

THE FRENCH PORCELAIN SOCIETY

# DES CUVETTES DÉMASQUÉES

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This paper is a transcript of a talk given at the French Porcelain Society Study day on 17 June 2014.

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Cyrille Froissart is an independent European ceramics specialist and the consultant for most of the major French auction houses and Sotheby's France. Among the many ceramic pieces sold at auction in the past 15 years, he is delighted to have brought to light a fascinating Rouen porcelain mustard-pot from Louis Poterat factory, the two earliest Vincennes porcelain plates known today, an unrecorded Sèvres biscuit group "Les nymphes à la coquille" bought by the Musée de Sèvres and a Sèvres "Vase Japon" now in the Frick collection.





**C**uvette Mahon, gobelet Hébert, vase Choiseul, théière Calabre, plateau Courteilles, vase urne antique, broc Roussel, vase boileau, pot-pourri Duvaux...

All these names are today immediately familiar and the Sevres porcelain amateurs can easily visualize the shape over them.

That is, in a large part, due to the works of Pierre Verlet in the 1950's, who was a pioneer in the research on Sevres porcelain. Starting from almost nothing, Pierre Verlet had in one hand the porcelains and in the other hand their names in Sèvres archives. He produced links between both and most of them are perfectly appropriate and still admitted by every of us<sup>1</sup>.

### **Sèvres porcelain *cuvettes* with a partition**

The matter of this talk concerns two *cuvettes à fleurs* (jardinière) and a vase and their name used by the Sèvres factory during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The first shape on focus is on oval *cuvette* with two scroll handles and divided by a partition.

In 1953, Pierre Verlet has suggested that this shape of *cuvette à fleurs* (fig. 1) was named *vase à compartiments ou Choisy* in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Sèvres archives<sup>2</sup>.



**Fig. 1 Date-letter G , first size.  
Dodin, lapis et verd.  
Private Collection**

Four *vases à compartiments ou Choisy* appear in the sale record between 1758 and 1762. The first is sold to Madame Duvaux in December 1758<sup>3</sup>. It is twice called *vase à compartiment ou Choisy* or *vase Choisy ou à compartiments* and in 1762 an example is sold, part of a garniture with this mention: *deux pots pourris triangle et Choisy*<sup>4</sup>. It is unusual but this vase bears two cumulative or alternative names.

1758	<i>Vase à compartiments Choisy</i>	480.
1760	<i>Vase à compartiments Choisy</i>	432.
1760	<i>Vase à compartiments Choisy</i>	240.
1761	<i>Vase Choisy ou à compartiments</i>	240.
1762	<i>Plaque triangle et Choisy</i>	480. 1440.

Fig. 2 extracts from Sevres sale registers and stock list

What did lead Verlet to this attribution?

The first obvious reason is that this *cuvette* has two compartments divided with a fixed partition. After 1760, examples of the second and third size are known without the partition but it is still the same shape.



Fig. 3 *Seau à liqueur ovale*



Fig. 4 *Plateau triangle à compartiments?*

As the factory called the *seau à liqueur ovale* (fig. 3) with the words "*à compartiments*" because it has two compartments separated with a perpendicular divider, it could have been very logical to call this shape of *cuvette* the *vase à compartiments*.

There are also mentions of *plateau triangle à compartiments* in the *magasin de blanc* in the 1770's.

The decoration of the illustrated *plateau triangle* (fig. 4) is obviously of later date but the porcelain with the partitions might be of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and therefore could be an example of the *plateau triangle à compartiments*.

In 1794, when the goods of Madame du Barry were ceased and an inventory drawn up at the château de Louveciennes, a pair of *cuvettes* of this shape are listed and described as follow: « deux grandes *cuvettes à compartiments pour les fleurs coupées fond blanc à guirlandes de fleurs et médaillons avec oiseaux* »<sup>5</sup>. It means that, outside the factory during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the words *à compartiments* were used to describe this shape (fig. 5).



**Fig. 5 Date-letter V – First size.**  
Chappuis, Tandard, Vincent. Oiseaux guirlandes.  
Musée du Châteaux de Versailles.

The second reason that led Pierre Verlet to this conclusion is that among the four *vases à compartiments ou Choisy* listed in the sales registers, one given to Bertin in December 1760 is described with a pink and green ground and painted with a scene after Téniers<sup>6</sup>.

Pierre Verlet established a relation between that mention and a *cuvette* with a central partition in the Wallace collection with pink and green ground and painting after Téniers<sup>7</sup>.



**Fig. 6 Date-letter G, first size**  
Dodin, rose et verd, Tesnières.  
The Wallace Collection

So it was indeed very logical to consider that this shape was called the *vase à compartiments ou Choisy* but there is a number of reasons that make me think that this flower jardinière beard another name in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. To be clear, for a while I will call it the *cuvette* with partition.

The shape likely derives from an early ovale *cuvette* with a central partition of which two examples seem to be recorded one in the Sevres museum<sup>8</sup> and one in the Belvedere collection<sup>9</sup> (fig.7-8).

*Jatte à fleurs or cuvette forme ancienne (?)*



Fig. 7 Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique



Fig. 8 Mark: LL  
The Belvedere Collection



Fig. 9 Date-letter C  
With Adrian Sassoon, 2003

These and/or the very feminine smaller *cuvettes* (fig. 7-9) could possibly be the ones called *cuvettes forme ancienne* from 1754 to 1758, described in the stock inventories in two sizes.

The model of the mould of the *vase à compartiments* is listed for the first time in the stock inventory of January 1756 for the year 1755 and the first example in the sale records is the one sold in December 1758.

The first dated examples of the *cuvettes* with a partition bear the date letter C. One of these 1756 examples is the one painted with flowers in the David Collection in Copenhagen (fig. 10)<sup>10</sup>.



