

## @a2 Chapter IV

### @a3 Germany

Germany is generally well endowed with medieval fonts, though their distribution is uneven, with few in the south, centre and east. A considerable number were imported from the Meuse valley and from Scandinavia, but there are three major groups of locally made fonts all of quite distinct types. The largest, of which around 120 are believed to survive, complete or as fragments, is the Bentheim sandstone group. The second, of Westphalian tub, or cylinder, fonts is also of sandstone. They were unusual in retaining the cylindrical form well into the Gothic era, at a time when all other countries were producing fonts with separate bowls and supports. Although the decoration displayed advances in sculptural technique, the only variation in the actual form of the fonts was to include both purely cylindrical and slightly flaring outlines. The third, of suspended fonts (but different from the Bodmin group), has a bowl shaped like a kettle-drum, neither standing directly on the ground nor supported from beneath, but appearing to hang by the rim from a ring of colonnettes. All three groups are strongly localised, the first based on the quarries around what is now Bad Bentheim, the second on the Baumberg quarries near Münster and the third in the Siebengebirge, made of a variety of volcanic rocks, mainly basalt and trachyte. Neither the Bentheim nor the Siebengebirg fonts had parallels elsewhere in Germany or in the neighbouring countries, though examples of all three were distributed over areas radiating quite widely from their centres of production.

There are two areas with a significant number of imported fonts. In Nordrhein-Westfalen the stock includes many which are products of the Mosan workshops in the quarries around Namur and are covered in the chapter on Belgium. A considerable number of these lie mainly west of the Rhine and between Kleve in the north and the Mosel valley in the south. Along the coast, north and east of Lübeck, and in Schleswig are substantial numbers of Swedish chalice fonts from Gotland, products of the limestone quarries which exported to the Swedish mainland, to Denmark and right round the coastline of the Baltic. Unlike the Namur fonts, some of the Gotland models were reproduced in local granite. Schleswig-Holstein is part of the peninsula of which Jutland is the extension and shares its geology, so it is no surprise to find granite boulder fonts occurring there too. There are also examples of the work of Swedish mainland masons, and a few exports from the Mosan and Bentheim quarries. The long coastlines on both the North Sea and the Baltic, to say nothing of the way in which the border between Germany and Denmark has fluctuated north and south across the centuries, has opened the area to land- and sea-borne trade from all directions. In fact

Sauermann<sup>1</sup> divides his book into two sections: 'Fonts of Foreign Material' (divided into 'black Belgian marble', 'sandstone' and 'Gotland marble') and 'Fonts of Granite'. The 'marble' means hard limestones and the granite is only stone occurring naturally in the Province, the boulders left behind by the retreating glaciers after the last Ice Age.

The majority of German medieval fonts are to be found in three areas: in Schleswig-Holstein, on the northern plain across to Rostock and south into Saxony-Anhalt, and on the western side of the country bounded by the north sea coast, the frontiers with Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and France as far south as the Black Forest. South of the Ruhr there are also significant numbers of fonts across the Rhine into the Bergischland and then they thin out significantly to the east and south. This is not to say that there are no medieval fonts in central, eastern and southern Germany but they are few and far between and mostly of little decorative interest.

The main workshops were based in or near quarries of suitable stone and each produced, over time, a standard type which barely changed in form, even when major decorative advances were introduced. Such was the excellence of their work that they continued manufacture long after local needs had been satisfied and exported into those areas where there was a lack of suitable stone and to which there were well-established transport routes. The weight of the products made it necessary to use water transport wherever possible, so the greatest concentration of export wares can be seen along the lines of the main water-courses into Holland, northern Germany and on the lower Rhine. Certain workshops were obviously more productive than others; Bentheim fonts were clearly exported on the Vechta, Ijssel, Ems and Hase rivers and along the coast. In central and southern Westphalia, where transport was more difficult for the Bentheim quarries, other materials were more readily to hand.<sup>2</sup> Germany, with three major font-producing schools of its own and the prolific neighbour in the Meuse valley on its western frontier is a good place to see how the boundaries between markets are set and to judge the degree of interpenetration which took place.

Reinle mentions that in Germany there is a small number of very large bowls surviving from medieval cloister wash-places, like that from St Ulrich in the Black Forest.<sup>3</sup> The decorative programme, arcading containing the Majestas Domini, the Virgin Mary, Ecclesia, the apostles and a matching number of prophets, is similar to various orthodox fonts, which has caused it to be taken as a very large 'proper font' which had been used for baptism by immersion but this cannot have been the case. The sheer size of the bowl, 73cm tall yet looking very shallow by reason of its exceptional diameter of 1.6m, must exclude it from consideration as a piece of liturgical furniture to be placed within the church.

This chapter will deal separately with the Bentheim and Westphalian cylinder schools, explore the Rhineland, concentrating particularly on the fonts of volcanic rocks, and look in

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<sup>1</sup> E. T. Sauermann, *Mittelalterliche Taufsteine der Provinz Schleswig-Holstein*, Lübeck, 1904.

<sup>2</sup> K. Noehles, inaugural dissertation, *Die Westfälischen Taufsteine des 12ten und 13ten Jahrhunderts*, Münster, 1953, p. 14, says that the distribution of Bentheim products was based on commercial and geographical factors but the situation with the Westphalian cylinders was quite different; theirs was not a mass-produced article but a series of individual pieces formed within a common outline.

<sup>3</sup> A. Reinle, *Die Ausstattung deutscher Kirchen im Mittelalter*, Leer, 1997, pp. 38–9.

detail at the granite and imported limestone fonts of the north and east. The centre and south of the country will be reviewed fairly briefly, in view of the relative poverty of fonts of the Romanesque period in those areas, and will then close with detailed studies of a small number of outstanding individual pieces from different parts of the country. The bronze fonts are handled in a separate chapter with the metal fonts from other countries.

### **@c Bentheim**

There are several texts which provide useful information about the Bentheim fonts, of which the most useful are Noehles and Petersen.<sup>4</sup> In a sense both produced incomplete surveys as they limited themselves by their chosen geographical definitions, Westphalia and Ostfriesland respectively. This study will owe much to both authors but will attempt to extend consideration to all known fonts of the school, wherever located. A serious cause for regret is that a number of those in Germany, for example at Damme and Ankum, have been provided in recent years with elaborate metal covers, fixed to the stone, which completely overshadow the artefacts themselves and deprive them of their innate simple elegance. This elegance is derived from the proportions of the font as a whole and the quality of the decoration but it must be said that they are nevertheless artisans' work, not high art, and the limitation of the masons can be seen in the frequency with which they have found it difficult to achieve a true vertical or even a consistent horizontal.

There is such standardisation among these fonts that there can be no question that they share a common origin. The basic design persisted, but subject to continuous modifications, so it is likely that the fonts were made in a single workshop by a closely related group of masons. It has been proposed that these fonts were made from Rhineland stone but, as there are none of this type in that area this must be excluded<sup>5</sup> and it seems quite conclusive that they originated in the Bentheim quarries, if only because of the high concentration of the fonts around what is now Bad Bentheim. Two small quarries, in particular, provided very similar sandstones, greyish-yellow at Bentheim itself is and a slightly whiter shade at nearby Gildeshaus. Both stones are fine-grained and accept detailed carving in a rewarding manner so it was natural that the quarries should become the centre of a school of skilled stoneworkers which manufactured grave-slabs and fonts of this local stone. Others in the same style were made of a similar, but redder, sandstone found at Baumberg, though the Baumberg sandstone was more often used in the Westphalian tub fonts. All the roughly thirty-six fonts in the main subgroup are from Bentheim sandstone but Hatzum and Neuenkirchen are from the Baumberg quarries, while the stone of which Metelen, Gross-Borssum and Wybelsum are

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<sup>4</sup> F. Petersen, *Romanische Taufsteine in Ostfriesland*, Leer, 1997. J. Braun SJ, 'Der Romanische Taufstein der Pfarrkirche in Neuenkirchen', *Zeitschrift für christliche Kunst*, VIII, 1898, pp. 73–86, gives useful general information about the Bentheim Group B, as well as detailed information about the Neuenkirchen font itself.

<sup>5</sup> J. Braun, p. 84.

made is not yet established. The use of Baumberg stone may have been due to its specification by the men who commissioned them, or to travelling masons who clung to their original tradition, but all examples of the Bentheim model will be considered together, irrespective of where their stone was extracted.

Their number, in excess of 120, puts them on a par with the only slightly more productive Namur School; both worked for a similar period of years and both exported widely.

Bentheim fonts are found right across the northern half of Holland, in Germany south as far as Ostönnen near Soest. Three examples are found even further afield, north of the present Danish border, two in Jutland and one on the island of Sylt. They were not exported far eastwards, being generally confined to the area west of the River Hunte (a tributary of the Weser). The trade in Bentheim fonts, which went to west Friesland, to Ostfriesland and to Westphalia, was clearly facilitated by the river system based on the Vechte and its tributaries, then across the Zuidersee, along the Ems and following the coast northwards. The Hase runs into the Ems and at least six fonts would have travelled by this route. The Bentheim fonts outside Germany will be included in this study for sake of completeness of understanding of the School; listings in the Place Index show the country where they are located.

There is not a great deal which can be said with certainty about the date of these fonts, though they are unmistakably Romanesque in style.<sup>6</sup> The form of the base, the style of the decoration, the arcading, the plaitwork, the vine tendrils, the miniature columns between the masks, all speak the Romanesque language, but without revealing whether they are products of the late eleventh, twelfth or early thirteenth centuries. The Rijksmuseum gives the eleventh for Groenlo, but without any clear evidence for so early a date and this must be impossibly early given what little is known about the granting of baptismal licences generally to churches in the region. The roughness of some of the pieces is more representative of artisan-like work than of an early date and some have probably stood in the open for part of their existence and suffered wear. The Bentheim and Gildeshaus quarries are known to have been first exploited as early as c. 1130 but it was not until the middle of the century that the school became established and it was only in the latter half of the twelfth century that they turned their hands to making baptismal fonts, continuing for almost a hundred years, roughly 1180–1270. Rumpius refers to quarries being developed, not opened, during the reign of Duke Egbert, 1277–99.<sup>7</sup> The fact that the quarries only became really active early in the late twelfth/early thirteenth century suggests that it is the second half of the twelfth to which most belong, with a few dating from the early thirteenth. The developed style of the vine tendril supports this contention. Although there is no information about the date of any of the fonts themselves, the first stone churches in the area were built 1180–1230. Several of the churches in which examples stand date from the beginning of the thirteenth century, for example Marienhaf, Hage and Ankum, and the first stone church at Ueffeln was built in 1292 but this is not to say that stone fonts would not already have been in use in those parishes which were late in replacing their wooden churches with stone buildings.<sup>8</sup> Even the

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<sup>6</sup> A. ten Hompel, *Frühmittelalterliche Taufsteine in Westfalen*, inaugural dissertation, Münster, 1926, pp. 38–9.

<sup>7</sup> H. Hagels, 'Die Anfänge der Bentheimer Sandsteinplastik', *Jahrbuch des Heimatvereins der Grafschaft Bentheim*, 1958, pp. 23–37 and plates.

<sup>8</sup> The church at Ostönnen must have been one of the first, built in 1184.

records of individual churches are little help, because it is known that a number of the fonts no longer stand in the churches for which they were made, but have been transferred at some date unknown.

Earlier writers have tended to date the fonts much earlier than the current view, suggesting that Recke, Nordherringen and Wettringen may be set at around 1100, based on the fully abstract tendril, the primitive palmettes, the bunches of grapes sketched in with incised lines, the very flat primitive relief and the proportions of the whole font, wide in respect to the height.<sup>9</sup> Heek, Salzbergen, Bippen, Ramsdorf and Borken are placed not a great deal later, despite the advances in decoration, Badbergen and Südkirchen a little later still. While this chronology certainly holds water, the starting point must be suspect. A much more realistic dating places Group 'A' around the middle of the twelfth century and Group 'B' towards 1180–1200, with the overall period of activity of the workshop lasting some seventy years rather than a whole century.<sup>10</sup> Neuenkirchen and Suurhusen, with their extra tier of finely carved plaitwork, undoubtedly represent the final stage of development and may well be from the first quarter of the thirteenth century. There is no problem in placing the late variants after even the last of these but it is extremely hard to say where the early one-off examples should be inserted in the continuum of production. The Bentheim model followed a clear line of development throughout its long period of activity yet, if the bands of ornament are ignored, it is clear that the silhouette remained essentially unchanged and even the move from an articulated cylinder with reduced lower diameter to a fully differentiated lower section below the bowl was quite a minor step.<sup>11</sup>

Any attempt to explain the development of the Bentheim fonts must begin with the work of Karl Noehles,<sup>12</sup> which effectively allocates the fonts to two main groups and then divides the second into a series of phases of development which can be placed in approximate chronological order. The only major change in the whole series of these fonts was the evolution of the cylindrical tub into a supported font, accomplished in two small steps. Even though bipartite in appearance, they seem in fact to have remained monoliths. A photograph of the font in Grimersum church does show a bowl on the lower part of another, larger, piece<sup>13</sup> (both Bentheim) but the fact that the base section is smooth at the top need not mean that it originally belonged to a font with separate bowl and support. A base shorn of its bowl by damage could not have been used safely to support the bowl without levelling off the top. It is only necessary to see the remains of the Apeldoorn font to see what could have

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<sup>9</sup> J. Braun, pp. 84–5.

<sup>10</sup> H. Hagels, pp. 24 and 29–34.

<sup>11</sup> This reinforces my view that the origin of the multisupport, as opposed to tub, font was the desire on the part of the mason to articulate the block by progressive undercutting and also supports Pudelko's statement on the subject of Tournai fonts when he refers, pp. 43–6, to the essential mass still being visible.

<sup>12</sup> K. Noehles, pp. 5–8 and 21–34.

<sup>13</sup> F. Petersen, pp. 71–3.

happened.<sup>14</sup> Here is a badly damaged bowl, the sides broken away unevenly around its circumference and in one place almost down to the level of the bottom of the basin, showing that it is indeed a monolith; many other fragments consist of the base with a portion of the bowl, often no more than the lowest band of ornament surviving.<sup>15</sup> Sandstone is relatively weak and there is often damage to the rim, usually as a result of fitting some form of lock. Sometimes no more than a small piece of stone has broken away but the degradation can be more drastic.

There are certain characteristics common to virtually all the Bentheim fonts. One of these is the frequent use of cable ornament, single or double, as a horizontal dividing line between bands of decoration. The early pieces were round and there was a single band of simple arcading as ornament but this changed to single and then multiple bands of undulating motifs. Double lines of cable are always contra-rotating, that is they are portrayed with the twist running in the opposite sense to each other so that, placed directly adjacent, as they usually are, they can give the appearance of a herring-bone or of a series of arrow-heads, each placed within the outline of the next. This absence of the sense of a true cable, such as may be found encircling the upper rim of many Swedish fonts, is at its most compelling where the carving is carried out flat, with no attempt at modelling. The form of the base and integral plinth is another characteristic of the fully developed model. It consists of a square plinth transmuting into a pyramid which becomes a round shaft supported by four diagonal supports emerging from the corners to meet a horizontal plate beneath the bowl. The plate is a constant element of the fonts and acts to facilitate the junction between the two parts. The dimensions of these fonts vary quite considerably, but within certain fairly narrow limits, and do so probably in direct relation to the size of the original block of stone with which the mason had to work. The height rarely exceeds 95cm nor drops below 85cm. The upper diameter varies between 70 and 100cm, any greater differences being exceptional; most are between 80 and 90cm.<sup>16</sup>

Noehles' Groups 'A' and 'B' are numerically unequal. The former comprised those fonts which were a basic cylinder with little differentiation between bowl and base and the latter those which had a square plinth combined with a distinct load-bearing section beneath the bowl. The 'B' Group he further subdivided into a sequence of phases based on their decorative programmes. This was an excellent and helpful analysis but did not go quite far enough. In the first place the 'A' Group should be divided into two sections, even though only a single example is known of the first. Second, close examination of all the surviving fonts, and of those fragments which are sufficiently large to provide evidence, shows that

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<sup>14</sup> The same can be seen from the photograph in F. Petersen, p. 77, of the Loquard font before it was restored. On p. 83 is a photograph of the base of a font now in the Schlossmuseum, Jever.

<sup>15</sup> None of the Bentheim fonts which I have examined personally were other than monolithic, though E. T. Sauermann, p. 16, states that the font at Keitum, on the island of Sylt, is in two pieces.

<sup>16</sup> Two fonts are 1.06m high, three around 75cm.

there is in fact a small transitional, ‘A/B’ Group which may also be subdivided.<sup>17</sup> Finally, certain of the ‘B’ Group ‘phases’ require to be subdivided and there is at least one additional section required, plus perhaps sections for early and late derivatives of the basic type.<sup>18</sup> The proposed new structure will become clear as the sections are described in turn. It accepts Noehles’ chronology as very feasible, if not cast-iron, though the early variants in particular defy accurate dating, or even reliable placement in the overall chronology. There are two aspects of these fonts which will be ignored in the modified analysis because they do not appear to fit into the line of development, the form of the supporters, lions or men, and whether the bowl is cylindrical or slightly flaring. Examples of both pairs of options are to be found in fonts of all stages and they will therefore be discussed separately.

### **@e Group A1, the ‘Pure Cylinder’**

This consists today of Emsbüren alone [156], a tall cylinder of constant diameter throughout its height. The upper part is decorated with wide, round-headed arcading below a plain band at the rim; the arcading is supported on short columns with bases but no capitals. The lower part has three equally spaced encircling bands, two single cables above a plain moulding. These concentric bands not only articulate the plain surface of the cylinder, they emphasise the origins of the early fonts in the wooden cask held together with ropes or metal hoops, and are reminiscent of the concentric mouldings around the central shafts of some Tournai fonts. The cable-mouldings already display the contra-rotation which is one of the hall-marks of the Bentheim Group. Below the plain moulding is a broad plain band which originally would have stood directly on the floor of the church but now stands on a low round plinth of slightly greater diameter than the font itself.

### **@e Group A2, the ‘Modified Cylinder’**

This modification of the basic cylinder is effected by reducing the diameter of the lower half and thus introducing the sense of a bipartite object, bowl and support, with the

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<sup>17</sup> As Noehles writes of Groups A and B, I felt it would be confusing for anyone using this chapter and his dissertation together if I were to retitle his second group ‘C’ and introduce an entirely new group ‘B’. The transitional group is therefore titled ‘A/B’.

