Constantinopoli per Turcos expugnata CC.LIV.

Anno ab Henrici magni Carnuti inauguratone tertio Calendas Martii C.XV.

Anno Pontificatus SS.Domini Clementis Papae Undecimi VIII.

Anno Regni Christianissimi Regis Nostri Ludovici Magni LXV.

Anno Ordinationis Illustrissimi Domini D. Gastos Joannis Baptistae Ludovici de Noailles XII.

Episcopi & Comitis Cathalaunensis Franciae Paris

Anno a Francorum Rege die Natali Anno Ordinationis Dulius I. LXXIV.

Anno suprema supplicatione Templorum propiaeo XI.

Anno a secundo hujus Templi incendio VIII.

Anno Cycli Solarii currente XVII.

Anno Cycli decemvrenalis seu numeri aurei XVIII.

Anno Cycli Indictionis I.

Anno Cycli Epactarum VII.

Littera Dominicales G.

Littera Martyrologii G. VII.

Concurrentes VIII.

Pascha VIII.Aprilis.

Rogationes XIII.Mai.

Pentecostes XXVII.Maii.

Dies Adventus II.Decembris.

Dominica Septuagesimae XXVII.Januarii.

Feria Cinerum XIII.Februarii.

Dominicae Post Pentecosten XXVI.
The Charta at Rouen Cathedral in 1678

Consecratus est iste cereus in honore Agni immaculati, & in honore gloriosae virginis ejus genetricis Mariae.

Anno ab Incarnatione Domini 1989
Anno a confirmatione Ordinis 773
Anno a transitu beati Dominici 768
Benedictus est cereus iste ad honorem
Domini nostri
Jesu Christi

The Dominican Chart
APPENDIX 15 - The Suburbicarian Dioceses

Much of the uncertainty over the interpretation of the term 'suburbicarian' vis-à-vis the blessing of the Easter candle arises from Duchesne’s statement that 'the ceremony [of the Easter candle] was so popular that the Popes, although they did not adopt it in their own church, were obliged to permit its use in the "suburbicarian" diocese'.¹ He was commenting on the authorisation granted by Pope Zosimus (AD 417-18) to churches subject to papal jurisdiction permitting them to introduce the ceremony of the Easter candle:

per parrocia [paroccias] concessa licentia cereum benedici.²

According to Duchesne parocciae referred to the suburban parish churches of the Diocese of Rome. Since, however, there is no documentary evidence before the tenth century for the existence of the Easter candle in the papal rite,³ it seems most unlikely that for over 500 years the rite as observed in the Cathedral of St John Lateran resisted the introduction of the Easter candle which was blessed in other churches within the City and Diocese of Rome. It would appear that Duchesne overlooked the fact that parocchia at this period in the Church’s history indicated ‘diocese’ rather than ‘parish’. It is possible that the seven ancient Suburbicarian Dioceses within the immediate vicinity of Rome are here intended; but our observation above regarding the parish churches of the Diocese of Rome is almost equally applicable in this instance. It is the writer’s belief that parocciae refers either to those dioceses beyond the immediate vicinity of Rome, which were subject to papal influence, or to those regions which had been converted to Christianity by missionaries who owed their allegiance to Rome, or, most likely, to both.

This view is based partly on the evidence of Ordo 25, which states that the blessing of the Easter candle took place in suburbanis civitatibus.⁴ Moreover, Amalarius had observed:

Romanis ita agentibus, nobis praeceptum est a papa Zosimo benedicere cereum.⁵

¹Christian Worship p.252.
²‘Permission was granted throughout the parishes for the Easter candle to be blessed.’ Duchesne, Liber Pontificalis 1 p.225.
³It is first attested in the Roman rite in PRG c.950.
⁴OR 25.2, dated c.800. The phrase relates to cities and states outside Rome as far as Gaul.
⁵This is the practice at Rome [the making of wax Agnus Dei’s]; we were permitted to bless the Easter candle. Liber Officialis 1.18.1.
It is clear from Amalarius’ statement that Zosimus’ decree had been binding in regions beyond the confines of Italy.

The phrase ‘ordo suburbicaire’ was applied somewhat loosely by Capelle (and accepted by Andrieu) to Ordo 26, a Roman ordo with Gallican influences.\(^1\) Chavasse argues in favour of an intermediate zone between the Lateran Church and the neighbouring dioceses of Italy, corresponding to the seven Suburbicarian Dioceses, for the provenance of Ordo 26.\(^2\) His theory, however, is based on a questionable understanding of the relationship of the compiler of the ordo vis-à-vis the grammatical subject of faciunt in §8.

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\(^2\)Le Sacramentaire pp.103-4.
The purpose of the key is to provide a rapid reference to the primary sources listed in Sections (b) and (c) of the bibliography. The vast majority of the documents which the writer has consulted relate to or are associated with specific locations. Reference should therefore be made in the first instance to the left-hand column. The figure in the right-hand column relates to the corresponding entry in either Section (b) or Section (c) of the bibliography. A number of primary sources, mainly those not associated with a specific place, are listed in Section (a) of the bibliography.

Figures in italics and preceded by the letter M refer to the documents cited by Edmond Martene in *De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus*, and identified and classified with corresponding numeration by A.-G. Martimort in *La documentation liturgique de Dom Edmond Martene*.

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