Fig. 10 Date-letter C, first size  
Fontaine - David Collection, Copenhagen





**Fig. 11 Mark: interlaced LL - 1752-53**  
Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique

But in the Sèvres museum is this example painted with birds on terrace marked with double L's without date-letter. We date it from the years 1752 or 1753, not 1755 (fig. 11)<sup>11</sup>.

Another clue is given by the name itself. Why would have it been called a *vase* and not a *cuvette*? A part from the *vase Hollandais* which is slightly different, all the others oval flowers jardinières are called *cuvettes* and not vases: *cuvettes Mahon*, *cuvettes Courteille*, *cuvettes à tombeau*, *cuvettes Verdun*, *cuvettes à masque*, *cuvettes ovale unie* and *cuvettes Roussel*.

In December 1761, the king bought six *cuvettes*<sup>12</sup>. Their names are not specified, they are just listed (fig. 12). At the same time, Louis XV bought a *vase à Choisy ou compartiments*. If it would have been a *cuvette*, it would have been more logical to list it among the other *cuvettes*.

1	Cuvette fondre	240
2	Joe. Noye	204
1	Joe. Noye	408
2	Joe. Noye	200
1	Joe. Noye	192
2	Joe. Noye	384
1	Vase Choisy ou compartiments	240

**Fig. 12 Purchases by the King Louis XV in December 1761**  
Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Vy3, f°82v.

It is the same in the stock list of January 1774. All the *cuvettes* are listed together shape after shape. In the same document, but few pages away, in the middle of the vases is mentioned a *vase à compartiments*.

The first example of the *vase à compartiments* was sold in December 1758 but we know four examples of *cuvette* with a partition dating before.

There are the four entries for the *vase à compartiments ou Choisy* in the sale registers between 1758 and 1762 and I have collected 41 examples mostly from 1753 to 1762 (fig. 13):





Fig. 13

From 1760, the sale legders become quite imprecise and a lot of vases and *cuvettes* are simply listed as *pieces d'ornements* but still, there is something wrong with the huge difference between the number of known examples of *cuvettes* with a partition and the number of *vases à compartiments* sold.

If the *cuvette* with a partition is not the *vase à compartiments* ou *Choisy* then two questions need answer: What is the name of this *cuvette* and what is a *vase à compartiments* ou *Choisy*?

We'll see that between the two answers, a third question will emerge.

### **The name of the *cuvette* with a partition**

In the sale registers of the Sevres factory, after December 1773, is a list of all the porcelain bought by Madame du Barry during the year 1773. At the date of 26 January 1773 are listed :

*2 cuvettes à tombeau 1ere beau bleu treillage oiseaux 360/720<sup>#</sup>*

And on 22 February 1773 :

*2 cuvettes Verdun 1ere guirlandes et oiseaux rehaussés d'or à 240<sup>#</sup>/480<sup>#</sup>*

*1 cuvette Courteille 1er treillage et oiseaux 240<sup>#</sup>*

And then *two cuvettes Courteilles* of the second size with same decoration for 192 livres each.

The baron Charles Davillier published in 1870<sup>13</sup> a document preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale by the hand of someone working at the Sevres factory listing all the purchases of Madame du Barry with few comments. At the date of 26 February 1773, the same *cuvettes* are described:

*2 cuvettes à tombeau bleu royal à treillage et oiseaux 720<sup>#</sup>*

*2 cuvettes à fleurs et oiseaux 480<sup>#</sup>*

*Une grande cuvette de même à treillage 240<sup>#</sup>*

*2 ditto moyenne 384<sup>#</sup>*

The 1772 *cuvettes à tombeau* are split between the Royal Collection and Harewood, mixed with another pair of *cuvettes à tombeau* with the same decoration bought by madame du Barry in 1785. Geoffrey de Bellaigue has clearly explained how the two pairs have been mixed<sup>14</sup>. Two of the three 1772 *cuvettes Courteilles* are today also at Harewood and the two *cuvettes* sold for 480 are now at Versailles (fig.14-15-16).



**Fig. 14-15-16 Cuvettes bought by Madame du Barry in 1773**  
 Royal Collection – Musée du château de Versailles – Harewood House.



But there are two problems: they are dated with a V for the year 1774 and they are not of the shape of the *cuvette Verdun* which is different with acanthus leaves handles and undulating top rim (fig. 17).

It has sometimes been answered that the painter might have drawn the wrong year letter by anticipation and that the man who wrote the entry in the sale register might have made a confusion between names.



**Fig. 17 Date-letter O - 2<sup>nd</sup> size**  
**Méreaud jeune, frise colorée Durfort sablé d'or.**  
 Anc. Coll. Mavrommatis

### Date Letter:

The same sort of problem is found on the few rare pieces known from the service with *figures chinoises* bought by Mme du Barry in August 1773. Two plates, two bottles coolers and a *plateau corbeille ovale ajouré* are dated with a V, and according to Bernard Dragesco and David Peters, the *plateau corbeille ovale ajouré* is marked with a V and the date 1773<sup>15</sup>.

Could it be possible that the letter V had been used sometimes in 1773 and confused with the U?. Another explanation could be that the date of 26 Februray 1773 would be the date of the payment or the delivery of some of the *cuvettes* but not all the seven and the ones preserved at Versailles could have been delivered some months later in 1774, due to firing difficulties. Among the comments in the document published by Charles Davillier, just after the mentions of these *cuvettes* is this one: *Ces cuvettes à mettre des fleurs ont été ordonnés par madame la comtesse, sur les dessins qu'elle a choisis, et elle n'ignore pas combien il en a péri au feu avant de réussir à celles qu'on lui a livrées.*

### Name:

What is a *cuvette Verdun*? Pierre Verlet again, made a connection with some hesitation between the name *cuvette Verdun* found in the Sevres archives and the *cuvette* with acanthus leaves handles (fig. 17). This identification was later confirmed by Svend Eriksen.