<sup>18</sup> For lists of Bentheim fonts see Appx 4A1–8. In creating subsections and adding new sections I have ignored minor variations which could easily be explained as errors of execution and have focused on alterations which introduce a distinctive difference, even where there is only a single surviving example. The ‘Early Variant’ grouping contains fonts where the ‘flavour’ seems to be changed, perhaps by the arrival of a new mason who has not yet become fully imbued with the style of the School.

appearance of a heavy goblet; the basin is hollowed out of the upper, wider, part. There are several fonts of this type, all slightly different, but all consisting of a wider upper part above a narrower cylindrical shaft and integral base. The two parts are approximately equal in height and the junction between bowl and shaft is effected by successive roll-mouldings diminishing in diameter. The base is almost Attic and consists of a further succession of roll-mouldings, the lowest being of the same diameter as the bowl, as at Ochtrup [157]. Ueffeln [158] differs only slightly from this model in that the shaft is shaped like a curved dumb-bell from the bottom of the bowl to the top of the plinth; around the centre of this concave section is a massive roll-moulding, precursor to the ‘plate’ of the fully developed design. The decoration of the bowl is simple and consists in all cases of a combination of cable ornament and blind arcading like Emsbüren, though columns supporting the arcades are without bases. Ueffeln differs again in its ornament, in that there is no arcade but double the number of cable motifs. The typical arrangement of the others is to have a plain band at the top of the bowl, two cable-mouldings, the arcade and a single cable at the bottom. On some fonts, like Epe, the arcades are of round-headed arches and on others are like horseshoes, as at Herzlake and Ochtrup. These are almost identical and only differ in the direction of twist of their cable-mouldings. Other fonts of this subgroup are Gimpte and Farup, the latter being of particular interest because of the way in which it combines the standard form and decoration of group A2 with the forthcoming vine tendril of group B1, effectively leap-frogging over the transitional group. From this it must be concluded, as with others of the ‘Early Variants’, that the masons were continuously working out new ideas in advance of adopting a new version of the design. The fact that some of the early variants were one-off fonts, the individual ideas embodied not being replicated elsewhere, only reinforces this view of a culture of experiment.

### **@e Group A/B1, Transitional**

The small number of fonts which fall into this new category are those which see the first establishment of a true bipartite product, but retain the Group ‘A’ arcading. In ‘A/B1’, ‘Transitional with Colonnets’ are three fonts, Almen, Apeldoorn and Vledder [159]. The shaft has been cut back and there are engaged colonnette supports for the bowl, at Vledder without capitals and bases. At Almen and Apeldoorn the base has changed from round to

square but Vledder remains basically a cylinder.<sup>19</sup> The Apeldoorn font is badly weathered and much of the bowl is broken away so there is no trace of decoration. The others are complete, Almen plain but Vledder with a pair of plain bands at the rim above a groove and a single cable-moulding. At the bottom of the bowl, below a plain narrow band, is a Lombard frieze of twelve arches, three between each pair of colonnettes; above the colonnettes are plain pieces of stone aping capitals. Between the Lombard frieze and the cable-moulding the centre of the bowl is barrel-shaped, and covered with a network of criss-cross lines. The font at Ommen is similar but the engaged colonnettes are not so proud of the central shaft and between them are demilunes decorated with whorls. The decoration has the same elements in a different disposition, plain narrow bands top and bottom of the bowl with an arcade of round-headed arches above a single cable. At Norg is a stoup of similar type, but too small to be considered as a baptismal font.<sup>20</sup> Lengerich is the final variant of A/B1, with leaves growing up from the corners.

#### **@e Group A/B2, 'Transitional with Figures'**

This composite group is a real step forward, not just for the appearance of seated human figures as supporters. The bowl has attained the shape of the final stages and there is the beginning of the round plate which is found from now on at the top of the base. At Hviding the central shaft is still far from the vertical so that the figures seem almost to lean back against it, with the emerging plate resting on their necks. At Brandlecht there is a clear vertical plinth, a short upward slope and then the central shaft rises vertically. On both fonts the supporters have their arms extended downwards, hands on their knees. The decoration on both bowls is similar, plain band over double cable above a blind arcade. The arches at Hviding are round-headed and at Brandlecht [160] are horseshoe-shaped; neither has capitals or bases for the columns. Holtland, otherwise like Brandlecht, has a double cable at the top (unless recutting of the rim to remove damage has removed the normal plain band); it has a completely developed plate at the top of the shaft and lion supporters in place of the human figures.

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<sup>19</sup> Both these fonts are worn, Apeldoorn exceptionally so, so it is possible that they may have been round when first made, though the existence of corner colonnettes beneath the bowl makes this unlikely.

<sup>20</sup> This is not to be confused with a full-size font of type 'Berge I' in the same church.

From now on the overall shape of the Bentheim type is set, with just three variations to be remarked: the seated human figure at the corner will, in some cases, become a lion *regardant*; the sides of the bowl may be either vertical or slightly flaring; and the bottom of the bowl may slope down to a circular plate with rounded edge, or it may be flat and meet the plate via a concave groove. The height of the bowl will also vary, especially in those fonts with vertical sides, but it is the programme of decoration in which the greatest variation will appear and where there will be a clear line of development in the planning and execution of ornament.

The major modification to the base was the addition of living supporters for the bowl, rather than the inanimate colonnettes, leaves or spurs of the last fonts of Group 'A/B1'. These new supporters are in two forms, seated men and lions *regardant*. The choice of human figures or lions as corner supports bears no relation to the Phase to which a font belongs and so plays no part in differentiation between the different chronological stages of development. Both are found at all stages and at Borken and Ramsdorf, there are two human figures and two lions paired at the diagonally opposite corners. The supporters are placed with their extremities at the corners of the base and angled diagonally to the central shaft with which they are engaged. The men sit, feet to the corners. Sometimes the chairs are no more than suggested from the position of their legs and bodies, but on other examples, as at Lastrup, the arm-rests are shown. Noehles describes the seated figures as having their hair cut over their foreheads like a cap, features such as mouth, chin and nose merely sketched in; the arms rest on the body, hands on knees, and they wear long, unpleated robes which reach to the feet.<sup>21</sup> A few figures have their hands above their heads, possibly *orans* but more likely as Atalants supporting the plate beneath the bowl (Borken). At Berge their capped heads are pressed against the underpart of the bowl, the bodies disproportionately short compared with the legs. The arms are bent and the hands press against the plate, but at Lastrup they are more natural and, sitting on clearly recognisable seats with arms, their feet hang vertically downwards, visible below the tubular folds in their robes. At Lathen there is an intriguing variation; what at first sight appear to be seated figures at the corners, on closer inspection are seen to be a type of diagonal buttress with two rudimentary faces, one above the other. The upper face is where one would expect to find the head of a seated figure and the lower at about the position of the lap.

The lions have their rumps to the corners, the tails passing between their legs and over their backs, while their forelegs press up against the central shaft. The heads turn back to look outwards, rotated through 180°, and are generally devoid of features, though in some cases the mouth is open showing the teeth. It is clear from the font at Brandlecht, the first with a square base and recognisable figure supporters, that the human figures came first, although later used together. They were outnumbered by the lions in a ratio of about 4:1, with fourteen fonts known with human and sixty-one with lion supporters. An analysis shows that all fonts of the Hage, Sögel and Larrelt groups had lions as supporters. In other words, not only did the human figures precede the lions but they were also superseded by them. Group A/B2 in fact seems to have had equal numbers of both types of supporter, while the Berge subgroups had three times as many examples with lions as with seated men, 20:7. BI had a ratio of 11:5, twice as many, BII 7:2, three times and BIII 2:0. The seven Early Variants include only two fonts with human figures, Lastrup and Geerdswehr, and the six bases without bowls are evenly divided. This breakdown is of interest in that it can help decide the groups to which

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<sup>21</sup> K. Noehles, p. 6.

some of the fonts now surviving as bases only must have belonged and also where some of the Early Variants may be fitted into the sequence.

### **@e Group B**

Group 'B' is, in effect, the finished Bentheim model, with the shape achieved at Holtland consistent to the end of production, with just one minor modification in the final stages.

The various subgroups which follow are all defined by differences in their decoration which are not always easy to recognise without placing photographs or drawings of different fonts side-by-side. The decorative programmes will all be described from top to bottom. Noehles gives the name of the Berge font to his first subgroup, 'Phase Berge', the most numerous of all the Bentheim types, with no fewer than thirty-five in Germany and more in Holland.<sup>22</sup> Encircling the bottom of the bowl is a frieze of fan-like, upward-pointing leaves which is formed from a line running around the bottom edge and looping upwards into the leaf motifs. This fan-frieze is carved with considerable freedom.

Enschede, Hallendoorn and Roggenstede are variants; there are no 'fans' as such, but a band of tall, slender, upright grooved leaves packed closely together like a stockade encircles the bottom of the bowl. All the others have the same grooved leaves but they are spread outwards in groups like the fingers of a hand, a distinct small triangular space occurring between each adjacent pair of fans. There is no set number of leaves for each fan; they vary between five and eight, even on a single font and only four of the fonts in the Berge and Hage groups have constant multiples of leaves.<sup>23</sup> In the most refined forms of this motif the outlines of the fans are created from a fine cord carved round the bottom edge of the bowl which is then looped where it rises from and returns to the horizontal.

One of the clearest examples is at Wissel where, from a low viewpoint, it is possible to see how the 'cord' has been looped and knotted to form the motifs, a quite gratuitous embellishment which is not normally easily seen.

In 'Berge 1' – Haselünne [**fig. 12**] – the two-tier decorative programme consists of a plain band, two cables, a continuous tendril, two cables and, encircling the bottom of the bowl, a fan-frieze. The vine-tendril undulates in round curves, with alternate upright palmettes and pendent bunches of grapes emerging on side-shoots from the stem; the grapes are defined

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<sup>22</sup> K. Noehles, pp. 23–4. F. Petersen, p. 68.

<sup>23</sup> The most common are combinations of five, six and seven leaves, followed by combinations of six, seven and eight.

with a network of incised lines and the bunches are either square or rhomboid. The fans are uninterrupted.

‘Berge II’ is precisely the same as the first subgroup, but here the fan-frieze is interrupted, not in any consistent pattern, by arcading, frontal human heads and rosettes. The arcading may be round-headed (Weerselo) or horseshoe (Alfhausen) [fig. 13], or consist merely of columns without arches (Südkirchen); it may be empty or may contain heads or rosettes. The heads are of two types, both of which may appear on the same font. One type has the hair combed down over the forehead, the other has a band like a coronet. Heads may be framed by columns (Südkirchen) or in an unbroken line (Heek), even some framed and others not (Salzbergen). In this bottom register on the font at Heek is a scene in which a man holds a horse or donkey by the head, while a woman stands beside him and to her right is a large multipetalled flower or perhaps a star. This scene, for which there seems no ready explanation, is the only decoration on a Bentheim font remotely to approach narrative and is unique on fonts of this School. Heek has the unique feature of the tendril in the main band of decoration issuing from an animal mask. Interrupting the fan frieze are a plain rosette, three heads then three trees. There is no font with this type of decoration completely encircling the bottom of the bowl without the fan frieze, except for Alfhausen. In its place is a row of round-headed arches, some empty and some with single rosettes, followed by a series of heads without dividers between them. These heads are of two types, one rather square with short bobbed hair, then two heads of oval shape with centrally parted hair. These two heads have a slender column between them.<sup>24</sup> The variant at Winterswijk has the vine tendril of Phase Berge but its bowl is set on a single shaft and round base similar to Ochtrup. Around the bottom of the vertical face of the bowl runs a frieze of human heads, without intervening columns. Again the fans are absent.

It has been customary to see Roggenstede [161] and Geerdswehr [fig. 14] as early variants, similar to each other but not identical, but the identification of Enschede and Hallendoorn as closely related to them suggests that they all truly comprise a Type Berge III. Their characteristics consist of all the side shoots from the tendril terminating in tight bunches of grapes, a degree of uncertainty with the use of the dividing cable and plain bands, and the bottom fan-frieze changing its nature into a pallsade of vertical grooves. The bowl is taller than the norm, for its diameter, and at Roggenstede the bottom is flat and sits on top of the base. In effect the height of the absent sloping portion has been added to the height of the vertical sides and the bands of ornament broadened to fill the space. After the church at Geerdswehr was inundated by the sea in 1669, the font moved first to Wybelsum church and then to Emden Museum; it appears now to have been lost.<sup>25</sup> Petersen’s sketch and accompanying photograph show an unexpected difference in the support; the plate fits into the nape of the neck of the seated men, instead of being above their heads. It is more likely that the lower quality compared with the other Berge fonts is a function of copying by less skilled masons than that these represent an earlier, unworked-out Berge version. This view is strengthened by the adoption of two tiers of undulating ornament, a trait common to all the later subgroups, and the fact that all four have lion supporters. Petkum and Strackholt [162]

<sup>24</sup> K. Noehles, p. 24.

<sup>25</sup> Petersen, pp. 84–5, reproduces a sketch of 1861 by the then pastor and a photograph from J. Stracke, ‘Romanische Bildnisgrabsteine in Ostfriesland’, *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst und vaterländische Altertümer*, 1954.

have the same type of tendril but in two registers, the ‘pallisade’ frieze having disappeared. At the upper rim is a single cable and a double, contra-rotating cable separates the two. Unlike the other fonts with two-tiered undulations, here both tendrils are naturalistic rather than formalised and both are the same except that the upper is broader, and therefore more rounded, than the lower. The shoots on each stem all point in the same direction, rather than alternating. At Petkum the shoots in both registers point left but at Strackholt they point left at the top and right in the bottom register. The stems stick out stiffly horizontal and terminate in what appear to be round bunches of grapes, but with a difference. The difference is that in each bunch one half is patterned and the other smooth. On the upper band alone, the stems framed within the upward undulations have pendent triangles, perhaps leaves, just before the swelling of the grape-bunches.

‘Phase Hage’, which is few in number,<sup>26</sup> represents only a minor step from Berge, with changes to the main motif and the way it is framed, and to the fan-frieze. In ‘Hage 1’ [fig. 15] of the undulating tendril has mutated; the alternating grapes and palmettes on the side-shoots of the Berge fonts have been replaced by short curling shoots which terminate in bifurcations. Where on the Berge fonts the main decorative band is framed by single or double cables, here the framing bands are plain. Finally, the fan motifs are more regular in the number of their leaves and there are no interruptions to the fan-frieze. Hage 2 consists of a single known variant: at Gehrde [fig. 16] the cables have reappeared as framing for the tendril with bifurcated shoots and there is no frieze of fan motifs. The bottom of the bowl slopes down at about 45° to the flat top of the base without the normal concavity.

‘Phase Sögel’ represents a major double modification, modifying both the arrangement and the form of the decoration. Although the move to two-tiered undulating decoration, by abandoning the fan-frieze at the bottom of the bowl, was signalled in Berge III, in ‘Sögel I’ [fig. 17], the masons introduced to the repertoire a second band of entirely new, highly stylised, continuous ornament, while retaining the more naturalistic style for the other tier. The sequence is now: plain, double cable, stylised band, double cable, natural band, and a thin plain band at the bottom edge. The ‘natural’ band is now an amalgam of the two bands used in the Berge and Hage groups, with the palmettes, the grape bunches and the bifurcated twig-endings all used, though not in strict alternation. The stylised band is at a new level of sophistication, with two quite distinct continuous patterns, the one superimposed upon the other. The first is a simple series of round-headed arches joined at the bottom by a horizontal line; this design leaves a series of two spaces of quite different outlines, the arch and the quasi spandrel. Within each arch is a small demilune from which sprout, low down and at 45°, two short stems which curl down and outwards at the ends. Two others sprout from a common point of origin at the top and either curl inwards or turn in by a sharp angle and then curl outwards. Both forms of this device are used on a single font, though not always alternating. The spandrels are filled with a device which also has its origin in the demilunes of two adjacent arches. It begins as a pair of stems which originate between the upper and lower shoots already described and cross the line of the arches into the top of the spandrel, where they curl inwards; from between them emerges a rhomboid formalised bunch of grapes. There are, inevitably, minor variations but these are almost certainly errors of execution of a complex pattern rather than a deliberate attempt to produce a new model. In addition to minor differences of execution, there are three quite distinct Sögel variants: ‘Sögel II’ (Emmen) [fig. 18] has the same programme as the basic model but with plain

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<sup>26</sup> K. Noehles, p. 25, n. 1.

bands substituted for the cables. ‘Sögel III’ reverses juxtaposition of the formal and natural bands and places only a single cable between them. There is just the one known example at Marienhafe. ‘Sögel IV’ follows the same decorative programme as ‘Sögel II’ but with a structural change. Between each pair of lion supporters is a colonnette engaged with the central shaft. A ‘Sögel V’ variant is found at Aurich-Oldendorf [fig. 19], though damage to the upper rim prevents making a definitive statement about the whole programme. The stylised band is at the top and is separated from the new lower tier by a triple plain band, with a narrow plain band at the bottom. The new band is also stylised and consists of a series of heart-shapes alternately upright and inverted, sharing the same line where they touch. Where the outline dips at the top to give the form familiar from playing cards, the lines are carried into the interior of the heart to form a fleur-de-lis; this motif also occurs on the Heemse font.<sup>27</sup> It is to be noted that all the ‘IV’ and ‘V’ fonts flare slightly, whereas the Sögel fonts otherwise have cylindrical bowls only. At Jever is a base with the engaged colonnettes but the total absence of any trace of the bowl prevents its attribution to either ‘IV’ or ‘V’. The final flowering of the basic Bentheim School appears in the two small groups of Larrelt [fig. 20] and Neuenkirchen. These have the plain dividing bands of ‘Sögel I’ and the engaged colonnettes of ‘Sögel III’, with the addition of a third tier of decoration. At Larrelt the change involves the reintroduction of the fan-frieze around the bottom of the bowl and at Neuenkirchen the third tier is a band of plaitwork around the centre of the bowl. The plaiting is loose and rounded at Suurhusen [fig. 21] but sharply angular at Neuenkirchen. Only these two fonts have the plaited centre band.<sup>28</sup> These fonts all seem to be made of the lighter stone of the Gildeshaus quarry, suggesting that a possible separate but related workshop had been established by the latter part of the thirteenth century.<sup>29</sup>

### @e Variants

There are fonts which do not fit into either Noehles’ analysis or the new structure proposed here. While some are obviously the final workings-out, enriched with the ideas of a new artistic age, of what had been a very successful basic design, others must have been contemporary with the various phases of Noehles’ Group ‘B’. Indeed, the whole quartet of Berge III fonts could be taken as variants. Ihrhove is very close to the basic design, cylindrical bowl, square base, *regardant* lion supporters and no engaged colonnettes between the lions. It has plain bands of equal width at top and bottom of the bowl and the single decorative band encircling the centre of the bowl is framed between double cables, cut really flat so that they look like a herring-bone. The main differences lie in the absence

<sup>27</sup> A similar device is also found on the granite bowl of the font in the Danish church of Kalundborg.

<sup>28</sup> K. Noehles, p. 26, says Damme is a third, but this has a double cable between the two registers.

<sup>29</sup> K. Noehles, p. 26.

of the plate between the bottom of the bowl and the heads of the supporters, and the unique decorative frieze. This is based on the continuous tendril familiar from the other fonts but here it is drawn with very rounded curves so that it consists of a continuous chain of figures '8' lying on their sides. Alternate rings are completely filled with round bunches of grapes and the others have various cross-motifs. Vestigial leaves are used to fill the triangular 'spandrels' between the rings of the tendril and the framing cables.

The Stapelmoor font is similar in proportions to Roggenstede, again with a flat-bottomed bowl, but has further variations in the ornament. The foliate band contains a vine tendril with the more normal curve to the undulations but there are fully developed leaves and bunches of grapes growing together from the same reverse shoots; below the foliate band is a double plait instead of the customary double cable.<sup>30</sup> The broad band at the bottom of the bowl is plain.

The Jennelt font spent some years in the Emden Museum, before being placed on loan in the Neue Kirche. It follows the basic Group 'B' model in almost every respect and differs only in the main (single) band of decoration. This is a continuous vine tendril with bold undulations following the Danish convention, with leaf shoots branching away from and on both sides of the main stem, a type of tendril not found on any other Bentheim font. The remainder of the programme consists of a wide plain band, a pair of narrower plain bands framing the decorative frieze and a single cable at the bottom of the bowl.<sup>31</sup>

Loquard font spent an unknown number of years in the garden of the pastor's house, though it was still in use in the church, complete with its wooden cover, as late as 1880.<sup>32</sup> Its exposure to the elements had left the base and supporters especially badly weathered and about three quarters of the bowl had broken away. Sufficient remained, however, for the restorer to be able to reproduce the original decorative programme. The bowl has a narrow plain band at the rim, a double cable, thick single cable, broad decorative band and, at the bottom of the bowl, a repeat of the double cable. The main band of decoration resembles the formal palmettes of southern Swedish fonts, but is actually closer to the Stafford knot-cum-fleur-de-lis of the upper frieze at Hatzum, though on a much larger scale. The device consists of a stem curled round to frame the four trefoil leaf-terminals sprouting outwards in pairs and

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<sup>30</sup> K. Noehles does not mention Stapelmoor but states that Den Ham and Petkum resemble Roggenstede in having vertical striations in place of the fan motifs. He is surprisingly wrong about both. Petkum has no vertical leaves and has the two foliate bands which are met in Phase Sögel. A photograph from M. Schölk van der Wal included in her study of fonts in the Netherlands shows Den Ham as a very plain, suspiciously recut, pedestal font, albeit of Bentheim sandstone. This is so unlike the Bentheim design that it must be asked if Noehles saw another font at Den Ham or perhaps muddled his notes.

<sup>31</sup> This description is taken from a poor photograph, F. Petersen, p. 49. There may be a double cable at the bottom instead of a plain band over a single cable.

<sup>32</sup> F. Petersen, p. 76. He shows the font before and after restoration.

a smaller trefoil at the top. The ends of the upper trefoils cross the framing-line of the stem to meet their twins from the neighbouring motif. The devices are 'strapped' to each other with short plain bands. No attempt was made at the restoration to replace the broken heads of the lions supporters.

In the Ostfriesisches Landesmuseum at Emden is the font from the church of Faldern. It is similar to Ihrhove but the cylindrical bowl is significantly taller than the Berge/Hage model and it has a unique programme of decoration. The actual area of decoration is about the same width as normal, but there is an exceptionally broad plain band at the bottom, over one third the total height of the bowl. Below the plain band of normal width at the top a pair of double cables frame the decorative band. This consists of square panels of different formal ornament, mainly based on variations of the cross, though there is a diaper pattern too. The strange thing is that the panels are left to define themselves, with no vertical dividing lines. Perhaps because it was so successful and thus popular with sponsors, the basic Bentheim design persisted in clear post-Romanesque variations long after the basic design was finished. At least six examples are still extant, all quite different from each other, though they are plainly of common pedigree. The main characteristics which they share, differentiating them from the original model, is that they have become more squat, with the bowl more dominant, and the plate at the top of the base has departed. Hatzum, of Baumberg sandstone, is probably closest to the original design. The base is square with a flat top and there is a low concentric moulding round the bottom of the cylindrical shaft between the supporting lions. These follow the model, rumps at the corners and tails passing between the hind legs, but their heads look up at the bowl not over their shoulders and their forepaws press against the lower rim of the bowl, not at the junction between bowl and shaft. Below a broad plain band at the rim, two tiers of decorative frieze are framed by three single cables; top and centre cables twist in the same direction, with the bottom cable reversed. The lower frieze consists of an arcade of round-headed arches each containing a fleur-de-lis. The upper tier has a series of individual foliate motifs shaped like a Staffordshire knot. The motif is in fact a semicircle of stem, the two ends turning in at the bottom to tuck inside the curving stem, and opening out into fleur-de-lis endings. Each motif is 'strapped' to its neighbours by a plain band.

At Remels the bowl is slightly barrel-shaped, with plain bands top and bottom and a central broad band of ornament based on the acanthus leaf; it consists of a series of identical 'U'-shaped motifs with the outer tips of the leaves touching at the top and a ball resting on the bottom of the 'U'. This centre band is framed by two very refined cables formed of two strands, one broad and plain, the other narrow and beaded. Unusually they both twist in the same direction. The base is now smaller than the bowl, the central shaft less recessed and the human figure supporters quite changed. They no longer sit and are quite clearly Atalants, in stooping and crouching poses as they bear the weight of the bowl on their shoulders. The plinth is quite small but is extended at the corners to accommodate the supporters.

Riepe [163] is similar in outline to Remels, but with very different decoration. At the bottom of the bowl are two rows of fleur-de-lis shooting from the same roll-moulding so that the lower row is inverted. At the top, beneath a narrow plain band, is an upright row of five-leaf fleur-de-lis. The plinth is cut across the angle at the corners to form an octagon and the supporters are lions, rounder, more vertical than the original model and with bulging eyes. The font at Westerbur consists of two separate components which clearly do not belong together. The bowl is of quite different provenance from those of the Bentheim School but the base is like Riepe, the corners cut off to form an octagon and there are the same plumper, more vertical supporters. Two of them appear to be men on their knees, the other two lions on their haunches, but this is not clear.

Asbeck font is beginning to show many of the attributes of the Westphalian tubs, though retaining the bipartite form. In overall shape it has reverted to the cylindrical goblet form of Bentheim A2 but the decoration has entered a completely new era. A little below the upper rim the bowl is encircled by a broad band of undulating leaf motifs, the remainder of the vertical face of the bowl accommodating a frieze of round-headed arches which spring from the lower rim. Above three incised demilunes lined across the full width of each arch are different single formal ornaments. The base is round, with no supporters, aligning it typologically with the 'A1' group. To appreciate the link with the Westphalian tubs, all that is necessary is to visualise its appearance if the whole font were of the same diameter as the bowl and if the frieze of arches were to be supported on columns.

Grosswolde is of similar proportions to the others with a round base markedly smaller than the cylindrical bowl. Four equally spaced lion supporters are more like the earlier fonts than Riepe, though with greater detailing of the head. At the top of the bowl is a broad plain band and two plain roll-mouldings frame the stylish decorative band which consists of a non-continuous tendril with mythical beasts, possibly dragons, enmeshed in its stems.

A final comment on the shape of the bowls, whether they are more often cylindrical or flaring. The pattern varies across the types and it is clear that the later fonts were made with greater consistency than was the case at the beginning. In the Berge group nearly three times as many bowls are cylindrical as those which flare (21:8); in Berge I the ratio is higher (13:3), but only 6:5 with Berge II. The Hage group is predominantly cylindrical (17:1) and the single bowl wider at the top is only marginally so, while all the Sögel bowls are cylindrical. The picture changes completely with the final stages of evolution and all fonts of both the Larrelt and Neuenkirchen types have flaring bowls. The Early Variants follow the mainstream but the Late Variants tend towards a rounded barrel shape.

### **@c Westphalia**

#### **@e The Cylinder Fonts**

Interspersed with the products of the Bentheim school over much of their area of distribution, between the Weser and the border with Holland, is another sandstone group, mainly originating from the Baumberg quarries which lie between Coesfeld and Münster. The boundaries of their distribution are set by the examples at Ossendorf, Stockum and Wormeln to the south, Elsen, Warendorf, Schleddehausen, Osterkappeln, Bakum and Rastede to the east. There are none in the Emsland area, with Saerbeck, Welbergen, Nienborg, Dorsten, Wattenscheid and Hagen marking the western limits, except for the one in northern Holland at Eibergen. They are of a broadly consistent design but, unlike the Bentheim group, there was no attempt at any articulation of the basic shape, which persisted for around a century and well past the time when in most other areas the tub was replaced by the supported bowl. In the warm South the evolution of the font began with the sunken baptistery piscina and then, with the general adoption of infant baptism, moved to the pedestal model but there was a different point of departure in the countries north of the

Alps, where baptisteries were hardly built at all. Here the first fonts were wooden casks such as, before the arrival of Christianity, had been used for bathing.<sup>33</sup> It is thus natural that, when the edict went out that all churches should provide themselves with a font of stone, many of the first products translated the original casks into the new medium. What is surprising, though, is that while the Bentheim fonts evolved rapidly from the Emsbüren cylinder to the articulated form of Berge, Hage and Sögel, the Westphalian masons clung to their basic design, confining their developments to the form and style of the decoration, confining any articulation to the surface. In fact, while every country<sup>34</sup> has surviving examples of tub fonts, the proportion in Germany is far higher, especially when it is accepted that the design of ‘suspended’ fonts (see Rhineland below) has more in common with the tub than with the pedestal type.

When considering the generality of tub fonts, in Germany and elsewhere, the fonts of the Westphalian cylinder group stand out by their height, from which it is plain that they could not have been designed for baptism of adults by partial immersion, with the catechumen standing in the font, while the water was poured over the head. There is hardly a single font of this type lower at the rim than 80cm, the overall height varying between 65cm and 1.26m.<sup>35</sup> Most are a little under one metre high and normally the external diameter is the same as the height or slightly greater. Although some of the earlier examples are larger, the diameter tends to be around, but less than, one metre.<sup>36</sup> Figures for the internal diameters show an average thickness of the wall of the bowl to be around 12.5cm. Details of the depth of the basins are more difficult to obtain but, where access to the interior is possible, analysis shows that they are on average deeper than fonts of comparable age elsewhere; at least twenty-eight are over 40cm deep and the two most shallow, at 30 and 32cm respectively, are slightly deeper than the overall average, suggesting that partial or even complete infant immersion may indeed have continued longer in Westphalia than elsewhere.<sup>37</sup> At first there were few different designs.<sup>38</sup> The earliest were crudely shaped tubs, round or square, according to the rough blocks supplied to the mason and his ability to shape them, and it was only after the establishment of workshops for architectural sculpture, based at quarries of suitable stone, that regional and local designs began to evolve. Noehles sees the

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<sup>33</sup> K. Noehles, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> With the possible exception of Italy, where baptisteries continued to be built well into the fourteenth century.

<sup>35</sup> Seven are less than 80cm high, twelve over 100cm and thirty-four between 80 and 100cm.

<sup>36</sup> Of fifty-three fonts of which the dimensions are to hand, in fifteen the height is greater than the diameter, in twenty-eight the reverse and in the remaining ten they are the same.

<sup>37</sup> Fourteen are more than 40cm, ten more than 45cm and four more than 50cm deep.

<sup>38</sup> For lists of Westphalian cylinder fonts, by types, see Appx 4B1–3.

Westphalian cylinders as coming after that stage.<sup>39</sup> They are sometimes plain cylinders, as at Langerhorst, but the form is generally more like a beaker, flaring at the top like Albersloh; where the diameter increases towards the top, it does so in a straight line, not a curve. There are other German fonts of similar form but generally these may be distinguished from the Westphalian group through various hallmark details. These Westphalian fonts were produced in two main formats, with human figures and without, and the characteristics of the type are the foliate frieze below the top, the profiled upper rim and the almost invariable base of stepped mouldings.<sup>40</sup> The basins are either cylindrical, often rounded at the bottom, or are hemispherical. Just a few of these fonts stand on supporters, with lions at Wattenscheid, Lüdinghausen and Hohenkirchen, and the Tetramorph at Boke.<sup>41</sup>

The Westphalian cylinder type remained in production until the end of the thirteenth century, even though the sculptured decoration had become Gothic well before the type ceased to be made. About seventy could be included as Romanesque or at least Transitional. What is surprising about the longevity of the cylinder font design is that, once infant baptism has been adopted as the norm, the tub is a most inconvenient form to use, the whole purpose of the pedestal being to present the vessel containing the consecrated baptismal water at a convenient height for the officiating priest. Does this mean that conversions proceeded more slowly and that adult baptism persisted longer in this area than elsewhere? Given that some of the earlier Bentheim group were also made of Baumberg sandstone and given that both Bentheim and Westphalian fonts are thoroughly intermingled geographically in north-west Germany, this seems most unlikely. The longevity of the Westphalian cylinders may be explained by the exceptional height of these fonts, compared with tubs elsewhere, avoiding the inconvenience of the design for infant baptism.

The fact that Westphalia was the only German region which retained its cylindrical form throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, although all around different types were predominant, must have had an explanation. It cannot just have been a question of innate conservatism, though Westphalians had a reputation for clinging fast to tried and traditional solutions, and the massive outline of the cylindrical body reflected the air of permanence to be seen in the architecture of the region. It seems most likely that the artistic aspirations of the best masons demanded a larger 'canvas' on which to deploy their skills and the cylinder type best suited the Westphalian artist and his sponsors preferring simplicity and their own tradition above the complexity and risk-taking of the suspended fonts of the Rhineland. Their special skill for articulation of the flat surface could be deployed on the large walls of their fonts with a freedom which no other type of font could offer. The rejection of serial manufacture, so common in other areas, seems also to have been in character. The independent Westphalian had no taste for 'factory-wares', he wanted an individual piece. Content with conformity in outward shape, he avoided repetition in ornament and also in iconography and in no other country do the normal Biblical scenes appear in such variety.

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<sup>39</sup> K. Noehles, p. 2.

<sup>40</sup> K. Noehles, p. 2, states that Kirchhilpe font is the sole example of this type where there is no decorative treatment of the upper rim.

<sup>41</sup> K. Noehles, p. 3, says that the Boke fonts stands on representations of the Tetramorph. I have not seen this, but there is at Eitorf a medieval tub now standing on modern supporters which are symbols of the Evangelists.

What is more, the masons' skills were such that they were equally successful whether producing a plain or a figured font.<sup>42</sup>

The earlier examples tend to be more squat, cylindrical rather than flaring, and to have simpler foliate ornament in the band below the rim. The base is usually quite simple and may consist of no more than a raised plinth of greater diameter than the section above, to which it slopes up quite steeply, or there may be a succession of roll-mouldings of differing diameters combining to form the base. The base is rarely decorated, other than where the bases of columns of the arcading invade the bottom of the font itself. Exceptions are Welbergen, where the broad roll-moulding forming the base is ornamented with a series of rings containing foliate motifs, and Lippborg, where there is a rich band of leaf ornament below the arcading. The top of the font is a different matter. The upper rim is usually defined by a narrow roll-moulding then a band of decoration which varies between 12cm and 20cm in width.

Eitorf has a cable immediately below the narrow moulding round the upper rim, a common motif elsewhere but rare in this group. Below it is a frieze of Lombard arches but otherwise the font is plain. The Ossendorf font is also cylindrical but below the roll-moulding at the rim is a continuous band of vine tendril with large leaves, cut so that the surface of the tendril is in the same plane as the bowl. The rest of the height of the bowl is taken up with an arcade of round-headed arches with rudimentary capitals, the columns standing without bases directly on a broad plain band encircling the bottom of the bowl. On neither of these fonts does the upper rim extend beyond the overall diameter, nor is there any attempt to use roll-mouldings to articulate the bottom rim, two new features introduced with the fonts at Einem and Langenhorst, though the strictly cylindrical form has not changed. At Einem the top is without ornament but consists of a massive salient plain band above two roll-mouldings of diminishing size; the plinth is modern but marks around the bottom edge of the cylinder suggest that this might be a replacement. Langenhorst also now stands on a modern plinth but the original base survives. Around the top, below the narrow roll-moulding, is a band of foliate ornament based on pairs of leaf forms.

While the form and structure of these fonts may have remained the same, their decoration varied from great simplicity to wide-ranging narrative sculpture, with the emphasis on a small number of major Biblical themes. Even after the introduction of figure sculpture, fonts were still produced throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries with the area between the foliate band and the mouldings of the Attic base absolutely plain or perhaps with no more than a simple cross motif or with blind arcading.<sup>43</sup> The foliate band may consist of a continuous tendril or of more stylised repeated motifs. Though a standard feature of virtually every one of these fonts and almost invariably based on the vine or palmette, it comes in many variations of form and with varying degrees of undercutting, the later examples often being inhabited by birds and animals. There is as much diversity in the form of this band on the iconographic fonts as there is on those without figures; it is just not so marked because attention is naturally drawn to the scenes which the figures portray. There is flat acanthus at Ossendorf and Weslarn, a series of enclosed palmettes at Harsewinkel [164], and a variety of other leaf-forms at Albersloh, Lüdinghausen and Rinkerode. At Iburg (Fleckenkirche) [165], a beaded stem undulates around the font, sprouting at regular intervals stems which terminate in triple leaves like a fleur-de-lis. Harsewinkel has upright palmettes framed by their own

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<sup>42</sup> K. Noehles, pp. 99–101.

<sup>43</sup> K. Noehles gives seventeen examples, pp. 126–35.

stems bifurcating and curling round to join above them. At Rinkerode the continuous stem has bunches of grapes as well as leaves and at Lüdinghausen [166] the repeated motif is based on pairs of fleur-de-lis which curve elegantly outwards, the outer leaves attenuating and joining with the next to form a top frame. All the upper decorative bands seem to be based on some such motif, sometimes deeply undercut, except at Dülmen and Holtwick [167] where there are undulating tendrils with reverse shoots which develop round bunches of grapes to fill the curved spaces. At Dornum there is complete realism in the way that the vine leaves and grapes have been carved.

The plain fonts with nothing more than small roll-mouldings top and bottom recall the wooden casks from which they were derived though there is no font of this type with a full complement of 'hoops' encircling the cylinder, as found on the Bentheim font at Emsbüren; Lünen however, and a few others, have flat bands at top and bottom. Interest was added to the otherwise flat surface by introducing round-headed arcading, first in low relief as at Kirchilpe and Ossendorf, then more deeply cut at Welbergen, while at Dülmen the engaged columns are almost in the round. The Lippborg font has pilasters without arches, otherwise unknown except where there are figures, and even then less common than full arcading. Any arcading is usually tectonic, with capitals, if not always bases. A variety of other ideas have been used to add interest to the flat surface, scalloping at Kurl, vertical channelling at Drensteinfurt [168] and framed panelling at Albachten [169], Handorf and Osterkappeln. This is an astonishingly mature device for the early Middle Ages and something which would have been thought more likely to belong to the Renaissance or the Baroque. Despite these attempts at articulation of the surface, the majority of fonts without figure decoration are quite plain below the foliate band. Generally speaking, the carving of the foliate elements in the decoration is more natural and Gothic in style than the human figures who are staunchly Romanesque. The difference in period is marked more by the degree of undercutting than by the form and detail of the figures themselves.

Among the beaker-shape fonts only Uckerath is completely plain, except for the roll mouldings at top and bottom which are strongly salient. Of the other largely plain fonts Siegburg and Winterscheid have four long-staff crosses, the former in equally spaced arched panels, the latter evenly spaced in a continuous arcade. Both have concave channelling at the top between pairs of narrow mouldings and the relief is very flat. The next stage was to introduce arcading with true depth of modelling. Welbergen is probably the oldest, despite its extra band of foliate ornament around the base. The upper decorative band is in quite low relief, as is the arcade of round-headed arches supported by columns with very simple capitals and bases; there is no ornament in the spandrels. At Dülmen the top band is still in low relief but the arcading is more proud of the surface of the bowl. The spandrels are now filled with leaf-ornament, the six arches are ornamented with flower-buds and the capitals have an abacus; there are no bases. Eibergen and Holtwick are similar, with a small step further in quality, but Dornum displays major advances in both concept and execution. Here the continuous tendril has lost its stylised leaves and grapes and the formalised spiral movement of the stem. In their place are seen true vine leaves and bunches of individually sculpted grapes. The spandrels contain rosettes and trefoils, the six arches are more richly decorated and the columns now have bases as well as capitals; small animals crouch on the lower roll-moulding and seem to crawl over the bases of the arcade. On all these arcaded fonts the columns, whether with or without bases, stand on the top chamfer of the base of the font.