This connection was made with the support of a drawing preserved in the archives showing the outline of the elevation and the base with the *inscription caise à fleurs unje contourné fait le 7 mars 1754 par ordre de Mr de Verdun plus en juillet 1759 fait 2eme et 3eme grandeur* (fig. 18).

A closer look at the drawing shows that the front top line is curve, going down and not straight, and that on the side a scroll handle is drawn. This drawing shows actually the outline of the *cuvette* with the central partition (fig. 19).



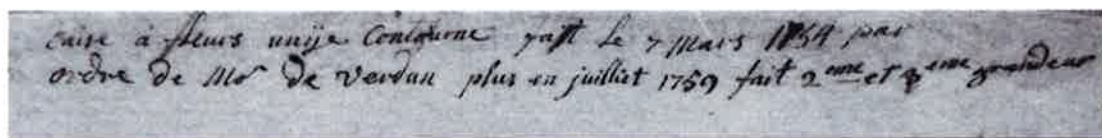
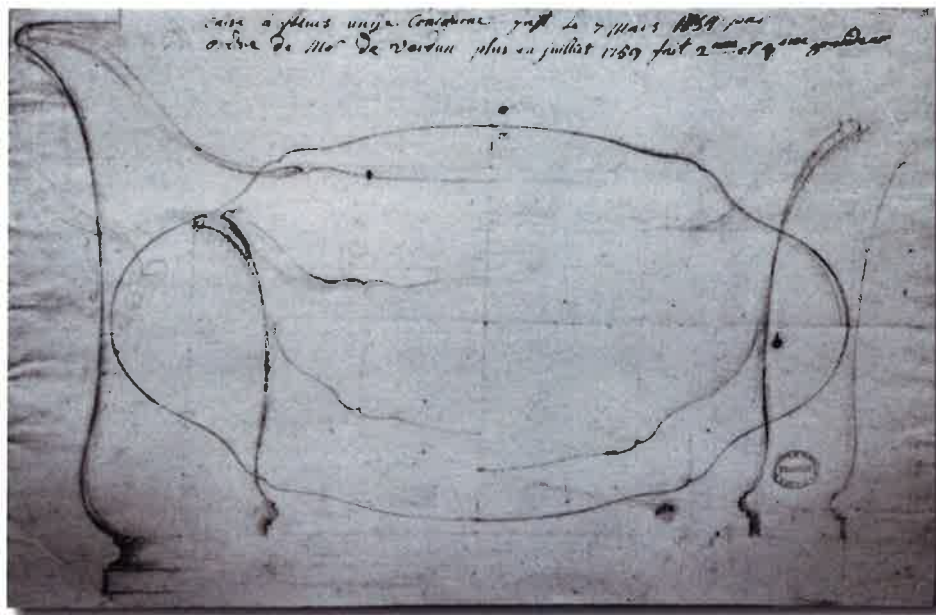


Fig. 18 – Drawing  
Archives, Sèvres, cite de la céramique



Fig. 19

On 20<sup>th</sup> december 1773, in the *registre des tourneurs, mouleurs et repareurs*, a repareur named Cochard worked on one *cuvette Verdun 1er réparé et moulés deux plaques finis*. On 3 December another repareur worked on 2 *plaques de cuvettes Verdun Moulées*. In my opinion, the *plaque* for the *cuvette Verdun* is the central partition.

It means that the *cuvette* with the partition is the *cuvette Verdun*.

### Cuvettes Verdun in the sales registers

A comparison between the *cuvettes Verdun* sold by the factory with the known examples of *cuvettes* with a partition illustrates that the parallels work much better with the name *cuvette Verdun* than with the name *vase à compartiments*.

I am not pretending that the illustrated examples are the ones mentioned in the archives.

Lazare Duvaux bought one *cuvette Verdun BC enfants colorés* during the second half of the year 1755 for 600 livres and another one with the same description and price in the second half of 1757<sup>16</sup>. There are no *cuvette* at 600 livres in the *Livre journal de Lazare Duvaux*. It has been previously suggested that this *cuvette Verdun* could be the ovale *cuvette* with bleu céleste ground and children in the Wallace Collection (fig. 20)<sup>17</sup>.



Fig. 20 Date-letter C - 1<sup>st</sup> size  
Bleu céleste – enfants colorés  
The Wallace Collection

A *cuvette* with partition was with Adrian Sassoon in 2002. The date-letter is illegible but that we can date around 1755. The design of the gilding and the style of painting presumably by Vieillard are typical of the mid 1750's (fig. 21).



Fig. 21 Mark LL, indistinct date-letter - 1<sup>st</sup> size  
Bleu céleste – enfants colorés  
Adrian Sassoon, 2002



Fig. 21-b Back side



**Fig. 22 - Date-letter C, first size**  
Fontaine - David Collection, Copenhagen

In the first half of the year 1757, Duvaux buys a *cuvette Verdun fleurs* for 192 livres<sup>18</sup> which could be the one preserved in the David Collection in Copenhagen dated C (fig. 22).

In July 1757 Lazare Duvaux sold to Madame de Pompadour :

*Un vase à fleurs peint à fleurs* for 192 livres.

In the inventaire après décès de Madame de Pompadour is listed in the Château de Compiègne *Un vase à fleurs à deux compartiments* but without any description of the decoration.

During the second half of 1758, Duvaux buys a *cuvette Verdun paysage* for the price of 480 livres<sup>19</sup>. The price suggests a ground colour.

An example formerly in the collections of Philippe de Rothschild with date letter E could be the cuvette bought by Lazare Duvaux (fig. 23). Another *cuvette* with a *paysage* on a green ground bears an indistinct date-letter but probably an H for 1761 (fig. 24).



**Fig. 23 - Date-letter E, first size**  
Paysage – rubans verts – anc. coll. Philippe de Rothschild



**Fig. 24 - Mark: LL, indistinct date-letter but maybe an H - first size**  
Verd – paysage – Private collection



The next entry in the sales registers among the purchase by Duvaux in the second half of the year 1758 is a *cuvette Verdun enfants colorés* bought at the price of 240 livres<sup>20</sup>.

In the livre-journal de Lazare Duvaux, on 24 march 1758 is mentioned the sale to the duchesse de Mazarin of un *vase à fleurs de porcelaine, peint à enfants*, 240 livres.

The year after on 10 May 1759 la dauphine buys at the same price a *cuvette Verdun Enfants*<sup>21</sup> and at the end of the year 1759, Madame Lair buys also a *cuvette Verdun enfants* for 240 livres<sup>22</sup>.

Two *cuvettes* with partition painted with *enfants colorés*, both bearing the date-letter E, are likely two of the three sold in 1758 and 1759 (fig. 25-26).



Fig. 25 - Date-letter E - 1<sup>st</sup> size  
Vieillard – Enfants colorés



Fig. 26 - Date-letter E - 1<sup>st</sup> size  
Vieillard & Buteux – Enfants colorés

In December 1760, the King Louis XV buys a *cuvette Verdun rose et verd* for 528 livres together with *vases pots pourris* Hebert, *vases Elephants*, *vase pot pourri fontaine à dauphin*, *vases hollandais et à bobèche*, 3 *cuvettes Courteilles* and a *déjeuner*. Some of these have been identified and are painted with scene after Téniers<sup>23</sup>.



Fig. 27 - Date-letter H – 2<sup>nd</sup> size Dodin – roze et  
verd –Tesnières Waddesdon Manor

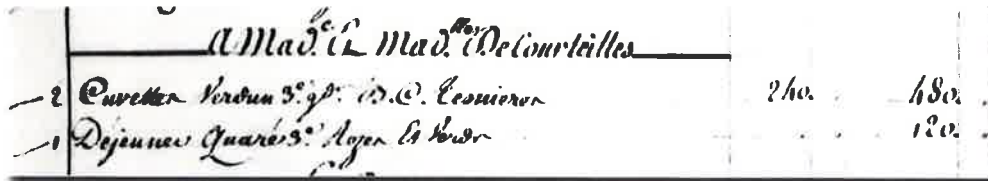
The price of the *cuvette Verdun* (528<sup>#</sup>) suggests that it is of the first size. It was previously thought that it could be the example at Waddesdon Manor (fig. 27) but a connection with the *cuvette* with partition in the Wallace Collection (fig. 28) seems to me now more appropriate.



Fig. 28 Date-letter G, first size Dodin, rose et verd, Tesnières.  
The Wallace Collection



At the same date, in December 1760, Madame and Mademoiselle Courteilles received a pair of *cuvettes Verdun* of the third size painted after Teniers on a bleu céleste ground<sup>24</sup>. In the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum is a pair of *cuvettes* with partition of the third size that matches perfectly the description (fig. 29).



**Fig. 29 Date-letter G, third size Vieillard, bleu céleste, Tesnières.**  
Victoria and Albert Museum

The stock list of January 1774 mentions six *cuvettes Verdun*.

Among them, one of the first size is described *bleu céleste caillouté enfants*.

The caillouté gilding on bleu céleste ground is rare enough to consider that this *cuvette Verdun* is most likely the Vincennes example sold in 1977 from Mentmore collection (fig. 30).



Fig. 30 - Date-letter C - 1st size  
Bleu céleste caillouté - enfants colorés  
Mentmore 1977

In the same document two of the first size are described *gros bleu et verd enfants* : the *cuvette* preserved at Waddesdon Manor matches also this description (fig. 31).



**Fig. 31 - Date-letter F – 1<sup>st</sup> size**  
**Morin - Lapis et verd, enfants colorés**  
 Waddesdon Manor



**Fig. 32 - Date-letter H – 2<sup>nd</sup> size**  
**Rose mosaïque – Tesnières**  
 Musée du Louvre

At last, one of second size is described *rose chiné ténières*, it could be the one now preserved in the musée du Louvre (fig. 32), even if the words *rose mosaïque* would probably have been more accurate.





## The name of the ex-cuvette Verdun

If the *cuvette* with a partition is now the *cuvette Verdun*, what would be the name of the *cuvette* previously called the *cuvette Verdun*?

I've been able to find 50 examples of the previously called *cuvette Verdun*. I probably missed published examples, some might have disappeared and others never been published. There is a shape of *cuvette* which has never been identified: the *cuvette Roussel*. This shape has been introduced in 1754 and produced in second and third size from 1759. It is not like if the *cuvette Roussel* was a rare shape, only produced in a very few examples. There is a large number of references to the *cuvette Roussel* in the sale registers, the stock lists, the kiln records and overtime payment book. Twenty-three examples are sold between 1755 and 1765 and after 1760 a number of *cuvettes* are simply called *cuvette* or listed among the *pièces d'ornements*. Nine *cuvettes Roussel* are in stock in the *magasin de vente* in 1774.

The overtime payment register for 1769 mentions that the painter Nicolas Catrice was paid for one *cuvette Roussel* of the second size and two of the third size painted with *roses détachées*.<sup>25</sup>

A garniture of three *cuvettes* said to date of 1768 and 1769 were in the collection of prince Demidoff at San Donato and later in the sale of the collection of Tony Dreyfus in Paris in 1935 (fig. 33). A fourth one is now preserved in the Musée des Arts décoratifs in Paris. It bear the date letter Q for 1769 and the mark of the painter Nicolas Catrice (fig. 34).