Judging from the quality of the carving, there are two fonts which probably come chronologically between the plain arcaded and the figured fonts. These are at Albachten and

Drensteinfurt and, from the very similar style of the top band, may well be by the same hand. Both have the familiar continuous tendrils with reversed side shoots but with the most unusual refinement of the different parts of the tendril being tied together with short stems. Both fonts have bases of stepped mouldings and the angle of flare of the bowl, the breadth and degree of oversail of the foliate band are all identical. The difference lies in the articulation of the surface of the bowls, both of excellent quality. Drensteinfurt has shallow channelling of great regularity, each groove rounded top and bottom, reminiscent of the best of the Aylesbury group in England. Albachten, from the sophistication of its base the finer of the two, has its surface divided into six recessed rectangles of equal size which are best described as like the coffering of a ceiling. The stone is of an exceptionally fine grain and this and the skill of the artist have combined to produce a true work of art.

On the figured fonts the top foliate band remains a constant feature but the base is frequently missing, replaced in some cases by a later plinth of lesser diameter than the bottom rim, lifting the lower edge of the bowl clear of the floor. It is not clear whether this has been done to raise the upper rim to a more convenient height or to protect the lower sculpture from passing feet.<sup>44</sup> The figures stand on a plinth formed by the chamfered top of the base, or by the background being sloped out towards the bottom edge. There may be no lateral separation of any kind, they may be placed beneath arches with or without supporting columns or, in a few cases, they may stand between columns without arches. From a study of the carving of the figures, it is generally more likely that the fonts with arcading preceded those with a Lombard frieze, which in turn preceded those without arcading in any form. Exceptions to this attempt at a chronology would be Nesse which, though fully arcaded, is clearly one of the later fonts, and the Lippborg font with columns but no arches. The figure decoration, found on about thirty of these fonts produced over more than a century, is all of a very high quality, either statuesque figures of saints or apostles, or scenes from the Bible, most commonly the New Testament. In most arcaded examples there is only one figure in each arch, even if this means that the Baptism of Christ, for example, must occupy three separate bays. Another approach is to use arcading for single or paired figures and then to abandon any type of framing for the major scenes involving several people.

There are no extant records of how and by whom the iconographic programmes were commissioned but it is most unlikely that the choice was left to the mason. By contrast it is clear that he must have been given considerable freedom in the way he chose to set his figures out, however much clerical guidance and direction he received over the details. The considerable freedom of artistic expression in the way in which the various Biblical scenes are portrayed contrasts strongly with the narrow range of subjects used. At the head of the list is the Baptism of Christ in the Jordan, one of the most common scenes of baptismal iconography anywhere. It appears with other subjects in a variety of combinations and with a variety of details on different fonts.<sup>45</sup> There are fish in the waters of the Jordan at Vellern

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<sup>44</sup> It is possible that originally these fonts also had proper bases; a tight fit between bowl and socket-base combined with the dirt and dust of ages can often make it seem that base is as much one with the bowl as are salient mouldings at the upper rim.

<sup>45</sup> K. Noehles, pp. 104–7. Other subjects depicted are the Annunciation, Nativity, Adoration, Massacre of the Innocents, Crucifixion, Harrowing of Hell and Resurrection. Noehles states that the Last Judgement is shown at Stockum, without describing how it is shown or

[170], the dove of the Holy Spirit carries an ampoula in its beak at Elsen, Lippborg and Middels. The Baptist may appear on either side of Christ, and the angel, though not always present, invariably seems to be carrying a cloth or Christ's robe, not just veiling his hands. Although the Crucifixion is less common, no two representations are the same, though the depiction of Christ Himself, body sagging to His right, head bowed and eyes closed in death, seems constant, except that at Middels [171] His feet are crossed. One of the most intriguing images in baptismal iconography, unique on fonts and in this period, is the portrayal of the Resurrection of Christ on the Middels font. In the Middle Ages Christ's disappearance from the tomb is commonly depicted either by an angel seated upon the lid of a sarcophagus or by the three women carrying pots of ointment at the tomb. The first is combined at Freckenhorst with the Harrowing of Hell and the second is at Lenton and was on the now lost St Venant font. To see the Risen Christ actually stepping out of His coffin, it is normally necessary to move forward to the Renaissance, but at Middels this very image is clearly shown; Christ stands in the open sarcophagus attended by an angel on either side. On the font at Osterkappeln is the Annunciation to Zacaraias, who is shown censing the altar on which a chalice stands. On the other side of the altar the angel stretches out his right hand to the old priest, who raises his left hand in astonishment. The figure of a bishop completes the programme.

Only at Lünen are there scenes from the Old Testament. The Book of Genesis provides the symbolism for the loss of innocence through rejecting the word of God and the murderous outcome which has plagued the world ever since, reminding the onlooker how the waters of Baptism furnish a cleansing from Original Sin. The sequence begins with God's warning to Adam and Eve, and continues with the Fall, the Expulsion, the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, Cain's murder of his brother and ends with redemption symbolised by Christ's Baptism in the Jordan. Lünen demonstrates its late date with its six trefoil arches.

One of the most organised and disciplined presentations is found at Hohenkirchen, where the figures stand in high relief looking outwards from the surface of the bowl, the upper foliate band acting like a canopy of honour. The Annunciation, the Adoration of the Magi and the Baptism of Christ are all depicted, together with the saints Sixtus and Sinnicius, but there is no formal separation of one figure from another. This font stands on three couched lions, one with human prey in its jaws, but close examination reveals that the original intention must have been for the font to stand directly on the ground; the level of the tops of the lions' heads is such that they obscure the lower part of the carvings on the bowl behind them. Rastede [172] is similar to Hohenkirchen but without lion supporters. At the top is a foliate band with birds and animals. Below is an array of figures beneath eight unsupported arches. In one bay sits Christ as Judge, blessing with His right hand and holding a book on His knee with the left. There are two female saints and, from the large key carried by one figure, the others may represent St Peter and five of the apostles, though the others have no attributes to aid identification.

Also without any form of intermediate framing is the font at Ennigerloh [173], otherwise of a very different style. Here the sculpture is in much flatter relief, except for the foliate band,

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mentioning the *Majestas Domini* (found at Beckum and Rastede) which often represents the Judgement scenes, especially in the limited space available on fonts. Saints or apostles occur in 'statuesque' mode at Bakum, Beckum, Boke, Elsen, Lippborg and Ostinghausen. They are combined with Biblical scenes at Hagen and Stedesdorf.

and the single figure breaks the top and bottom frames, with his head cutting into the tendril, while his bare feet cross the thick beaded cable moulding which encircles the bowl a little above the base. The figure holds a sword, point downwards, in his right hand and an open book in his left, and is standing, feet apart, in front of the junction of two flat bands which curve down to meet the cable behind him. On each side of the figure these flat bands divide to form a vertical motif, like an escutcheon round the keyhole on a piece of furniture. The flat band encircles the whole font, dipping to the top of the base behind the figure and the three pairs of highly stylised trees which, with the man's figure, occupy about one quarter each of the circumference of the bowl. The trunks of each pair of trees cross a little below the springing of the branches, and their roots, like the man's feet, cross the line of the cable moulding. The symbolism of the vine and palmette in non-narrative decoration is well understood and there is little doubt that the pairs of stylised trees on the Ennigerloh font represent the Tree of Life. Noehles considers that, being in pairs, they must represent the two Trees, of Life and of Knowledge (by inference the second is the Tree of Death – the Cross).<sup>46</sup> An identification of the human figure is not easy, especially as it appears not to be nimbed, though there is a crown of luxuriant hair. He could represent St Michael, the book of the dead in one hand, the sword of retribution in the other, but the temptation to see him as Christ the Judge, sword in one hand and book in the other, would seem to fail with the absence of a halo; while saints may appear unnimbed, it is rare for the Saviour to do so. However this normally reliable rule is by no means generally applicable on these fonts, for example at Middels, where there is not a halo in sight. Noehles identifies the figure as St James the Greater, patron saint of the church. The only justification for doing so would seem to be the fact that James was executed by beheading with a sword and is the patron of the church. There are other fonts on which the patron saints are identified by inscription, for example St Pancratius at Vellern, but they appear with Biblical scenes or with other saints and apostles and it would be surprising for the patron to be so honoured as to appear alone. Waltröp, probably the earliest figured font, is slightly flaring. At the top between two plain narrow bands is a double, contra-rotating cable and at the bottom is a broad plain band; there is no profiled base or plinth. The decoration consists of an arcade of six round-headed arches supported on slender double columns without bases; the capitals are formed by horizontal lines at the springing of the arches. The arches are occupied by a nimbed female, a man lying on a 'bed' with head-rest, an upright cross, a cross leaning to the left, a soldier holding a diagonal cross against his body and finally the Agnus Dei, foreleg crooked to 'hold' the shaft of the cross of sacrifice behind its body. Noehles provides a detailed explanation of the Waltröp programme,<sup>47</sup> which he interprets as the Legend of the True Cross and its finding by the Emperor Constantine. The female saint is the Empress Helen, and the sleeping man the Emperor, dreaming of where he will find the Cross, the sign in which he will conquer. This is seen in the next panel, floating in Heaven. The helmeted figure is the Emperor Heraclius who carried the cross to Jerusalem on foot, having recovered it from the heathen who stole it. Another early example, but without arcading, is at Roxel, a cylinder with simple profiling at top and bottom. On the face are a *Majestas Domini*, without mandorla, a bishop holding a book and the symbols of the Evangelists, nimbed, winged and holding books. The figures are in flat relief, with sharp outlines but little modelling, giving a two- rather than three-dimensional effect, the work of a draughtsman, not of a sculptor. Noehles particularly refers

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<sup>46</sup> K. Noehles, p. 113.

<sup>47</sup> K. Noehles, p. 124.

to the way in which the vestments of the bishop and Christ's robes look as though they have been ironed flat.<sup>48</sup>

Wattenscheid font has a plain band at the rim and a small roll-moulding at the base. There is no arcading and the four scenes are widely separated, giving a sense of spaciousness which contrasts with the usual crowding of the figures.<sup>49</sup> At Christ's Baptism no angel attends and the two figures stand on top of the roll-moulding. At His resurrection the Saviour floats, the flag of victory pressed against His body as He points up to Heaven with His right hand. In the Nativity Mary, nimbed, is in bed but faces the viewer. The crib is above her head, ox and ass at the top. The final scene is the Crucifixion which shows John and Mary flanking the cross, above which are the busts of sun and moon; all are nimbed. The font is supported on lions, three according to ten Hompel, five in Noehles' catalogue. Only the foreparts are sculpted, the rest of the bodies left in the rough and one is so long that there would not have been room for another to be placed diametrically opposite beneath the bowl and they may have been intended originally to be inserted into a wall as corbels.<sup>50</sup>

The font from Aplerbeck, now in the Dortmund Ostwall Museum, is roughly contemporary with Waltrop. It has the familiar New Testament scenes, an abbreviated Life of Christ, the Adoration, Massacre of the Innocents, Baptism of Christ and Crucifixion, with a single column marking the beginning and end of the series. Over all is a Lombard frieze. On the Stockum font the Annunciation, Virgin and Child enthroned, Crucifixion and Majestas Domini are joined by the Nativity, the Journey of the Magi and by St Pancratius, all displayed within an eight-arch arcade. Although the Ostinghausen font [174] has individual figures in arcading, the Baptism of Christ is set in a space large enough for all three figures, the Baptist on the left, holding Christ by the elbow with the left hand and placing the right upon His head as the dove flies down from the foliate band. The figure on the other side holding a cloth is not winged but must be intended as the angel. The Jordan rises round Christ's waist and fills the space between Him and his flanking figures, whose feet are not obscured by the water. In deep arches figures in clerical dress, probably St Peter and six apostles, fill the remainder of the circumference. The arches are depressed and slightly behind the edge of the foliate band and the columns have a Byzantine flavour with grooved pilasters and ornamented capitals.

It is at first surprising that Noehles includes Beckum in his group of Westphalian tub fonts. What is an octagonal font on a stepped octagonal base doing among the cylinders and beakers? In fact there are several justifications for his choice, beginning with the decorative foliate band at the top, the slight flare, in itself a most unusual feature in an octagon, the base of stepped mouldings and the columns supporting the arcade. The arches are somewhat sketchy, almost as though the mason could not make up his mind whether he wanted an arcade or a lintel. Indeed it is the haloes of the figures which really define the unusual double arches which are on six of the sides and contain two standing figures. The other two faces, on opposite sides of the font, are occupied by a Majestas Domini and the Baptism of Christ. Christ is enthroned in a mandorla, not seated upon a rainbow, blessing with His right hand and holding a book in His left. The symbols of the Evangelists flank the mandorla at top and bottom. In the other scene Christ stands in the Jordan, the dove of the Holy Spirit overhead,

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<sup>48</sup> K. Noehles, p. 41.

<sup>49</sup> A. ten Hompel, p. 14.

<sup>50</sup> A. ten Hompel, p. 17.

and the Baptist lays his hand on His head. The apostles, in pairs, are posed so that they turn inwards to each other. Only Peter and Paul are identifiable, by the key and by Paul's beard and bald head. All the apostles carry books or banderoles, some with veiled hands. Four of the pairs stand on prostrate figures of the great prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and Ezekiel, the other two on architectural plinths representing the Temple of Solomon. Thus the Old Law is fulfilled by the New, the Prophets and the Temple becoming footstools of Christ's chosen.<sup>51</sup> The slender faceted columns supporting the arcade are placed on the vertical edges between the sides of the octagon. They are fully tectonic, the spandrels occupied by the busts of angels with outspread wings. Beckum is akin to the octagonal font in Merseburg Cathedral [175], and also to the later hexagonal but sadly damaged example at Quedlinburg. Here there were also pairs of figures, each in a pointed arch, and their late date is evident from the fact that they were carved in the round and attached to the font by metal pegs, which can be seen from the holes which remain.

The Stedesdorf font, now on a modern inset plinth, has a broad foliate band right at the top, with no plain band beneath the rim. Birds inhabit the foliage. Single figures stand in a series of eight round-headed arches which grow out of pillars in one smooth curve, very like the nave arcades of the abbey church at Senanque, without bases or capitals. The sides of the pillars and the insides of the arches are chamfered. In the spandrels are upright leaf motifs. At Vellern the figures are in an arcade complete with heavy, fully tectonic, columns; over each of the eight arches is lettering which identifies the single figure below. Christ, nimbed is shown in the Jordan, flanked by the angel on His left, Simeon, not John, to His right.

Ecclesia is shown as a female figure holding a chalice in both hands and Synagoge as a male Jew in the trade-mark pointed hat and holding a staff in his right hand. In the other bays are Gabriel, Mary and Pancratius. The identities of all the figures are inscribed over the arches within which they stand. Unusually, on this font the joins between the separate stones of the base are visible, reinforcing the idea that the fonts which stood upon a stepped base were not monoliths but cylinders set in a shallow socket. The font is of a greenish sandstone, quite different from the normal Baumberg material.

Nesse [176] has a complete arcade of eight bays, with capitals and bases to the columns; the spandrels are filled with various leaf motifs and mythical beasts. The top foliate band is inhabited with similar beasts, some with human heads. The three figures of Christ's Baptism occupy two bays of the arcade, an angel with a cloth on the left, alone, and the small figure of the nimbed Christ with the Baptist together in the neighbouring bay. The dove flies down diagonally from the spandrel to the left of Christ's head. The Virgin and Child enthroned occupy a single trilobed arch, the only one on the font of that shape. Christ is held in the crook of her arm, clear of her lap, and in her right hand Mary holds a sceptre with fleur-de-lis terminal. To the left kneels one of the Magi, crowned, who offers his gift with his right hand and in the next two bays to the left stand the other Magi, the one furthest from the Virgin and Child depicted as a young man without a beard. Unlike his companions the kneeling king's body cuts across the two flanking columns with the right hand and with the right leg as he bends the knee. The remaining two adjacent arches are occupied by Gabriel and the Virgin. This font shows considerable traces of colour, especially around the base.

The Lippborg font [177] is a piece of high artistic quality executed by a master and is probably one of the latest of the group. Beneath a narrow plain band at the rim is a broad

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<sup>51</sup> F. Helmert, 'Skt Stephanus, Beckum: Stift und Kirche', *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte des Kreises Beckum*, I, 1967, pp. 166, 173.

band of foliate decoration formed of different double motifs separated by a common square device which is placed over each of the eight columns; there are no arches. The columns which support the decorative band like a lintel, are of a distinctive tripartite form standing out from the wall of the bowl on two levels. The design might best be described as a pilaster engaged with a wider pilaster behind it, giving a stepped effect to capital, shaft and base alike. In the arcade are figures of saints or apostles, one of whom is St Peter; they stand on miniature platforms and hold banderoles. Also depicted, in a single bay, are Christ in the Jordan with the Baptist whose right hand is above Christ's head, on which the Holy Spirit is about to alight. The Saviour's arms are by His side and the water is heaped up but no higher than the loincloth which He wears. All the figures on this font are nimbed, including the Baptist. The cylinder stands on a round plinth, probably not contemporary, and around the bottom of the bowl immediately below the arcade is a band of continuous tendril as at Welbergen.

At Middels the foliate band is inhabited by mythical beasts. Unlike Nesse, there is no separation of the scenes. Above the Crucifixion are two busts, probably representing Sun and Moon, rather than Ecclesia and Synagogue, as the former is shown standing on one side of the cross to catch the blood from Christ's side. The dove of the Holy Spirit flies down upon the Saviour's crowned head. Christ's feet are crossed but rest on a suppedaneum actually placed upon the ground and His head is inclined in death to the right. On the other side of the cross from Ecclesia is Longinus while at the extreme left to the viewer, and thus breaking away from the more customary balance of the scene, John supports the swooning Virgin in his arms. The Baptism of Christ is of a more familiar composition, Christ in the centre, the water heaped about His waist, hands *orans* in front of the body and the dove of the Holy Spirit flying down like a spread eagle, superimposed upon the foliate band. On His left a winged angel leans towards Him, hands veiled, and on His right is the Baptist who places his left hand on Christ's head. The unusual feature of this scene is the way in which the Baptist and the angel seem to stand in the Jordan as the water spreads out sideways from Christ's waist. The other scenes depict the Resurrection of Christ and the Harrowing of Hell. The resurrected Christ stands in an open coffin attended by an angel on either side, a most unusual portrayal in early medieval sculpture, in which it is more common to show the empty tomb with a single angel. In the Harrowing of Hell the Saviour thrusts the staff of His flag of victory into the mouth of the Devil, with forked tail, whom He tramples beneath His feet as He walks towards a group of small naked human figures framed on the right by rocks. The dead are emerging from a doorway, the round-topped door with its fleur-de-lis hinge lying broken on the ground. The sequence around the font, moving from left to right, is Baptism, Crucifixion, Resurrection and the Harrowing of Hell. Here the Westphalian artists seem to have achieved total freedom. There is little sense of the Romanesque in the style of the figures and draped manner of their robes and the lack of separation between the scenes has introduced a new release of imagination.