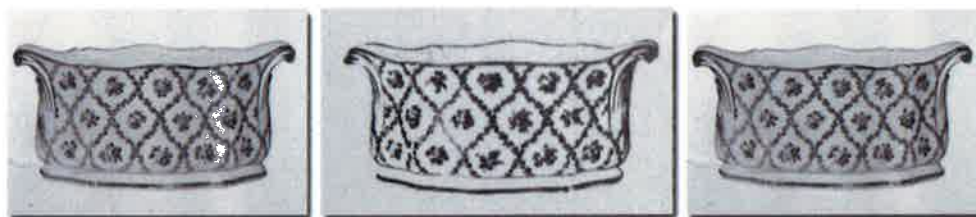


Fig. 33 - Date-letter P & Q - One of the 2<sup>nd</sup> size and two of the 3<sup>rd</sup> size  
Roses détachées  
anc. Coll. Tony Dreyfus



Fig. 34 - Date-letter Q, 3<sup>rd</sup> size – Catrice, roses détachées,  
Musée des Arts décoratifs, Paris.





Fig. 35

The same year, Genest is paid for the painting of a *cuvette Roussel à médaillon avec ornements en bas-relief*. I thank Rosalind Savill and John Whitehead who have drawn my attention to this *cuvette* in a private collection (fig. 36). It is not dated and has no painter's mark but the work of Genest in the years 1768-70 is enough well-known on the large set of vases à fond bleu Fallot à fleurs incrustées for example, to be quite sure that this *cuvette* is by the hand of Genest in those years.



Fig. 36 - Mark: LL, no date-letter  
Size unknown  
Private collection

In the first half of the year 1755, Lazare Duvaux bought a *cuvette Roussel enfants camayeux chairs colorés* for 300 livres together with a pair of *vases d'après le Saxe enfants camayeux chairs colorées encadrés* for 150 livres each<sup>26</sup> (fig. 37).

He sold all them three together to the prince de Soubise on 9 April 1755 (n° 2115) *une jatte à fleurs de Vincennes à contours, à cartouches, camayeux enfans, chairs colorées 300<sup>#</sup> et deux vases à mettre des fleurs, à cartouches, camayeu bleu, chairs colorées <sup>#</sup>*. We learn that the *vases d'après le Saxe* are flower pots. The *cuvette* preserved in the musée de Saint Omer is very likely this one<sup>27</sup> (fig. 38).

1	Jatte à fleurs Roussel infans. chairs colorées	300
1	Vase d'après le Saxe infans. chairs colorées	150
1	Plaque d'après le Saxe infans. chairs colorées	150
1	Vase d'après le Saxe infans. chairs colorées	150
1	Jatte à fleurs	300
2	Vase d'après le Saxe infans. chairs colorées	300
1	Plaque d'après le Saxe infans. chairs colorées	150
1	Vase d'après le Saxe infans. chairs colorées	150

Fig. 37 – Purchases by Lazare Duvaux 1755.  
Archives, Sèvres cité de la céramique, Vy1 f°88r



Fig. 38 - Date-letter C, 1<sup>st</sup> size  
Vieillard, enfans camayeux chairs colorées  
Musée de Saint-Omer

On 22 April 1756, the marchand mercier Bazin buys a *cuvette Roussel enfans colorés* for 300 livres<sup>28</sup>.

An example of the first size dated 1756, from the collection at Mentmore, is painted with polychrome children and could be the *cuvette* bought by Bazin (fig. 39).



**Fig. 39 - Date-letter C, 1<sup>st</sup> size, Vieillard – enfans colorés.**  
Mentmore 1977.



**Fig. 40 - Date-letter C, 1<sup>st</sup> size, Vieillard – lapis enfans colorés.**  
Anc. coll. Rosebery.

Lazare Duvaux bought 3 *cuvettes Roussel* painted with *enfans colorés* on a bleu lapis ground, two in the second half of 1756 and one in the second half of 1757, all three at the price of 432 livres<sup>29</sup>.

Two with this decoration are known, both dated of the year 1756, one from the Rosebery collection, one from the Levy collection (fig. 40-41)<sup>30</sup>.



**Fig. 41 - Date-letter C, 1<sup>st</sup> size, Vieillard – lapis enfans colorés.**  
Anc. coll. Levy.



Two of the three *cuvettes Roussel* bought by Duvaux are listed in his livre-journal :

The first sold on 18 décembre 1756 to the Marquis de Villeroy : *Une caisse à fleurs de Vincennes en bleu lapis peinte à enfans et cartouches en or* 432<sup>#</sup>. *Une griffe en fer-blanc peint et dix oignons*. 4<sup>#</sup>

The second sold on 20 décembre 1757 to M de Buchelet fermier général : *un vase pour mettre des fleurs de porcelaine, gros bleu , peint à enfans* 432<sup>#</sup>. *Une plaque de fer blanc verni pour mettre des oignons* 3<sup>#</sup>.

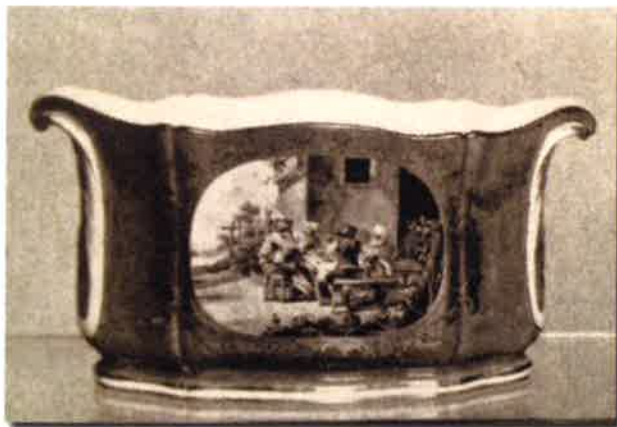
In 1761 the dealer Machard bought a *une cuvette Verd Ténieres* for 336 livres. Three matching with this decoration are known.



**Fig. 42 - Date letter G – 2<sup>nd</sup> size**  
**Veillard – verd – Tesnières**  
 Dragesco – Cramoisan 1989



**Fig. 43 - Date-letter H – 2<sup>nd</sup> size**  
**Verd – Tesnières**  
 Anc. Coll. Christner



**Fig. 44 - Date-letter H – 2<sup>nd</sup> size**  
**Morin – verd – Tesnières**  
 Anc. Coll. Duke of Leeds and Henri Walters



In the stock list of January 1774, nine *cuvettes Roussel* are described. Among them, a *cuvette Roussel* of the first size described as *rose fleurs* which could be the one preserved at Waddesdon Manor.

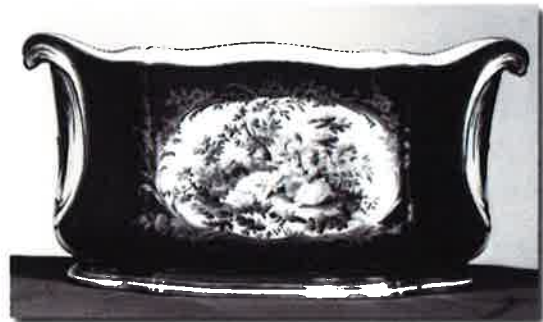


**Fig. 45 - Date letter E or F – 1<sup>st</sup> size**  
**rose – fleurs**  
Waddesdon Manor

In the same list, two described as *deux cuvettes Roussel 1<sup>re</sup> gr Verd enfants* and priced at 264 livres each could be the two of the first size painted with children on a green ground, one preserved in Baltimore and another one in Saint Jean Cap Ferrat which are likely a pair (fig. 46-47).



**Fig. 46 - Date letter E – 1<sup>st</sup> size**  
**Vieillard – verd – enfants colorés**  
Fondation Ephrussi de Rothschild, St-Jean-cap-Ferrat



**Fig. 47 - Date letter E – 1<sup>st</sup> size**  
**Vieillard – verd – enfants colorés**  
Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore

Among the nine *cuvettes Roussel* in the stock list of 1774, another one of the second size is described *Pastorale encadrée d'or*. An example sold in Saint-Germain-en-Laye 25 years ago matched very well this description (fig. 48).



**Fig. 48 - Date-Letter L – 2<sup>nd</sup> size**  
**Vieillard – Pastorale encadrée d'or.**

## Vase à compartiments ou Choisy

The last question is what is a *vase à compartiments ou Choisy*.

What do we know:

- We are looking for a vase created in 1755 with the first example sold in 1758
- The wording *à compartiments* was not only used at the factory to describe an inner separation but also the external faceted shape.



Fig. 49 - Sucrier ovale à compartiments

For example, the *sucrerie ovale à compartiments* has no partition inside but *à compartiments* refers to the four convexe panels (fig. 49).

The *vase à compartiments ou Choisy* might have a faceted body.

- In the *inventaire général* and the *Etat de défournement de couverte* for the year 1758, it is mentioned as *vase ovale à compartiments*

L'Etat de défournement de couverte	
1	Sot pourri en laine
1	Cuvette Mahon
1	Sot pourri hebert
1	Vase ovale à compartiments
2	Joe hollandais
1	Marquiere

The *vase à compartiments ou Choisy* might have an oval faceted body.

- We can also think that it has been declined as a pot-pourri. Among the purchases by the King in December 1762 are 3 *pots pourris triangle et Choisy*. It is not *ou Choisy* but *et Choisy*. It doesn't mean that *Choisy* is another name for the *pot-pourri triangle* but described two different shapes: probably two *pots-pourris triangle* and a *pot pourri Choisy*. They are several vases with a plain version and a pot-pourri variation like the *urne pompadour* and *pot-pourri Pompadour*, the *vase à feuille de myrthe* and *pot-pourri à feuille de myrthe*, the *vase Boileau* et *pot-pourri Boileau* etc.

I suggest that the vase hidden under the name *vase à compartiments ou Choisy* is the vase previously known as *urne à facette* but that is a name given in 1814 at the occasion of the inventory of the plaster models (fig. 50). The two names are not so far from each other and both describe a faceted vase.



— 1740-1780 —

VASE URNE A FACETTES

Hauteur 0<sup>m</sup>45

**Fig. 50** – Albert Troude, *Choix de modèle de la Manufacture Nationale de porcelaine de Sèvres appartenant au Musée céramique*, 1897.





A view on a cover shows the oval shape and the eight compartments also repeated on body.

**Fig. 51 – Date-letter G – Dodin & Méreaud – lapis caillouté, enfants, fleurs.**

Anc. coll. Alphonse de Rothschild

And it has been declined as a pot-pourri with pierced body and cover and the addition of two small handles.

**Fig. 52 – Date-letter G – rose et verd Tesnières**  
H. 34 cm. Musée des Arts décoratifs, Paris



Today four vases and a pot-pourri of this shape are known.

The first vase à compartiments was bought by Madame Duvaux in December 1758 for the price of 480 livres, described *rose fleurs*<sup>31</sup>.

360	Vente de la bibliothèque de Madame Duvaux le 27 Dec 1758 par M. Savin	30034	30034
-----	---	-------	-------

1	Pot-pourri 2 <sup>e</sup> Oiseau		15
4	Pot-pourri à compartiments rose fleurs	72	288
1	Pot-pourri à compartiments rose fleurs		576
2	Pot-pourri 2 <sup>e</sup> Oiseau	432	864
2	Pot-pourri 2 <sup>e</sup> Oiseau	96	192
1	Pot-pourri à compartiments rose fleurs		480
2	Pot-pourri à compartiments rose fleurs	360	720
1	Pot-pourri à compartiments rose fleurs		96
2	Pot-pourri à compartiments rose fleurs	120	240
			192

**Fig. 53 – Sale legders, December 1758**

The next entry in the sale register is a pair of *pots-pourris Pompadour rose fleurs* at 360 livres each.



**Fig. 54 - No mark, rose fleurs.**  
H. 32,6 cm. Anc. coll. Alfred de Rothschild  
Philadelphia Museum of Art

An example preserved in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (fig. 54) is painted with flowers and fruits and pink ribbons ground. It is not dated. It came from Alfred de Rothschild collection and had been published by Davis in 1884 (fig. 55)<sup>32</sup>. Two *pots-pourris Pompadour* painted with flowers on a pink ground are also preserved in the Philadelphia Museum of Art and also came from Alfred de Rothschild collection.