Another late font without arcading is found at Sillenstede, with the refinement of flat foliate decoration, like wall-paper, covering the background to the narrative. The four scenes depicted are the Adoration of the Magi, the Baptism of Christ in the Jordan, the Crucifixion and the Harrowing of Hell. In an act of vandalism in 1584 the two bands of foliate ornament at top and bottom of the bowl were replaced with an inscription. Also with no arcading but with an ornamented background, this time a formal lozenge pattern containing cross-shaped

four-leaf motifs, is the Wiarden font, now in the Oldenburg Museum.<sup>52</sup> It shows the same four scenes. Below the upper rim is a broad band of undulating vine tendril with animals which, like Hohenkirchen, appears almost like a canopy. There are faint traces of colour. At the bottom is a plain plinth integral with the rest of the block. The feet of many of the figures are placed on the chamfered upper part of the plinth.

The cylindrical font at Kurl is low relative to the diameter.<sup>53</sup> It differs also from other Westphalian cylinders in the framing of the decoration and in the motifs used. There is a cable at the rim and a second, of the opposite twist, at the base. Immediately above and below the cables are two decorated bands of equal width. On the upper band, occupying half the circumference, is an undulating tendril with half-palmettes pointing left. The remainder is taken up with a serpent with two loops in its body, biting the tendril at one end, the other touching its tail. On the lower band is carved a series of four- or six-pointed stars separated by plain vertical strips. The series is broken in one place by two trees with three leaves on each side, the points curving downwards to meet the cable. Between these two decorative friezes are ten panels divided from each other by double vertical cables, all but one pair with contra-rotating strands. The panels contain various designs: four discs containing cross-forms set in the shape of a cross; the Agnus Dei with the cross of sacrifice and below it a fish; a strange bird, with no detailing, standing on the bottom frieze while a second, above it, displays claws, beak, eye and feathers and seems to peck the ground; the skull-like remains of a figure; a tree; a pair of seven-leaf sprays; a figure with two pairs of wings. The remaining three panels are damaged, one with the ornament completely effaced but the others seem to hold angels.

The problems of dating are no easier than with the Bentheim group, though Noehles' view that these fonts were made on site at the time of major building campaigns, if correct, could help in many cases. There seems little doubt that the earliest fonts were the cylinders with no surface decoration at all (Einen and Langenhorst),<sup>54</sup> followed by those with simple flat arcading (Ossendorf and Welbergen) and then arches containing cross motifs (Siegburg and Winterscheid). Next came arcading cut almost in the round, with spandrel ornament, as Dülmen and Holtwick, their later date being emphasised by the 'bud' ornament around the arches. The majority of the non-figured fonts must be dated on the style of the carving of the foliate band almost exclusively, because so few of them have any form of decoration on the main part of the surface. The realism of the vine tendril at Dornum places it safely at the end

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<sup>52</sup> The catalogue, *Mittelalterliche Skulpturen, Landesmuseum Oldenburg*, shows no. 11 as a font of Baumberg sandstone, height 94cm, diameter 90cm (64cm internally), depth 36cm, dated 1270–80. It came from the church of Ss Cosmas and Damian in Wiarden.

<sup>53</sup> A. ten Hompel, p. 23, gives its dimensions as: height 65cm, diameter 85cm (internal 65cm), depth 45cm. He says it is unusual in tapering slightly upwards but it appears to be a cylinder with both top and bottom rims slightly inset.

<sup>54</sup> In fact Noehles places Langenhorst almost a century later than Einen, though its massive bulk, total absence of flare and repetitive foliate motif suggest, stylistically at least, otherwise.

of the line of development, even among the latest figured fonts, and with the more sophisticated Albachten and Drensteinfurt.

A comparison of the manner in which the figures are portrayed places Middels and Nesse among the latest of the fonts, in the third quarter of the thirteenth century and Lippborg with them, though Noehles sets this font thirty or forty years earlier. Close behind come Beckum and Ennigerloh, roughly contemporary with Lippborg, though they lack its fineness of detail both in the arcading and in the figures. Vellern and Ostinghausen look the earliest of the thirteenth-century examples, though the treatment of the foliage on the latter may indicate a later date. Noehles again dates them with Lippborg, despite its much more advanced features. Rastede and Hohenkirchen are both dated with Middels and Nesse *c.* 1260–70 but, despite the abandonment of arcading, the treatment of the figures still clings to the Romanesque tradition, especially in the delineation of facial features. In fact an analysis of Noehles' catalogue with his approximate dating shows that many of these fonts must have been made at much the same time, perhaps a stronger argument for his notion that they were being made on site by different masons rather than in a workshop at a quarry. Of the figured fonts only Aplerbeck, Roxel and Waltrop appear to be firmly of the twelfth century.<sup>55</sup>

It would be difficult to say whether the flaring shape is early or late. Consideration of all the characteristics together suggests that the cylinder was first, though it was not entirely supplanted by the beaker. There was greater variety of angle of flare in the plain fonts than in those with figures, no doubt because figures would look odd if shown leaning forward and the whole font would look strange if its surface sloped while the engaged figures were erect. In fact there is an apparent slight flare on all the figured fonts but this comes mainly from the overhang of the foliate band, most obvious at Hohenkirchen and Rastede, where the band seems to form a canopy.

Despite the very evident similarities, the Westphalian cylinders are virtually all individual pieces and, in Noehles' view, were made at the time the churches were built or extended and by the masons working on them, more or less where they stand today.<sup>56</sup> There is no evidence for large-scale workshops and the small numbers of similar products do not seem to point to common centres of production. For Noehles' theory to be correct, the Baumberg sandstone

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<sup>55</sup> Of the twelfth-century examples Noehles lists Cappenberg 1150, Asseln, Einen, Roxel, Wellinghofen and Wengern all *c.* 1170, Kirchhilpe, Kurl, Wattenscheid, Waltrop all *c.* 1180 and Aplerbeck, Bochum, Ossendorf all *c.* 1190. K. Noehles' catalogue, pp. 126–35 gives approximate dates for most of the fonts.

<sup>56</sup> Noehles includes two other cylindrical fonts in this group, Freckenhorst and Brenken. While the former does have the standard upper foliate band and Attic base there is still so much that differentiates it from the rest that it will be considered separately. Brenken is even more an individual case and it is not easy to see why Noehles should have wished to include it here. Material (a greenish sandstone), proportions, absence of foliate band, iconography and style of carving are all so much at variance that it must be considered separately as just one of the best of a disparate and widespread collection of tub fonts, both cylindrical and polygonal. K. Noehles, pp. 44–5.

must have been delivered on site as rough blocks from the quarry but this ignores the fact that, due to the high costs of moving large pieces of stone, the relative scarcity of skilled craftsmen and the number of projects running simultaneously, virtually all building material was at least partly finished in the quarry and transported virtually ready to be placed in position. If this were true of monumental sculpture, where there would have been a need for one piece to match the next positioned beside it, it is at least as likely for items of movable church furniture.

### **@e The Pedestal Fonts**

Also in Westphalia, in the area south and slightly east of Bremen, is a small group of sandstone fonts of which the most impressive is in Verden Cathedral. It, and Achim [178] a few miles away, are both supported on clustered columns, a central shaft and four colonnettes all carved out of the same block. The base is very like those of the Tournai and Mosan Schools, with heavy roll-mouldings around the bases of all the supports. There are decorative spurs at the corners. The bowl is round at the top but becomes almost four-lobed at the bottom where it is shaped to fit the tops of the supports. At the top is a cuff standing about 3cm proud the bowl below. Below a narrow plain section is a broad band of continuous tendril. On each side of the bowl an arching groove runs from the tops of the colonnettes to a point immediately below the centre of the decorative band. Pudelko goes so far as to say that the font in Verden Cathedral, which is the same shape as that at Tanum in Norway, is an English import but this is difficult to accept. The clustering of the supports (looking like five but only one) is indeed found in England but not in quite the same manner, which is more akin to certain fonts in Bohuslän, Sweden<sup>57</sup> and the shape of the bowl is not found in England either. The Achim font does not have the arching groove and is generally simpler, with a smaller base without spurs and no cuff. Both fonts flare in a continuous curve. In the same area, at Heiligenfelde [179], is a bowl of similar shape and decoration, except for a leaf design swelling up from the roll-moulding at the bottom, where it meets the single support. The circular base is later. Not far away, and almost certainly related, is Riede, also single-support and on a contemporary square base. The top of the bowl has been seriously damaged and restored but the decorative foliate band is partly visible and appears not to be a continuous meander but to be a series of leaf-based

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<sup>57</sup> For example Skredsvik and Hede, attributed to the 'Clustered-column master' by S. A. Hallbäck, *Medeltidar dopfuntar i Bohuslän*, 1961, pp. 353–41, pls. XXV, XXXII and figs. 15, 21.

motifs. The sides of the bowl above the taper to the base flare in a straight line. The stone of all these four fonts seems to be a fine sandstone of consistent pinkish colour.

### **@c The Rhineland**

This Province is outstanding for the number of surviving medieval fonts, mainly from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, and for the richness of variety.<sup>58</sup> Zimmermann demonstrated the blurring, artistically, of the border between Lower Rhine and Westphalia and his map showed the spread of medieval fonts in the Lower Rhine area, with various groups divided by workshop and form of which the Bentheim and Westphalian cylinder fonts have already been discussed.<sup>59</sup> The Namur fonts are very numerous in the valley of the Lower Rhine and widespread in the area between Rhine and Sieg, though upstream along the Rhine there are only a few. They are considered separately in Chapter II.

Zimmerman also refers, erroneously, to examples of the Tournai group at Heel and Elmpt but the only possible link with Tournai is their square bowls; they are almost certainly Mosan. The most interesting fonts in this region are the indigenous products of trachyte and basalt which were produced both as cylinders and beakers and as ‘suspended’ fonts. There is also a small group, of Trier sandstone, at the southern limit of the region but this is tiny and of little art-historical interest.<sup>60</sup> Schumacher wrote specifically on the medieval fonts in the Bergischland, the area east of the Rhine between Düsseldorf and Bonn, with the highest concentration between the Wupper and Sieg rivers. These are mainly of the volcanic rocks, but in a variety of forms.

### **@e The Cylinder Fonts**

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<sup>58</sup> G. Pudelko, *Romanische Taufsteine*, Berlin and Lankowitz, 1932, pp. 95–100, nn. 129–31, gives numerous examples of Rhineland fonts, but with little detail to enable division into categories. See Appx 4C1–5.

<sup>59</sup> W. Zimmermann, ‘Zur Grenze des niederrheinischen zum westfälischen Kunstraums’, *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter*, XXXI, 1950–1, pp. 479–82, a section of the full article, based on Map 6, *Die Verbreitung romanischer Taufsteine* (cited as W. Zimmermann, ‘Rheinland’).

<sup>60</sup> W. Zimmermann, ‘Romanische Taufsteine am Niederrhein’, *Annalen des historischen Vereins für den Niederrhein*, 1954, p. 485, n. 61 (cited as W. Zimmermann, ‘Niederrhein’). See also Friedrich Schumacher, ‘Mittelalterliche Taufsteine im Bergischen’ (journal not known), pp. 153–70.

In the Bergischland there are many round tubs very like the Westphalian cylinders, the similarity extending to form, dimensions and decoration, though in this area there are none with the rich figure decoration of Middels, Nesse and Vellern.<sup>61</sup> Most are cylindrical and some taper slightly to the top. Richrath has a cylindrical tub with stepped roll-mouldings at base and rim. It is plain except for a Lombard frieze below the top mouldings. Honnef, Siegburg and Winterscheid all flare slightly. Siegburg has no frieze but there is a deep concavity beneath the upper rim and four trefoil-arched recesses each containing a long-staff cross. Winterscheid has the usual mouldings at rim and base, and a Lombard frieze with four long-staff crosses. Honnef is more plain, a plinth with no mouldings at the bottom, simple roll-mouldings at the top and no ornament on the side. Seligenthal has simple flat-relief arcading on a cylindrical tub without base. At the top is no more than a concavity below the upper rim. Lohmar has a Lombard frieze of sixteen arches with a cable-moulding above the frieze. In four of the bays are long-staff crosses.<sup>62</sup>

The fonts of trachyte and basalt are grouped together because all variations are found in both types of stone. These fonts were originally painted and many had figures painted in the bays of the arcade,<sup>63</sup> making it difficult to identify the stone with certainty. The oldest type is the cylinder, the beaker shape appearing slightly later,<sup>64</sup> and both types may be completely plain or, more commonly, have profiling at the bottom and at the upper rim. They occur with flat arcading with long-staff crosses, sometimes standing on a demilune to represent the hill from which flow the rivers of Paradise so that the cross represents the Tree of Life. The font at Hellefeld has round-headed arcading below a cable moulding at the rim and masks in the spandrels. Seligenthal and Reifferscheid are similar and St Georg in Köln, which is lower and wider, has arcading carved more in the round and with fully developed capitals and bases. Some have Lombard friezes below the rim like Schwarzhendorf, and Köln-Kriel has a frieze of horseshoe arches.<sup>65</sup> The font from Grossen Linden is similar to Köln-Kriel, with very flat relief and a horseshoe blind arcade supported on pilasters at every third arch. Most have a strongly salient top edge to the bowl. The font at Herchen in the Lahn valley shows

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<sup>61</sup> F. Schumacher, pp. 156–8.

<sup>62</sup> Friedrich Schumacher remarks that the Siebengebirg cylinders all vary around 1.2m in diameter and 80cm in height and many have cable mouldings.

<sup>63</sup> W Zimmermann, 'Niederrhein', p. 478.

<sup>64</sup> W. Zimmermann, 'Niederrhein', p. 480, says that, from the known dates when some of the churches gained their baptismal rights, these cylinder fonts must date from the middle and latter half of the twelfth century.

<sup>65</sup> W. Zimmermann, 'Niederrhein', p. 478, n. 34 and p. 479, n. 35.

the extent of the distribution of this type, as do examples in Alsace, mostly now in the cathedral museum at Strasbourg.<sup>66</sup>

### **@e The Suspended Fonts**

Also of Siebengebirg trachyte and basalt is the instantly recognisable group of indigenous fonts found in and around the area of volcanic rock to the south and south-east of Cologne.<sup>67</sup> These are like no other type of font anywhere, with the possible exception of the much smaller Bodmin group in Cornwall. Although these two groups share the characteristics which enable them to be referred to as ‘suspended’, there are significant differences between the two, the most obvious being the number of supports. The German group have six or eight and the English group only four. These fonts are called ‘suspended’ because the bowls have the appearance of hanging from a ring of slender columns. Normally a multisupport font has a bowl which, whether round or square at the top, has a flat undersurface, below which the supports are located but, because the suspended font bowls are true hemispheres, the colonnettes cannot support them from below. The apparent frame around the circular top of the font, itself part of the bowl, provides the *point d’appui*. The method of attachment differs between Cornwall and the Rhineland. Both groups have hemispherical bowls like orchestral tympani, and in Germany the tops are framed in a hexagon or octagon, depending on the number of colonnettes on which it is supported. On the Bodmin group the top of the bowl is contained in a square frame and the four colonnettes stand beneath the corners, not in contact with the bowl. In a few cases the polygonal appearance of the German group is

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<sup>66</sup> See Chapter III, France.

<sup>67</sup> W. Zimmermann, ‘Rheinland’, p. 48,1 says that there appear to be two groups of fonts of similar design, the Middle Rhine group of basalt. (e.g. Niedermendig) and the trachyte fonts of the Siebengebirg (e.g. Drachenfels). Both are volcanic rocks and the use of the same design indicates a close relationship between the two groups. All the same variations are found in both materials. The first group is common in the Maifeld and spreads up into the area between Erft and Rhine, with a few examples across the Rhine south of the Sieg. Similar fonts on the lower Lahn are probably linked with this group. Pudelko does not seek to identify two distinct workshops nor is any evidence given in the article as to locations of any production centres.

misleading, and the top of the bowl is round, with evenly spaced protrusions beneath which the supporting colonnettes are located, clustered closely round the bowl. The design is like a camp wash-basin held up by the frame beneath the rim of the bowl. On many of the fonts the colonnettes appear to be engaged with the bowls but in fact these are grooved to accommodate the shaft and it is a combination of accurate cutting and the dust of years which makes them appear to be all of a piece. With some of the fonts, most notably Ruppichteroth and Burg, there is no framing to the upper edge and the capitals for the colonnettes protrude from the curved side of the bowl.

The weight of the bowl is actually taken on a stubby column beneath the centre of the hemisphere or the bowl may be attenuated and actually rest directly on the ground; the colonnettes do little more than ensure stability.<sup>68</sup> The bottoms of the shafts are located in separate bases, the majority consisting of a square block, on top of which is an abacus round the bottom of the colonnette and in many cases with one or more roll-mouldings between block and abacus. The central stub-shafts are also shaped as Attic bases, usually square but sometimes hexagonal like Ruppichteroth. At Ober-Breisig there appear to be only two original colonnettes complete with bases, the other four being thicker, longer shafts which stand directly on the floor. At Franken [180] and Ellenz the stub-shaft and all the bases appear original, though the colonnette shafts are replacements. The centres of the Ellenz and Dierdorf bowls now rest on square modern blocks, while the Ober-Breisig and Honrath stub-shafts are original. At Oberlahr [181] the bowl rests directly on the plinth in which the colonnettes are also located but this plinth is modern and the original arrangement cannot be divined. Lindlar [182] rests directly on the plinth. Judging from the colours of the stone Kessling seems to have a complete set of replacement supports, the centre of the bowl resting on the top of a truncated cone. This is so tall that it would be interesting to know whether the unusually small bowl had always required supports higher than the norm, or whether it had been raised later.

One matter that is not clear is how the colonnette bases were originally positioned. Today some are square-on to the bowl, at others they are oriented so that one of the corners points to the centre. It is rare for the bases to be other than square but at Hönningen they are hexagonal and at Altenahr round. Although on the latter font the supports are replacements, the fact that the integral capitals are round, suggests that the restorers were correct in their choice of an unusual design for the bases Odenthal has a plain shaft for central support, rather than a foot, but evidence that this was the original arrangement is lacking. Although most supports stand directly on the floor of the church, several fonts have plinths, hexagonal at Ülmen, round at

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<sup>68</sup> F. Schumacher, p. 161, says that the font at Much is unique in the fact that it does not just appear to be suspended but actually hangs from its six colonnettes, with no central stub-shaft underpinning the bowl. It must be said that the paucity of original supports for almost all these fonts makes it extremely hard to state beyond risk of contradiction which features are original. Not only is it likely that most of the existing colonnettes are replacements but the top frame may have been modified with the passage of time.

Sieglar, square at Niederzissen, but all of these may be later than the fonts. Only at Dattenfeld is there a definitely contemporary plinth and this is the font with a central support which is integral with the bowl and with the bases of the colonnettes. Waldbröl is unique in having its colonnettes not located near the top. The deep Lombard frieze here forms part of the 'frame' and the capitals are under the highest point of each arch, thus in the centre of each side of the octagon, not beneath the corners.