Fig. 55 – Charles Davis, *The Alfred de Rothschild Collection, II*, 1884

On the fabulous set of pink ground vases in Alfred de Rothschild collection, the vase with pink ribbons was already and still with the pair of *pots-pourris Pompadour* (fig. 55). All the vases are mounted on 19<sup>th</sup> Century ormoulu bases. The bases of three bought by madame Duvaux in 1758 are not flat like the other ones but with a *doucine*. There is no evidence when we look at the gilding that they were intended to form a garniture even if they seem all three to be painted by Vincent Taillandier, but there are other examples of garnitures assembled by Lazare Duvaux.



Fig. 56 Philadelphia Museum of Art

The *pots-pourris Pompadour*: 1939-41-49Aa,b, date-letter E, Taillandier. H. 24,1 cm.

The *vase à compartiments*: 1939-41-44a—c, no mark, H. 32,6 cm



The second entry for a *vase à compartiments* is a present to Bertin in December 1760 for 432 livres together with a pair of *vases hollandais nouveaux* at 360 livres all painted with pink and green ground and scenes after Téniers<sup>33</sup>.

It could be the vase in the musée des Arts décoratifs dated 1760 but it doesn't perfectly fit with the known examples of *vases hollandais* with pink and green ground and Tesnières.

The pair in Boston<sup>34</sup> is painted by Dodin and Armand Jeune and the vase in the Musée des Arts décoratifs is not painted by Dodin.

The vase in the Victoria and Albert Museum and its companion with Bonhams in 2008<sup>35</sup> are painted by Morin which is a possibility for the vase in Paris but they are painted also with *paysages* which is not the case for the vase in the Musée des Arts décoratifs, painted with flowers on reverse.



**Fig. 57 – Date-letter G – rose et verd Tesnières**

H. 34 cm. Musée des Arts décoratifs, Paris

<i>Ventes au Comptant faites à Versailles</i> <i>Le 24. Decr. 1761.</i> <i>Le Roy</i>			41
2 Vases balustrés, ornés de	180.	280.	
2 Jars Jars d'or	240.	480.	
2 Jars Jars de porcelaine de la marine	528.	1056.	
1 Vase Choisy ou à compartiments		240.	
2 Vases à fleur d'or	84.	168.	
2 Vases à fleur d'or	36.	312.	
2 Vases à fleur d'or	72.	168.	

In December 1761, the King Louis XV bought a vase *Choisy ou à compartiments* without any description of the decoration<sup>36</sup>.



Date-letter G

Dodin - Méreaud - lapis caillouté enfants  
anc. coll. Alphonse de Rothschild

This example from the collection of Alphonse de Rothschild is dated 1760. The vase *Choisy ou à compartiments* sold to the king was only at 240 livres The large quantity of gold painted on Dodin's vase would likely imply a price closer to 432/480 livres.



**Fig. 60 – Date-letter H – Lapis caillouté – marine, fleurs.**

Collection Earl and Countess of Rosebery,  
Dalmeny House  
(covers are English porcelain later  
replacements)

A pair, dated 1761, painted with marine scenes and flowers on a bleu lapis caillouté ground is preserved at Dalmeny House in Scotland. Rosalind Savill has recently suggested that they could be part of a five vases garniture with the *vase pot pourri* Boileau from the Royal Collection as the central vase, and two *vases pot-pourri* Hébert one now in the Walters Arts Gallery in Baltimore, the other one at Russborough in Ireland. They all share marine scene, probably by Genest, caillouté gilding on the lapis ground and specific gilding ornaments. It has not been possible to trace such a garniture in the archives, even with the supposed prices.



**Vase à compartiments  
ou Choisy**  
Mark: LL, date-letter H  
Collection Earl and  
Countess of Rosebery,  
Dalmeny house

360/480 livres

**Vase pot-pourri Hébert**  
Walters Arts gallery,  
Baltimore

600 livres

**Vase Boileau rectifié**  
Mark: LL  
Royal collection

720/960 livres

**Vase pot-pourri  
Hébert**  
Mark : LL  
Russborough  
House, Ireland

600 livres

**Vase à compartiments  
ou Choisy**  
Mark: LL, date-letter H  
Collection Earl and  
Countess of Rosebery,  
Dalmeny house

360/480 livres





Vincent and Sylvia Bastien kindly told me that this garniture might be the one listed in the Chateau de Fontainebleau in the 1786, described with *fond bleu et décor Chinois*, the shape of the *pots-pourris triangle* is mentioned but not the shapes of the three other vases, so this could be a possibility.

But in the *magasin de ventes* at the end of the year 1773 are listed two *pots-pourris à bobèches Petits verd Chinois*.

And Madame de Pompadour bought in June 1762 a pair of *pots-pourris à bobèche* painted with *Chinoiserie* on *Petit Verd* ground, also today in the musée du Louvre<sup>39</sup>, part of a garniture with a clock<sup>40</sup> and two *pots-pourris à feuillage*.<sup>41</sup> The price of the *pots-pourris à bobèche* was 336 livres not 360 livres<sup>42</sup>.



**Madame de Pompadour**



**Louis XV**

Looking at the two pairs of vases *pots-pourris à bobèche petit verd*, it seems hard to see any reason why the price of those sold in December 1762 would have been more expensive than those sold in June, if they had the same decoration. The ones sold to Madame de Pompadour have even more gold.

360 livres is the price of *pots-pourris à bobèches* with pink and green ground and scenes after Téniers. Louis XV bought a pair at this price in December 1761<sup>43</sup>.

Another possibility for the purchase of the king in December 1762 can be suggested.

In this suggested garniture, in the middle would be the *vase pot pourri Choisy ou à compartiments* from the Musée des Arts décoratifs and on sides a pair of *pots-pourris à bobèches* painted with scenes after Téniers and flowers at the back. The ribbon painted in gold tied around the green palms on the *vase Choisy* seems to match the molded tied ribbon in relief on the *pots-pourris à bobèche*. Two pairs of *pots-pourris à bobèches* painted with scenes after Téniers and flowers at the back are known, one in the Metropolitan<sup>44</sup>, one was in the Goode collection<sup>45</sup>.



A comparison with the two *pots-pourris à bobèches* from the Metropolitan Museum shows that the flowers at the back are painted by Pierre-Louis-Philippe Armand Jeune., his style is very distinctive. The vases in the Metropolitan are marked by Armand Jeune.

The front scenes seem also painted by one same hand. It is not Dodin nor Vieillard, it could be Morin or Caton.

Therefore, the garniture bought by the king in December 1762 could be or the *petit verd* and *Chinoiserie* set or a pink and ground and Ténieres garniture with a missing pair of *pots-pourris triangle*.





Armand jeune



## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it seems that there are now enough elements to consider that the oval *cuvette* with a partition is the *cuvette Verdun*, the oval *cuvette* with acanthus leaves handle is the *cuvette Roussel* and the previously called *urne à facette* is the *vase à compartiments ou Choisy*.

### Cuvette Verdun



Date Letter H

2nd size

Micaud - rose marbré, fruits

Musée du Petit Palais, Paris

### Cuvette Roussel



Date-letter M

3rd size

Armand l'ainé- oiseaux

Wadsworth Atheneum

## Vase Choisy ou à compartiments





## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Pierre Verlet, Serge Grandjean, Marcelle Brunet, *Sèvres*, Paris, 1953 et Pierre Verlet, « Some Historical Sèvres Porcelain Preserved in the United States », *The Art Quarterly* 17, n° 3, Autumn 1954, pp. 230-41.
- <sup>2</sup> Pierre Verlet, *op. cit.*, 1953, p. 205 and pl. 37.
- <sup>3</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Vy2, f°79r.
- <sup>4</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Vy3, f°114r.
- <sup>5</sup> Christian Baulez, *Revue du Louvre*, 1994, 2, p. 96, n° 29.
- <sup>6</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Vy3, f°46r.
- <sup>7</sup> Rosalind Savill, *The Wallace Collection, Catalogue of Sèvres Porcelain*, London, 1988, C226, pp. 98-101.
- <sup>8</sup> MNC 25058.
- <sup>9</sup> Joanna Gwilt, *Vincennes and early Sèvres porcelain from the Belvedere Collection*, London, 2014, p. 148, n° 88.
- <sup>10</sup> Svend Eriksen, *The David Collection, French Porcelain*, Copenhagen, 1980, p. 67, n° 45.
- <sup>11</sup> MNC 25029.
- <sup>12</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Vy3, f°82v.
- <sup>13</sup> Baron Charles Davillier, *Les porcelaines de Sèvres de Madame du Barry*, 1870.
- <sup>14</sup> Sir Geoffrey de Bellaigue, *French Porcelain in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen*, 2009, vol. I, n° 9, pp. 115-116.
- <sup>15</sup> David Peters, *Sèvres plates ans services of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, 2005, vol. II, n° 73-9, pp. 499-500.
- <sup>16</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy1 f° 119r et Vy2 f° 48r
- <sup>17</sup> Rosalind Savill, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 57.
- <sup>18</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy2 f° 30r.
- <sup>19</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy2 f° 64r.
- <sup>20</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy2 f°64r.
- <sup>21</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy2 f°91r.
- <sup>22</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy3 f°2r
- <sup>23</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy3 f°43v.
- <sup>24</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy3 f°46r.
- <sup>25</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, F 11
- <sup>26</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy1 f°88r.
- <sup>27</sup> Guy Blazy, *La porcelaine française du XVIII<sup>ème</sup> siècle dans les musées du Nord-Pas-de-Calais*, exhibition catalogue, October 1986 – June 1987, n° 88, p. 119
- <sup>28</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy1 f°123r.
- <sup>29</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la céramique, Vy2 f°12v, f°16r, f°48r
- <sup>30</sup> Sale, Sotheby's, London, 21 April 1964, lot 49 and Sale, Ader, Paris, Drouot, 23 November 1967, lot 139.
- <sup>31</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Vy2, f°79r
- <sup>32</sup> Charles Davis, *The Alfred de Rothschild Collection*, II, 1884
- <sup>33</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Vy3, f°46r
- <sup>34</sup> Jeffrey Munger, *The Forsyth Wickes Collection in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston*, 1992, n° 121, pp. 174-175.
- <sup>35</sup> William King, *The Jones Collection catalogue*, 1924, Vol II, n° 150, pp 20-21 and Christopher Maxwell, *French Porcelain of the Eighteenth Century at the V&A*, 2009, n° 78, pp. 86-87 and sale Bonhams, London, 14 May 2008, lot 152.
- <sup>36</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Vy3, f°82v.
- <sup>37</sup> 71-246/247
- <sup>38</sup> For example : Marie-Laure de Rochebrune, *Charles-Nicolas Dodin et la manufacture de Vincennes-Sèvres*, exhibition catalogue, Versailles, 2012, n° 32, p. 94.
- <sup>39</sup> Musée du Louvre OA11306.
- <sup>40</sup> With Dragesco-Cramoisan in 2014 or the clock in the Musée du Louvre (OA.10899)
- <sup>41</sup> Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, 48.590-591.
- <sup>42</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Vy3, f°115v.
- <sup>43</sup> Archives, Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique, Vy3, f°43v.
- <sup>44</sup> Formerly in the Hillingdon Collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art 58.75.94-95
- <sup>45</sup> Collection of William J. Goode, London, sold, Christie's, London, 17 July 1895, lot 192.