There are more than forty of these fonts and evidence for the line of development is seen in the decorative treatment of the top 'frame' and the upper part of the bowl. The basic type is seen at Ober-Breisig and Ellenz, where there are plain hexagonal tops to the bowls, so that the corners protrude beyond the circumference of the top surface, providing sills beneath which the colonnettes are located. Like the Tournai fonts, the capitals are fashioned out of the same block as the bowl, but out of the side. The next step was to introduce beneath the plain vertical surface of the top frame a concave groove, less deeply cut at the corners; below this is a roll-moulding which sits above the capitals or which acts as a lintel without capitals. In some cases, for example at Altenahr and Hönningen, this gives an unbalanced look to the font, with too little overhang at the top, especially at Altenahr, where the capitals protrude for about one third of their width. The new design was carried out more effectively at Franken and Ülmen.

At Franken for the first time there was a move to ornament the capitals with turned-over volutes at the top and this seems to have led to a desire for more ornament on what had hitherto been a rather stark design, impressive for its complex structure alone. The most simple form is found at Adenau where, below the universal plain band at the rim, the groove has been replaced by a row of blocks, rectangular and with a curved face, separated by undercut sections. Here the capitals are retained and the ornament is above them.

Niederzissen may be the first example of foliate ornament in this part of the font. The capitals, with curled volutes like Franken, have now crossed the roll-moulding and occupy the previously grooved section; the ornament is now extended round the font but leaving the capitals distinct. At Oberlahr the capitals are subsumed in a flamboyant foliate band so that the leaf ornament is unbroken.<sup>69</sup> The fonts with this upper foliate band, which first appeared at Wiedenest; are the most widely found type.

Dernau is very similar to Niederzissen, with the volutes on the capitals repeated in the spaces between, but here is a further innovation, a simple Lombard frieze around the top of the hemispherical bowl immediately below the 'frame'. The frieze is continuous, one whole and two half arches appearing between each pair of capitals, so that there is, in effect, an arch behind each colonnette. Sieglar parallels Dernau, but with the inclusive foliate frieze encircling the whole upper part of the font at the level of the capitals. In fact the arch behind the colonnette is often wider than the others as can be seen clearly at Dierdorf [183], where the colonnettes are lost. It is now a single-support font and, though on a modern central shaft and base, balances quite evenly, as do Ruppichteroth and Honrath, also now shorn of their colonnettes; the central stub-shaft at Honrath is original. At Dierdorf the top of the bowl is round, with six console-like protrusions for the capitals level with the top. The leaf ornament has been replaced with a narrow band of plaitwork.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Other examples are Neunkirchen, Niederlahnstein, Volberg and Wiedenest.

<sup>70</sup> Of the same subgroup are Odenspiel, Rosbach, Stieldorf, as is Wiehl, which is exceptionally deep at 55cm.

The next step can be seen at Leuscheid and Lindlar, with inverted fleur-de-lis terminals to the Lombard frieze.<sup>71</sup> Then, in the final development, the decorative terminals disappear and the arcade is displaced sideways so that two full arches are fitted between each pair of capitals, the junction between the two arches becoming not a terminal but a rib or vertical moulding which runs from top to bottom of the bowl. A fine example of this stage is seen at Rosbach, though here the top of the font is like Hönningen, with plain band and groove but with leaf ornament on the capitals. Honrath and Ruppichteroth do have ribs, but in very low relief, and at Honrath there is no Lombard frieze, the rib running down from a point below the 'frame' midway between the two adjacent capitals which now have very much more spreading foliage decoration. The final evolution of the Lombard frieze and vertical rib is found at Dattenfeld, where the arcading has migrated from the bowl up to the level of the capitals, replacing the foliate ornament. Here the stub-shaft has been transmuted into an integral part of the bowl, swelling out again from the narrowest part to become an Attic base with a bottom diameter so large as to meet the bases of the colonnettes. These are square and side-on to the circumference of the base, perhaps an indication that this is how all the colonnette bases were intended to be aligned. The top of the Asbach font is the same as Dattenfeld and, though it reverts to the separation of bowl and central support, it is clearly of a similar late date. This is not only apparent from the rather mannered decoration of the upper band, and the Lombard frieze and its terminals, but also from the changed ratio between size of the bowl and overall height; these two bowls are the smallest in diameter. The dimensions of all these fonts are remarkably consistent and, despite apparent major differences between the highest and lowest measurements, the majority cluster closely around the average.<sup>72</sup> All these examples are seven-support, a central stub-shaft with six colonnettes. A small, very much later, subgroup was produced with eight colonnettes, of which the most ambitious (and latest) is that in the cathedral of Limburg-an-der-Lahn. Odenthal boasts the same number but has neither top frame above the capitals, which are set a little below the upper rim, nor a Lombard frieze. There are, however, vertical ribs.

Any attempt to describe the different permutations of types of 'frame' and bowl ornament is almost bound to confuse, because there is no evolutionary path. However, an analysis of the different treatments of these two elements shows that the most common versions are those with plain frames over capitals and the foliate-decorated frames without capitals, both associated with the Lombard frieze and rib. The analysis also throws up the interesting point, that the fonts with undecorated bowls do not occur in the Middle Rhine group, a clear indication that there were indeed two centres of production, even though there must have been a free exchange of ideas between them. The relative lack of ornament and absence of a clear evolutionary path make dating hard but it is known that the churches in this area

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<sup>71</sup> Similar details are also found at Andernach, Blankenberg, Geistingen and Gummersbach.

<sup>72</sup> The breadth across the top of the bowls varies between 83cm and 1.16m (average 1.01m); internal diameter 65–82cm (average 74cm); overall height 70cm – 1.06m (average 90cm); depth of basin 32–43cm (average 40cm); height of base 12–35cm (average 24cm).

obtained their baptismal licences in the mid-twelfth century.<sup>73</sup> The interchangeability of variations in the design of the upper part of the font seems to suggest that they were made over quite a short period of time, with no strict line of development, more a set of permutations available for use according to preference. This new type of font, with bowl encircled by colonnettes, appeared soon after the middle of the twelfth century and continued into the second half of the thirteenth. The design was plain in the twelfth century, introduced a leaf-frieze at the turn of the centuries and became plain again in the mid-thirteenth century. Ellenz, Lindlar and Bensberg epitomise the three main stages.

### **@e Other Fonts**

Before leaving this area reference should be made to two unique fonts. There is a real hybrid at Niederkassel, across the Rhine from Cologne. The base and central shaft have all the hallmarks of a multisupport Mosan product but the cylindrical bowl is of a paler stone, reminiscent of the Bentheim group, with parallel flat bands at the top and a frieze of round-headed Lombard arcading below. The terminals of the arches do not reach the bottom edge of the bowl but end in points several centimetres above the lower edge. The Bentheim flavour is heightened by the four monkish figures of the same stone as the bowl which rests on their heads. The figures stand on the emplacements provided for the original corner colonnettes. Among the trachyte fonts, but neither ‘suspended’ nor a cylinder, is Wermelskirchen. It is in fact like Herkenrath, a typical Namur font on five supports with decorated panels between the salient heads, including a dragon, a winged dragon, a pair of lions’ bodies sharing a single head and the Lamb and flag. Being made of local stone but in the Namur style, it is perhaps the work of an itinerant mason.

### **@c Bavaria**

With one or two exceptions Bavaria has little of interest to show, with scarcely any variety, even between products of workshops using different stones, which include granite, sandstone, limestone and marble. The artistic standard of the stonemasons’ work is mainly coarse and with poor detailing, giving a very monotonous overall impression with little originality. There are both tub and pedestal fonts but in neither format is there any real variation either of articulation or of ornament, with the exception of five or six examples of exceptional quality. There is no information about the provenance of the stone of which

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<sup>73</sup> W. Zimmermann, ‘Niederrhein’, p. 479, suggests the first around 1150–70, production continuing until the middle of the thirteenth century. In ‘Rheinland’, p. 481, he proposes Wiedenest as *c.* 1154.

they are made and it is impossible to say whether they are indigenous or imported products. Even if imported, they are all of such individuality that they give no clues to their origins. In Lower Bavaria and the Oberpfalz the hemispherical bowl is predominant; it has a paucity of ornament, usually no more than a round-headed arcade, like Schambach, so that tubs like Chammünster, decorated with Christ and the twelve apostles, stand out. Progressive developments led to the addition of a base, and thence to single-support fonts with hemispherical bowls like Schlicht, and Zachenhausen which has a cylindrical bowl. The decoration continued to be restricted to simple motifs, mostly round-headed arches, often filled with plant motifs, but the face often remains free of decoration. The bases are mainly Attic, often without a supporting shaft. Many pieces of this group such as Rohr, have fluting on the lower part of the bowl. Leiching and other examples have even articulated the whole surface simply, but effectively with this motif. Another goblet font, outstanding for its high quality in comparison with the rough mass of the others, belongs to the former Benedictine monastery of Vornbach. On three fonts, Altenstadt, Kissing and Habach the hemispheres have become quatrefoils, though Altenstadt is only of this shape at the top; below, the bowl is round. The quatrefoil form is rare in Germany and it is not clear whether the concept was brought from Scandinavia or from the shape of many baptistery piscinae around the Mediterranean basin. Cylindrical fonts decorated with arcading and standing figures appear again in Bavaria, where they stand out from the rest. One which came originally from the Benedictine abbey in Neustadt am Main, dating from the end of the twelfth century, is now in the Luitpold Museum at Würzburg. The bowl in Windberg, from the second quarter of the thirteenth century, rests on four lions.<sup>74</sup>

### **@c Central Germany**

Fonts of great importance are no more common in this area than in Bavaria, despite the considerable number of major Romanesque churches, especially in Saxony-Anhalt. Late Romanesque fonts are quite numerous but they thin out towards the east and everywhere decoration is of poor quality. The materials are usually imported granite or limestone, with some sandstone products on the edge of the north German plain. Tub fonts are common, with a few developed from the cylinder, such as Bramsche, but the hemispherical form

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<sup>74</sup> G. Pudelko, p. 112. He also refers to another, later, example at Chamerau, with clover-leaf arches and rough figures. He dates it as mid-thirteenth century.

was more popular, flattened at the bottom into a cup-shape as at Jerichow, even flatter at Leuna. At Jerichow the large tub font is reminiscent of the bowls of the smaller Swedish pedestal fonts found in Skåne and north-east Germany, polygonal at the upper rim and round at the bottom. It is twelve-, perhaps fourteen-sided with a rib between each pair of sides running part-way down the half-round bowl to the bottom, where there is a small roll-moulding. Around the top, just beneath the rim, is a band of decoration consisting of leaf motifs enclosed on each face in a semicircle, of which the top rim is the diameter. These fonts belong to the second half of the twelfth and the early thirteenth century. The font at Borne is almost unique in shape, octagonal, with the sides narrowing in a curve to the roll-moulding on which it stands. The decoration is richer here and of higher quality; a band of leaf tendril encircles the upper rim and on each side is a figure in high relief, the heads cutting into the foliage.<sup>75</sup> The figures shown are: the Virgin and Child, the three kings holding gifts, one of them bearded, St Peter, a bearded man brandishing a sword (who must be Paul) and a bishop. To the left of Mary the last figure wears a pointed Jew's hat and may be intended as Joseph. The sides of the font below the heads of the figures slope inwards but the bodies follow the slope so that they are all in very flat relief. All are shown at the same height, even the seated Virgin. Ohle suggests a date in the second quarter of the thirteenth century, based on the more developed execution of the clothing.<sup>76</sup> Though there are tubs, the majority are borne on a single support and mainly of crude forms, plain and not infrequently misshapen. The support may include a shaft and base or may consist of no more than a heightened base without shaft. There are both hemispherical and cylindrical bowls.<sup>77</sup> Some two-piece fonts are like one hemisphere placed on another, inverted, with a roll-moulding at the junction, as at Gräfendorf,<sup>78</sup> while Bassinghausen is like two cubic capitals, a format found occasionally in Denmark, as at Hundstrup [222] and

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<sup>75</sup> G. Pudelko, p. 115, fig. 41. He says that there were three others of similar design but only mentions one, at Löbnitz.

<sup>76</sup> M. Ohle, 'Der Taufstein in Borne bei Stassfurt', *Die Denkmalpflege*, XIII, 2 August 1911, p. 80. He gives the following dimensions: The thickness of the walls 10cm, width of each face 39cm, overall width of the bowl 95cm and diameter of the basin 75cm. The height of the bowl is 71cm and depth of the basin 42cm.

<sup>77</sup> G. Pudelko, p. 110.

<sup>78</sup> G. Pudelko, p. 109, also draws attention to the Kilpeck stoup. Bere Regis, Dunkeswell and South Molton are examples of English fonts of this form.

Davinde, but unique in Germany.<sup>79</sup> A few late examples are more like a flat dish on a pillar or column, as at Bischofsrode, clearly not intended for baptism by immersion and quite possibly originally produced as stoups. There are, of course, certain individual fonts of interest, which Pudelko mentions but even these are of poor quality compared with fonts from other parts of Germany.<sup>80</sup> Exceptions are Gernrode, and others which are now in museums.<sup>81</sup>

There is a group of sandstone ‘goblet’ fonts along the Weser south of Hamelin. The bowls are all slightly barrel-shaped, rounded down to a small moulding to fit on top of the supports. At Hohe the base is circular and consists of a vertical plinth with successive roll-mouldings and concavities. Hajen has a square plinth with a moulding gripped by corner spurs, with a deep groove and roll-moulding above. Kemnade [184] has a modern base<sup>82</sup> and at Tündern only the plain bowl survives. On the bowls at both Hajen and Hohe are two thin mouldings framing a band of decoration, on the former a frieze of overlapping beaded rings. At Hohe the scheme is more intricate. Above the main band of decoration is a continuous vine tendril and, of the two narrow mouldings, the lower goes only half-way round the bowl, framing the four roundels with cross and whirl motifs, separated by formal leaf designs, which occupy half the circumference. The remainder of the bowl is covered with overlapping flat semicircles and a Latin inscription in majuscules encircles the middle of the bowl below the main band of ornament, with a slight change in height where the half-discs take over.<sup>83</sup> Around the centre of the bowl at Kemnade is a broad band ornamented, for three-quarters of the circumference, with a chequer-board pattern. Above the lower part of the bowl, where it rounds down to meet the support, is a narrow roll-moulding from which rise three slender double columns, dividing the lower part into three rectangular panels, their capitals cutting into the bottom of the central band. Above this band there are seven single columns which also seem to have had capitals, but the bowl is badly damaged at the rim. In one of the lower panels is a roundel; the others, like three of those in the upper tier, are empty. The other four in the upper tier contain a variety of disc-with-cross, Tree of Life, flower and other motifs. In the Weserbergland, to the west of the river, is another small group of related fonts of a fine-grained sandstone. They are all single-support, two on a square base with corner spurs. The bowls are hemispherical, shading into vertical at the top, and the hall-mark is a broad band of formal foliate ornament at the top of the bowl, framed between two narrow incised lines. Fürstenau has a series of beaded semicircles bisected with vertical beaded bands, from

<sup>79</sup> M. Mackeprang, *Danmarks middelalderlige døbefunte*, Copenhagen, 1941, figs. 132, 133.

<sup>80</sup> G. Pudelko, pp. 108–11.

<sup>81</sup> Trotha, polygonal with representations of the twelve apostles (Halle Provincial Museum), Burgdorf, c. 1200, Marienstein Abbey, end of the twelfth century (both Landesgalerie, Hanover).

<sup>82</sup> In a corner of the church is what may have been the original base. It is a round truncated cone with traces of beaded rings around the widest part.

<sup>83</sup> ‘SE PIEM · ST · EAQUE FACIUNT PECCATA · REMIT · FACTATE A SUNT D°’.

This has not been satisfactorily translated but has the sense that sins are remitted by God through the waters of baptism.

the base of which radiate quadruple narrow leaves to meet the framing arch. In the spandrels are loose knots. The font is in two parts, without shaft. Holzhausen has three different motifs in the decorative band, running into each other in succession without any form of divider. There are six palmettes in the familiar form of being enclosed within their own stems, three semicircles (like Fürstenau but without beading or vertical band) and nine zig-zags enclosing five-leaf motifs in each triangular space. This font is also in two pieces, bowl and shaft combined, and base topped by a roll-moulding. Godelheim [185] is of a coarser stone and of lesser quality, with a crooked bowl on a stubby round shaft which consists of a short cylinder between two flattened mouldings. The decorative band is slightly proud of the surface of the bowl and has a somewhat flattened continuous tendril. In the same general area and of the same stone are also tub fonts like Höxter, but they are devoid of ornament. Reinle briefly describes the badly worn font from the former Benedictine abbey of Lippoldsberg of around 1120.<sup>84</sup> The cylinder is surrounded by six half-round tower-gateways in high relief, in each of which a full-length figure is standing. Between the towers are reliefs of scenes related to baptism: the Last Judgement, the Flood, the Baptism of Christ and the Massacre of the Innocents. If his details are accurate, this must be the only font on which the Flood is depicted.

Another small sandstone group is distributed around the Harz, the distinguishing feature being arcading close to the top of the bowl. At Barbis [186] it is a plain Lombard frieze, at Zerbst the arches are horseshoe shape and at Rieder they are 'shouldered' Gothic. Zerbst has lost its original base, Rieder stands on a square plinth with truncated cone, heads at the bottom corners. Barbis is unusual in being a monolith, with a round base of almost the same diameter as the bowl, sloping up from a vertical plinth to a massive roll-moulding beneath the junction with the bowl. Around Dessau are numerous sandstone fonts of only minor interest, devoid of decoration, small, and in many cases no longer in the churches. Many are octagonal which points to a late date. Five of them, monoliths, do have a distinct elegance of shape and proportion, especially in the way in which the octagonal shaft is translated into a square base by means of sloping corner spurs.<sup>85</sup>

### **@c The Northern Lowlands**

This is an unusual geographical definition which has not been used by other writers. It is nevertheless logical, in that all parts of the north German plain, from Ostfriesland along the North Sea and Baltic coasts to the border with Poland, together with Schleswig-Holstein, share a common geology. There is virtually no naturally occurring stone other than the postglacial granite boulders. This has inevitably led to a stock of mainly imported fonts with a small scattering of granite fonts of indigenous and usually crude manufacture.

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<sup>84</sup> A. Reinle, p. 34.

<sup>85</sup> The fonts are: Dessau (St George), Klein Wülknitz, Luko, Natho, Weiden, with possibly Lausigk to be added, but excavation of the base would be needed to confirm.

For this reason the whole area, shaped like an inverted ‘T’, will be taken together, except for the Bentheim and Westphalian imports which have already been covered.<sup>86</sup>

The north-eastern part of Germany embraces the provinces of Mecklenburg, Pomerania, and Brandenburg, effectively the area between the Elbe and Oder rivers and Berlin. The region lacked a cultural identity of its own, being relatively thinly populated in the early Middle Ages, with few substantial towns except along the coast, where it has always been exposed to external influences. The medieval fonts in Mecklenburg-Pomerania are made of two types of stone.<sup>87</sup> The majority (about two thirds) are of a light grey Gotland limestone, almost certainly imported as finished articles, and to them should be added a very few of a harder red limestone, also from Gotland. It is well known that Sweden supplied both raw materials and finished goods to the north-east of Germany and to the Jutland peninsula.<sup>88</sup> The remainder are of granite, made from the indigenous postglacial boulders. Apart from the imports, dating is generally difficult. Though the fairly rare figure carvings do help through the use of stylistic criteria, the roughness of execution and lack of detail may be due more to granite being so hard to carve than to an early date. Conversions of the largely unsettled population were still continuing in 1124, using casks dug into the ground, and German settlers, who spread eastwards from Bremen and Hamburg and inland from the Baltic coast, were not mentioned in the area in any significant numbers until the thirteenth century. Many churches date from this time, the earliest of them in the western part of the region, so it is likely that the production of fonts in Vorpommern falls in the period between 1230 and 1350.

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<sup>86</sup> See Appx 4E1 (the North-East), Appx 4E2 (Schleswig-Holstein) and 4E3 (the North-West).

<sup>87</sup> A. M. Baalk, ‘Die mittelalterlichen Taufsteine in Mecklenburg-Schwerin’, *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Mecklenburger Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, 1926, pp. 116–23, notes that about sixty medieval fonts are recorded by Schlie in the region, of which eight are of bronze. About twenty-five had been removed from their churches by 1926 and stood in churchyards or gardens, with two in Schwerin Museum. E. Otto Schmitt, ‘Mittelalterliche Taufsteine im Kreise Greifswald’, *Blätter für die Kirchengeschichte Pommerns*, VI, 1930, pp. 29–33, assumes about thirty medieval fonts based on the number of medieval churches in the area. He lists the eleven which remain whole or in fragments.

<sup>88</sup> A. Mehnert, *Die mittelalterlichen Taufsteine in Vorpommern*, dissertation, Greifswald, 1934, pp. 7–9; catalogue pp. 57–63. This dissertation is an invaluable, especially for the imported material, drawing parallels with similar products elsewhere. She recognises two types of limestone, reef (e.g. Stoltenhagen) and crinoid (e.g. Gristow) but could not identify specific sites on Gotland. Annette Landen of Lund University is working to assign as many as possible of the known products to the different quarries on the island. She has not yet (Spring 2001) published her analysis.

Holstein was converted from the south, from the bishopric of Bremen-Hamburg, and Schleswig from the west, from England. The first churches were erected in the latter half of the ninth century but the real church-building campaign did not begin until the late eleventh, early twelfth century.

The north-west consists of Schleswig-Holstein and the northern part of Lower Saxony which, while sharing the geological characteristics of the other areas, was open to trade with the prolific font-producing areas of Bentheim and Westphalia to the south, through the many major water-courses which ran through the province. Schleswig-Holstein may be described as the root of the Jutland peninsula, which begins north of the line Hamburg–Lübeck. Like Danish Jutland, Schleswig is a land particularly well-known for its postglacial granite boulders; the naves of the country churches are walled with shaped blocks of granite and churchyards are bounded by low, wide walls of huge, unshaped stones. Granite is a stubborn and unforgiving material for the sculptor and the long coastlines east and west, with frequent deep-water inlets and many rivers, facilitated the penetration of the peninsula by imported goods, of which in the twelfth-century baptismal fonts formed a significant element.<sup>89</sup> The Province is well endowed with medieval fonts, especially north of a line east–west through Schleswig and Husum. Sauermann<sup>90</sup> identified four groups, of which he described three as being ‘of foreign stone’. While this description was certainly true of the fonts from Bentheim, Namur and Gotland it is only the position of the Danish–German border at the time he was writing that allowed him to claim the granite fonts as indigenous. The border has migrated north and south on several occasions during recent centuries and it must be said that the granite fonts of the province are more Danish than German, indeed there are no examples in his book which do not have their precise parallels in Denmark. In fact Sauermann’s map draws the border far north of its present position, along the course of the Kongeå, a river which enters the North Sea a few miles south of Esbjerg. This northward shift in the northern boundary of Schleswig effectively doubles the number of fonts to be covered in his book.<sup>91</sup> The imports include twelve Mosan fonts, all on the west coast between Röm and the Eider river, just three sandstone fonts, two from the Bentheim quarries and one from southern Sweden, with a fourth bowl of provenance unknown.<sup>92</sup> The Bentheim examples represent

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<sup>89</sup> All these imported fonts are dealt with in the sections devoted to their place of origin and may be found under Belgium, Bentheim (this chapter) and Sweden (Chalice Fonts of Gotland). Similarly the granite fonts of Schleswig which are clearly products of Danish craftsmen are considered under Denmark.

<sup>90</sup> E. T. Sauermann, p. 5.

<sup>91</sup> Despite the small number of truly indigenous ‘German’ fonts in the peninsula, Sauermann’s book is nevertheless most useful for its map and also for his analysis of the different workshops.

<sup>92</sup> E. T. Sauermann, pp. 16–19. Keitum (Sylt) and Witting are Bentheim products.

Westerhever comes from a workshop in Skåne. He notes a sandstone bowl at Wesselburen but, as he does not deal with part-fonts, gives no details; he implies, however, that it is different from both the Bentheim and Skåne types.

two distinct phases of that School's development so were probably imported at different times. Far more numerous are the Gotland imports, mainly chalice fonts of grey limestone, with a few of red Gotland 'marble', a hard limestone capable of taking a polish.

### **@e The Limestone Fonts of the North-East and Schleswig-Holstein**

In Germany there are forty-five (including fourteen quatrefoil variants) of the earliest group of Gotland chalice fonts. Grevesmühlen has a non-standard support, a square base with corner spurs and a shaft with roll-mouldings top and bottom, like Martebo on Gotland itself. Röbel has the unique feature of a band of vine tendril beneath the upper rim and on Proseken's quatrefoil font the rib of the bowl is carried down onto the shaft like a powerful vertical roll-moulding. On some bowls the top of the rib ends in a human head just below the mouldings of the upper rim. The low-relief modelling, with rather staring eyes, is reminiscent of the salient Mosan heads but here they are much smaller. At Rappin three are women's heads, crowned, and the fourth may be a bishop. Compared with the other types, these four-lobed fonts with salient heads were clearly expensive and highly valued which probably explains, despite their small numbers, their wide distribution, even to Emmelsbühl and Stedesand in Schleswig-Holstein. There are no examples in Germany of the second type, with pointed tops to the fields, and the final development, with trefoil tops, is represented only at Breklum and Schönkirchen, both in Schleswig-Holstein. These three groups are in chronological order. Discs at the springing of the arched tops to the fields, almost as if they were capitals, rarely occur with round-headed fields, with no more than four in Germany, including Haddeby in Schleswig, the only case where this shape of field occurs on a four-lobed bowl. In the Lübeck group discs are added to pointed arches, with thirteen in Germany, equally split between Schleswig and the north-east. Only Blindow is a quatrefoil.<sup>93</sup> The Güstrow group, with discs added to trefoil tops, is the second largest, of which around twenty are in Germany. Reflecting the greater liking for ornament of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, there are detailed differences in the form of spandrel ornament and in some cases the discs themselves have become flowers. Klein Wesendorf has pointed-arch tops to the inside of the fields which are trefoil outside.

Gotland supplied two other types of chalice-font, one plain, the other decorated, but both with a similar silhouette to the 'Paradise' fonts. The base and shaft with roll-moulding are of

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<sup>93</sup> A. Mehnert, pp. 30–1.

the same shape, but the bowls have neither raised fields nor a groove below the rim. The plain version has a bowl which consists of a shallow cylinder above a section with 45° rake to meet the top of the shaft. The majority are totally without ornament but Altenkirchen has four heads spaced equally around the bowl, set at the bottom of the vertical sides; three are clean-shaven and the bearded fourth head is turned so that it looks slightly to the right and is not directly *en face*. The heads are strongly salient, almost in the round. The features are sharply drawn and the hair is close to the skull, falls over the ears and is drawn with waving lines. On the beardless heads the hair is parted in the middle and on the fourth it lies in rolls on the neck. A poverty of modelling is apparent in the features. All the noses are the same, triangular and leading in an unbroken line into the eyebrows. The eyes are deep-set and the mouths and chins are individually drawn. There are related fonts on Gotland, the closest at Fole, though there the four heads are on the shaft, one bearded, one clean-shaven, the others unclear. Like Altenkirchen, the bearded head is again slightly to one side. Wiek has a font of the same shape but without the heads, as is Goldebee, though this has a quite different base, square with corner spurs and of one piece with the shaft, also square and with rounded edges. This reappears with a different shape of bowl at Levenhagen. Fonts of this type are found both with and without drain-hole, showing that they may be seen as a Transitional form, to be dated around 1250.<sup>94</sup> At Klein-Solt and Satrup in Schleswig-Holstein, there are heads at the top of the shaft, immediately below the roll-moulding, but the bowl is more rounded. Klein-Solt has four human heads but at Satrup two are rams' heads. There are many other fonts of the same plain type but with roughly hemispherical bowls and in such variety that it is not possible to establish any model. The bowls tend to be relatively small, diameters varying between 65 and 85cm, height 40 to 50cm, depth generally around 30cm. Kietzig is unusually large for this group, with a diameter of one metre. The bowls all differ slightly in silhouette, due to variations in the curvature and slope of the sides, but the affiliation is clear and the link with Gotland is confirmed by the survival of two examples on the island, at Björke and Follingbo.<sup>95</sup> Behrenhoff, c.1300, is typical of many undistinguished north-eastern fonts of limestone. It is in three pieces, a flat circular bowl with rounded lower part and a round base which slopes up to meet the cylindrical shaft. The only decoration consists of flat vertical bands equally spaced around the bowl from top to bottom. Pütte is like Altenkirchen except that it has no salient heads and the bowl is granite; the shaft is limestone and the base modern.<sup>96</sup>

The decorated version of the late chalice fonts seems to have been developed from the hemispherical type, rather than from the cylindrical bowl with raked lower section, and in Stralsund there are two examples. In the Skt Nikolai church is a font with hemispherical

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<sup>94</sup> A. Mehnert, p. 13, says this date is supported by the Altenkirchen font where the hair on the beardless heads resembles that on Henry the Lion's graveslab at Brunswick c.1240. The hair-styling of the bearded head was just beginning to be in common use in France c.1230. She also says that drain holes were not provided after about 1250.

<sup>95</sup> A. Mehnert, pp. 38–9.

<sup>96</sup> There are many others of this plain pedestal format, and plain tubs, and the only way to compile lists is to consult *Die Kunstdenkmäler* for Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and similar publications in other regions for examples elsewhere.

bowl supported on the usual round base and shaft with roll-moulding. Below the rim the groove of the fluted 'Paradise' fonts has reappeared and beneath there is a band of unframed motifs, four lions *passant* interspersed with four large discs containing six-armed crosses *paty*. This font is made on a grand scale but the bowl in the Stralsund Heimatmuseum, from the Abbey of the Heiligengeist (Holy Spirit), is much smaller and now lacks its support.<sup>97</sup> It is octagonal with steeply sloping sides which flatten at the bottom, so that each panel flares to the top. Below the panels the bowl becomes round, curving down to meet the shaft and on the vertical edges rise stems which spread out into triple palmettes flanked by triangles, with bosses to fill the spandrels. The panels are framed top and bottom by plain narrow strips above a fine saw-tooth band. On each of the sides a beaded round-headed arch springs from the bottom corners and encloses a stylised lion *passant* carved in low relief, similar to those on the St Nikolai font. The tail and one forepaw are raised, their mouths are open showing the rolled tongue. The relief is flat and the outline of the animals sharp, suggesting that this is a harder stone, confirmed by the way it has acquired a polish from being handled. The decoration appears Romanesque, of the twelfth century, but is almost certainly later. The Abbey of the Holy Spirit had its own chapel in 1263 but only received parish rights in 1325, which suggests that this was when it obtained its font. There is a bowl of similar shape and decoration at Ystad (St Peter) in Skåne, with the same type of base and shaft as St Nikolai, and another on Gotland at Fröjel.<sup>98</sup> Levenhagen<sup>99</sup> stands on a combined base and shaft like Goldebee. The bowl, which could be seen as a half-way stage between the two Stralsund fonts, is twelve-sided at the top, becoming hemispherical about one third of the height below the rim. Below an undelineated plain band are twelve round-headed arches supported on columns, with capitals which touch each corner at the point where the polygonal shape vanishes; there are no bases. In each arch, incised rather than carved, stands one of the apostles, only Peter identifiable from his keys. There is another rounded polygonal font at Reinberg, the edges of the polygon here being carried to the bottom of the bowl. Its worn state through standing in the open as a flower tub makes it impossible to discern if it has any incised decoration but Mehnert made no reference to any in 1934.

### **@e The Granite Fonts of the North-West and North-East**

Beside the exclusively imported limestone fonts, there is also quite a large number of indigenous granite fonts spread across the German northern plain, but they are not as prevalent in Pomerania as in Schleswig-Holstein and Westphalia. They are mostly rough works and in Vorpommern they are confined to a much smaller area than the limestone imports which they sometimes ape. Also in the north-west of Germany, among the sandstone fonts of the Bentheim and Westphalian schools, is a small number of isolated

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<sup>97</sup> St Nikolai, 1.08m in diameter (basin 79cm), 1.16m high, bowl height 45cm and depth 37cm. Heiligengeist, diameter 77cm (basin 59cm), bowl height 31cm, depth 27cm.

<sup>98</sup> J. Roosval, *Die Steinmeister Gotlands*, Stockholm 1918, p. 204, dates the Fröjel bowl to c.1300, which is consistent with the Heiligengeist font.

<sup>99</sup> Previously in the Greifswald Heimatmuseum but now returned to the church.

fonts of granite.<sup>100</sup> Unlike the north-east, these are exclusively tubs, though Uphusen is a granite monolith cut to look like two cylinders, one of greater diameter on top of another. Werdum and Buttforde are slightly beaker-shaped and Reepsholt is more like a barrel. None of these has any ornament. There are three fonts which have slight vertical articulation in the manner of Vledder or Apeldoorn, the lower half cut back to provide the appearance of a massive central shaft flanked by four engaged colonnettes. These are Fulkum and Funnix, both flaring slightly, and Dunum [187] which is cylindrical. Except at Fulkum, there is another, barely perceptible, vertical engaged colonnette in the centre of the lower parts of the fonts, so that each side is divided into two roughly rectangular panels. At Funnix there are four moderately salient heads, equally spaced around the bowl, level with the rim, and Dunum has similar heads (one now broken off) and the upper parts of bodies, the waists marked by the bottom of the bowl. There is little modelling of the faces and the only detail of the bodies is provided by the arms brought across the chests, with the hands joined at the throat. Finally, at Altenoythe [188] there is a granite font of the same basic shape as the early Bentheim products like Herzlake, with the lower part reduced in diameter. There is no ornament or articulation other than two very rudimentary roll-mouldings encircling the lower part. Probably because of the shape and positioning of the salient heads, Dunum and Funnix have been described as being of Namur stone, but they are granite.<sup>101</sup>

There is a small bipartite granite group in Vorpommern, linked by their form and by their decoration. The base of the Altentreptow font is almost the same diameter as the top of the bowl and consists of a flat plate from which rises a truncated cone ending in a roll-moulding flattened at the top. The bowl has the shape of a hemisphere slightly straightened at the top. Despite its size, the wall of the bowl is extremely thin for granite and the 46cm depth of basin indicates that the proportion was maintained throughout. The overall height cannot be measured accurately because the base is set into the floor of the church, but it is in excess of one metre.<sup>102</sup> Seven human faces are carved round the middle of the bowl. Two are close

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<sup>100</sup> F. Petersen, pp. 21–8. There are other rough bowls and tubs but these are too small to have been fonts and must have been stoups.

<sup>101</sup> F. Petersen, pp. 32–4. The nature of the stone becomes clear in colour photographs where the ‘granular’ surface is very much easier to see, as well as the pinkish speckled tinge of the stone.

<sup>102</sup> A. Mehnert, p. 45. draws attention to this unusual set of dimensions and comments that it is much less than is found in the more easily worked limestone products. It is necessary to go

together, while the others are separated from each other by five fleur-de-lis and a single cross, carved higher. The faces are almost circular, the eyebrows formed by two horizontal lines at right-angles to the nose, and small eyes are set in the corners between nose and brows. Lines run down from the nose and curve outwards, creating strange fat cheeks. The chins are round and the mouths are indicated with short curved lines. The faces are enclosed in circular frames which Mehnert refers to as nimbi but they seem to be neither of the correct shape nor in the right position for this to be the case. Below the fleur-de-lis are strange flat-topped outlines like a doorway or a capital 'A' without the cross-bar, the vertical strokes following the curve of the faces beside them. On the shaft are four figures in the same low relief, two as Atalants, holding up their arms to the roll-moulding as if to carry the heavy burden of the bowl. The feet are planted firmly on the plinth. One of the other figures is seated, with a head in its lap; this may represent Abraham holding a human soul but Mehnert identifies it as the Madonna. This is quite possible, but it is hard to accept her view that the fourth is an angel, with 'clearly recognisable wings'. It is smaller than the other figures and appears to have an animal with pointed ears at the level of its shoulder.

The similar font at Gross Nemerow [189] has a plain support, though there is some evidence that the base did have some attempt at articulation, probably square spurs, but it is too worn to be sure. The same fleur-de-lis above 'doorways' appear with faces in circular frames, but these are of different sizes and at different heights.<sup>103</sup> The new element here is a Crucifixion. Christ takes up virtually the whole height of the bowl; His arms are stretched out horizontally, His feet side by side. The face is drawn just like the others on the bowl and He wears a cruciferous nimbus. Small figures stand on either side, beneath the arms of the cross, and so crudely carved that it is impossible to say whom they represent; both appear male, the one on the right holding his hands in front of his body while the other reaches out to Christ's feet. At Steffanshagen is a font that is so similar in size, shape and decoration that it could be by the same hand. The round base is flat and has the same square spurs as Gross Nemerow, which here are less worn and can be seen to consist of crude masks. Between them is a radiating saw-tooth motif and the base of the shaft is encircled by a snake. Around the top of the bowl is a line of zig-zag, below which are eleven circular faces in round frames flanking a Crucifixion very like that at Gross Nemerow. The differences are that there are no figures standing below the cross and that a pair of fleur-de-lis grow from the extremities of the horizontal arms.<sup>104</sup> A granite bowl of closely related style but different proportions is at

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to the Scandinavian soapstone bowls to find thinner walls. External and internal diameters are 92cm and 79cm, giving a wall of only 6cm; the normal thickness is between 8cm and 12cm.

<sup>103</sup> The sequence is: fleur-de-lis, large face low, small face high, fleur-de-lis, large face high, fleur-de-lis, large face high, fleur-de-lis, Crucifixion. thickness is between 8cm and 12cm.

<sup>104</sup> A. Mehnert, p. 46, writes of a related font from Rühlow. The bowl is similar in size and style to Altentreptow. The base seems entirely plain. There are five heads separated by lilies, and Christ crucified, wearing a long robe and cruciferous nimbus, is flanked by Mary and John. Mehnert believes the font in the park of Schloss Willigrad is by the same hand, but undecorated except for a wreath of heads at the foot of the shaft, carved almost in the round.

Gielow, too large for a stoup but very much smaller than the last three examples. It has straight sides rounded to the bottom, where there is a small roll-moulding. The decoration again embodies fleur-de-lis and heads, but on one side is a bull's head flanked by two crowned human faces.<sup>105</sup> The remainder of the circumference is taken up with four standing figures, arms outstretched, each pair holding between them a fleur-de-lis. The faces here are not framed and are flattened at the forehead, but the same arrangement of nose, eyebrows, cheeks, mouth and chin prevails. There is no detailing of the bodies, which are wrapped in long robes which hide the feet. Below the arms and between the bodies are large loops which cross at the bottom.

At Dahlen is a granite tub font which is very worn or perhaps incomplete. It is possible to make out two faces, a cross and a figure holding a fleur-de-lis. The full-length figure is set at the top of the font, head near the rim and a large space beneath the feet. Although ostensibly a cylinder, it is possible to see the beginnings of shaping like a bowl to the upper part, suggesting that what is seen now as a tub had been intended as a bipartite piece like the others, with the same motifs. This is speculation but it is supported by the rough, unfinished state of the bottom; it can only stand upright by being propped on pieces of stone. The font at Lichtenhagen [190] is difficult to fit into this group because the base is sandstone. However, the bowl is of the same material, shape and proportions and the round support is of the same overall conical shape, even though this is disguised by its sculpted figures. The bowl has no figures but is covered in crudely worked triangular 'fish-scales', point downwards, except for the part immediately above the shaft. The scales are so poorly set out that the number of rows varies around the circumference of the bowl. The support consists of a circular plinth on which stand eight human figures, their feet lapped by concentric lines almost like water. The figures lean back against the shaft, heads right at the top. They are all different, one with hands *orantes*, another with arms folded, a third with a child or human soul in its lap like Altentreptow. The faces have the same triangular nose joined to the eyebrows, but otherwise they are closely wrapped in their robes and lack any detailing which might help identification. Neetzka lacks its original supports but has the same round faces and lilies on the bowl, beneath an upper frieze of saw-tooth ornament. These fonts are late Romanesque in style, from their mass and their decoration but probably date from the mid-thirteenth century or even later.

The second group of granite fonts in the north-east is more widely spread. Their main differentiating characteristics are their salient heads and the roll-moulding at the bottom of the bowl, rather than on the top of the support, and they all have the rounded fields of the 'Paradise' fonts. Three, at Pokrent, Hohenkirchen and Hohen-Viecheln [191], have bowls of much the same shape as the Altentreptow group, though the first is taller and turns in at the top beyond the diameter of the hemisphere. On the Hohen-Viecheln bowl are three heads covered with 'Breughel' peasant caps and one which is crowned. They protrude from the face of the bowl by about eight centimetres and are set about a third of the way down from the rim so that the crowns of the heads are slightly above the top of the rounded fields. The plain base is round, sweeping up from a low plinth, again like the Gotland 'Paradise' fonts. The Hohenkirchen base is similar but has four equally spaced heads, all different, their chins on the plinth. On the bowl of this font, at the level of the heads at Hohen-Viecheln, are strange high relief motifs which at first sight resemble nothing so much as a grotesque face with bulging forehead, triangular nose above a broad upper lip, mouth turned down at the

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<sup>105</sup> A. Mehnert, p. 47, n. 58, says that it may represent the arms of the Werle family.

corners, and round chin. The final element in this bizarre carving is that the face appears to wear goggles; if they are not crude representations of the human face it is hard to suggest an alternative. The heads on the base are quite normal, with long chins but little facial detail. There are no heads on the Pokrent bowl where the fields, while taller than the others, have a much broader clear space above them. The base is like Hohenkirchen but with more facial detail and, on one, the hair across the forehead is in a plait.

Biendorf has the same base with heads, but the completely plain bowl is less flat at the bottom and beginning to adopt the shape of the next group, a hemisphere slightly extended vertically at the top and with a rebate at the upper rim. Burg Stargard is also a bridging piece insofar as the bowl remains broad and flat, but it already has the rebate at the top which marks this subgroup out. Its three heads (one is lost) are very worn and now lack any detail beyond the nose, ears and eyes. Mehnert, in 1934, noted that they depicted an old man with short full beard and bald head and a young man with half-length, wavy hair which, she said, are found on almost all fonts of this type, but the third, a soldier with helmet, is only found here.<sup>106</sup> The original base does not survive. Loitz and Gross Giewitz [192] are of the new shape and have no raised fields. The Gross Giewitz bowl has a narrow roll-moulding at the bottom and a marked rebate at the top, below which are set the four heads, all different. They represent peasant, king, bishop and monk and below each chin is a short section of neck. The round combined shaft and base is like the Altentreptow font but taller, with less slope at the bottom and with very little additional width to the plinth. At Loitz the plinth has disappeared and the lower part of the conical support consists of one thick moulding and two smaller, of diminishing diameters. The bowl has the same rebate and a much more emphatic roll-moulding at the bottom. The heads have the same neck section and are all different, two clean-shaven and two with beards. Almost identical is the Wusterhusen font, though it has two downward steps at the bottom of the bowl and the heads are less detailed. These lead directly to the piece of especially high quality in the Greifswald St James' church. This is taller and with a smaller bowl, with no heads. The base is like Loitz but has a roll-moulding at the top while the bowl has an integral roll-moulding and a short (12cm) length of shaft below.<sup>107</sup>

Among the granite fonts of the north-east aping the 'Paradise' model, only the bowl survives at Dessow but Klütz is complete and copies the original Gotland form of the support, though with base and shaft combined. Wismar is the same and it is interesting that there is a roll-moulding at the bottom of the shaft, instead of the top, almost as if the mason had copied a model that had been incorrectly assembled. The one respect in which all these copies vary from the Gotland original is the absence of a groove below the upper rim. There are other granite bowls and complete fonts in a variety of forms, single pieces which do not slot into any of the groupings. The smaller would have stood, like Greifswald, on a pedestal, others on the ground or on a low base. Most are round but one or two show signs of a polygonal

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<sup>106</sup> A. Mehnert, p. 50, n. 61, thinks that, if it really is a soldier, the heads might represent the Four Rivers of Paradise, for one of the supporters of the Hildesheim font is dressed as a soldier.

<sup>107</sup> A. Mehnert, p. 51, says there was another like it at Eggesin but slightly smaller.

rim.<sup>108</sup> In front of Nossendorf church is a very crudely made font with large, hemispherical bowl of irregular outline with walls 16cm thick at the top. The slight base consists of an irregular plinth with short round shaft.

In general these one-off pieces are undistinguished and hardly worthy of notice but there are two which deserve to be picked out for their unique characteristics. The Patzig font is a monolith. At the bottom is a square base below a wide concave section, then a heavy, square moulding which transmutes into the bowl. The upper part is round and is joined to the roll-moulding by square ribs which rise to within a few centimetres of the rim, giving an apparent squareness to the round bowl. The whole piece is of roughly the same overall width from top to bottom. There is no parallel elsewhere in Germany, in Jutland, Gotland or on the Swedish mainland. The complete absence of any stylistic traits makes dating almost impossible, though the overall appearance is late Romanesque.<sup>109</sup> At Garz only the bowl is original. Of all the granite products it is of the finest workmanship and proportions. At the rim is a narrow lip above a broad plain vertical band about one third of the total height. From the bottom of the band the sides curve down to meet the shaft. Here pairs of thick cables of opposite twists are set vertically, between each pair a deep furrow. It is not only the design that is unique but such a depth of carving is almost unknown in this material. The only near parallel to be found is of sandstone, at Berdum in Ostfriesland. The proportions are the same and there is the same broad plain cuff at the top and curved vertical carving, but here there is plain sharp-edged fluting, not cables.

### **@c Individual Fonts**

To conclude the chapter on Germany, eleven fonts have been selected for individual description. They have been chosen for the quality of their workmanship, their iconographic interest and, in some instances, for their rarity of form. Among them are cylinders, goblets, bowls of pedestal fonts now shorn of their supports, cups on figure supporters and one shaped like, or adapted from, a cushion capital. Almost without exception they are *sui generis*, without parallels in Germany or in any other country.

### **@e Bonenburg**

The capital is a very rare shape in German fonts and the only example offered here is the example in the parish church of Bonenburg [193], in the form of a massive cushion capital. It is almost certainly of a fine sandstone but it has been painted and lack of access to the interior made confirmation impossible. The top is square and it follows the customary shape of this type of capital, the vertical sides gradually adopting a curved line as they go

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<sup>108</sup> Tub: Bodstedt, Retgendorf; Low base: Gross Eichsen, Nossendorf, Retgendorf, Röbel; Pedestal: Abtshagen, Döbbersen (octagonal), Friedland, Neddermin, Niepass.

<sup>109</sup> The present Patzig church was only consecrated around the middle of the fourteenth century, but the village was mentioned as early as 1232 and 1249.

to meet the shaft via a small roll-moulding. Along each side at the top of the bowl is a plain band from which two semicircles depend. Eight fleurs-de-lis on long stems grow out of the roll-moulding at each corner and in the centre of each side, terminating in the curved space where each pair of demilunes meet. There is no evidence to show whether this was indeed originally a capital from some nave arcade, hollowed out for reuse as a font, or whether it was made for baptism in this particular shape.

### **@e Freckenhorst**

Among the Westphalian cylinders Noehles includes Freckenhorst [194–5], which is rare in being dated, 1129, although some scholars have rejected this as no more than a record of the date of restoration of the church, and place the font much later.<sup>110</sup> Whatever its date, it is without doubt a masterpiece and outstanding for its size, workmanship and for the complex and imaginative iconographic programme. What is more, it is in wonderful condition and shows hardly a sign of its eight centuries of use. It stands 1.27m high with a diameter of 1.17m. The height without the base, which is made of separate pieces of stone and is almost certainly later than the pure cylindrical bowl, is 1.02m. There is no profiling at the upper rim and below a plain band inscribed with five encircling lines is a frieze of repeated leaf motifs. Below, the decoration is divided into two unequal registers by an inscription concerning the consecration of the church in 1129. In the upper tier are seven Biblical scenes within an arcade of depressed arches and below are lions which seem to be crushed by the weight above them, their heads turned upwards, mouths agape in frustrated threat. An intriguing feature is the series of eight inverted fleur-de-lis which hang from the inscribed band. As these are in the same plane as the external diameter of the font, the lions are carved behind them, a device which has been said to give the font something of the style of contemporary metalwork. The fleur-de-lis are placed in four pairs, each covering the top of either the shoulder or the rump of one of the crouching lions below.

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<sup>110</sup> Noehles says that the date may be taken as reliable as there is a close match between the sculpture of the font and pieces of decorative sculpture which form part of the new building work. This font has been published many times, the most complete in *Das Münster*, III, 1950. It was also the subject of a doctoral thesis by Stefan Soltek of the University of Bonn, completed in 1982. For visitors to the church there is a very well produced guide to the font, with excellent photographs.

Of the six lions in the lower register, four, seen from the side, crouch head to head in pairs, the necks screwed round so that the line of inscription rests on their chins. Between the hindquarters of each pair the masks, maned shoulders and forepaws of the others face out from the font. The tails of each pair of crouching lions enter the mouths of the masks between them and emerge through the ears, ending in heavy plumes. The claws of all six lions curl round the lower edge of the cylinder. Flanked by one pair of upturned lions' heads is a motif like an inverted lotus, while the heads of the others press against the sides of a man's face, the only other visible parts of his body being his shoulders and the hands which grasp the lower edge of the bowl as if it were the bottom frame of a window. The eyes are large, almond-shaped and expressionless. He wears a beard and moustache and his hair is combed onto his forehead in curls. Over his shoulders can be seen two layers of clothing, both turned over at the edge. He has been identified as Daniel in the den of lions.

The mismatch between seven Biblical scenes above and six lions below prevents a balanced spatial relationship between the two registers and, though the beginning of the inscription, an equal-armed cross with four beads making a square, is set above the man's head it is nevertheless offset. It is however almost precisely beneath the figure of Christ in the scene of His baptism in Jordan, the beginning of His ministry on earth; this cannot be other than intentional. The inscription is in Latin and records the date, 'In the 1129th year after the incarnation of the Lord . . . on the day before the nones (4th) of June this church was consecrated by the most worthy Egbert Bishop of Münster in the second year after his elevation.'<sup>111</sup> Other inscriptions on the font form part of one or other of the scenes depicted and will be considered with them.

In the upper register are seven scenes from the New Testament. They occur in the logical order (reading from right to left) Annunciation, Nativity, Baptism, Crucifixion, Harrowing of Hell, Ascension and Last Judgement. They are all framed in an arcade of depressed arches supported on stout columns complete with bases and carved capitals. In the spandrels are round turrets, each of a different design and each arch is ornamented with a different pattern. In the Annunciation the Virgin sits on a padded stool without arms, her feet on a cushion; she looks and holds out her right hand towards Gabriel who adopts a strange pose, leaning back as he walks forward. In their left hands both hold phylacteries, Mary's curving down in the space between the legs of the two figures, Gabriel's up between their heads. They are inscribed respectively: '+ AVE · GRAE · PLENA · TECV ·' and '+ FIAT · M · SCDM · VBV · T ·'<sup>112</sup> Both figures are nimbed.

The Nativity is in the Byzantine style. Her head to the right, the Virgin reclines on a bed with a small turret as finial on the bed-head. Above her is the crib, like a building with windows in two of the sides, drawn in a distorted fashion due to lack of understanding of the principles

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<sup>111</sup> '+ ANNO · AB INCARNAT · DNI · M · C · XX · VIII · EPACT · XX · VIII ·

CONCVRR · I · P · B · INDICT · VII · II · NON · IVN · A VENERAB EPO ·

MIMIGARDEVORDENSI · EGBERTO · ORDINAT · SVE · ANNO · II · CONSECRATV ·

· E · HOC · TEMPLVM ·' The word SVE was omitted and fitted in at the bottom of the scene above, beneath the angel of the Resurrection.

<sup>112</sup> These are even more than usually truncated versions of Gabriel's salutation, 'Hail Mary, full of grace . . . ' and her reply 'Be it unto me according to thy word'.

of perspective. In the crib the Child lies tightly swaddled with criss-cross tapes over His clothes; like the Virgin, He is nimbed. The ox and ass look over the crib from behind. Joseph, who wears a pointed Jew's hat, sits to the left of the crib at the foot of Mary's bed, sleeping with his head in his left hand, the elbow rested on his knee.

At His baptism Christ stands in Jordan, the waters heaped up to just below His navel, the left hand held in front of the body, palm outwards, while he points to the right in the gesture of speech or teaching. Wings outstretched, the dove of the Holy Spirit flies straight down upon His head which it touches with its beak. On the right the bearded Baptist, holding his camel-skin cloak about his naked body with his left hand, places his right upon Christ's head. On the left the angel stands frontally, the head turned slightly towards the Saviour, and holds a cloth or robe veiling his hands. All the figures are nimbed.

Christ is crucified on a massive cross with doubled ends to the arms. Behind His head, turned slightly to the right but not bowed, is a cruciferous nimbus. The knees are slightly bent, feet side by side just above the ground and His arms are almost horizontal, with no sense of His hanging from the nails. He wears a short collobium above the knees. The Virgin and John, both nimbed, stand immediately below the ends of the horizontal arm of the cross and look down at a small figure, probably the donor, who kneels in prayer at Christ's feet.

In the next scene, while the Harrowing of Hell is depicted in conventional terms, there is one unique detail. At the right is a decorated tomb with domed cover on which sits a nimbed angel who holds a rolled scroll in the left hand and points upward with his right. It is the Resurrection conflated with Christ's descent into Hell, represented at the left by an arch and a turreted doorway. In front of the door sits the Devil, wrists and ankles tied, a rope around his neck, his tail, cloven hooves and horns all clearly shown. In the centre stands the Saviour, His nimbus inscribed with rays of light. In His left hand is a staff with cross terminal, the three upper arms joined by a curved line like the standing crosses of Ireland. He reaches out with His right hand to two tiny naked figures whose hair shows them to be a man and a woman, therefore Adam and Eve whom Christ rescues from Hell.

In the Ascension scene Christ strides from the left, slightly off-centre to the right, and looks upward to the cloud of Heaven which bulges from beneath the arch. He wears a cruciferous nimbus and carries the same cross as He did in the Harrowing. Beneath and around His feet to right and left are the twelve nimbed heads of His apostles, all looking up at Him, pointing or gesturing in amazement. Leaning down from the arch above are two winged and nimbed angels holding phylacteries with inscriptions which are to be read together: '+ VIRI · GALIL · Q + D · STATIS · ASPIC · IN · CL ·' and 'SIC · VENIET · QADMOD · VID · EV ·'<sup>113</sup>

In the final scene Christ appears as Judge of the World. He sits on a rainbow in a mandorla, supported by the nimbed symbols of the Evangelists and, as in the Harrowing, His nimbus is marked with rays of light. His robe has partly fallen from his right shoulder leaving part of His torso naked, as He holds His two arms out to the sides of the mandorla; from His hands hang two phylacteries with inscriptions. Around the lower part of the mandorla are the heads and shoulders of the dead to whom the two inscriptions refer. The scroll to the right of Christ

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<sup>113</sup> 'Viri Galilaei, quid, statis aspicientes in caelum; sic veniet, quemadmodum vidistis eum'

(You men of Galilee, what are you doing there, looking up to Heaven? He will come again as you have seen Him before).

reads: ‘+ VENITE · BENEDICTI · PATRIS · MEI · CIPITE · REGNUM ·’ That to His left reads: ‘+ DISCEDITE · A ME · MALEDICTI · IN IGNEM · ETERNAM ·’<sup>114</sup>

### **@e Merseburg Cathedral**

The Merseburg Cathedral font [175] was previously in the Thomaskirche, in the Neumarkt suburb of the city.<sup>115</sup> It is a cylinder of red sandstone translated at top and bottom into an octagon by elegant decorative bands of foliage. It is too tall for an officiating priest without some sort of step. It stands on a slightly inset plinth of crouching lions and four human figures who are identified from an inscription on the bottom rim as the Rivers of Paradise. Unlike the Freckenhorst font these figures and lions are reduced to supporters, and do not form part of the main vessel. On the main central cylinder are twelve narrow round-headed arches in each of which stands a prophet.<sup>116</sup> They hold long pendent banderoles with their names: Osee propheta, Zacharias, Malachias, Esayas, Jonas, Johel, Amos, Ezechiel, Daniel, Sophonias, Abacuc and Jeremias. On the prophets’ shoulders sit the twelve apostles, their names (in the same order) on the round-headed arches above their heads: Scs Petrus, Scs Andreas, Jacobus, Joannes, Jacobus, S Simon, Judas, Mattheus, Bartholomeus, Philipus, Thomas, Scs Paulus. In the spandrels are busts of the elders of the church or other representatives of the Old Church, so that the font portrays the story of

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<sup>114</sup> ‘Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom of Heaven’ and ‘Go down from me, ye accursed, into eternal fire’.

<sup>115</sup> F. Wiggert, ‘Über einen Taufstein im Dom zu Merseburg’, *Neue Mitteilungen aus dem Gebiet historischer-antiquarischer Forschung*, 1834. He gives the dimensions in old measurements: ‘5 Fuss high, 3 Fuss interior diameter, 4 Fuss across the octagon, 1.5 Fuss deep’. The Fuss and the Zoll vary but are roughly 25cm, and 2.5cm respectively, giving approximations of 1.25m, 75cm, 1m and 38cm for the above figures.

<sup>116</sup> There is not a good match between the relative positioning of the twelve arches and the octagonal friezes, which might suggest that the original design was wholly circular, ‘improved’ at a later date. Certainly the arcade and figures look earlier than the beaded ornamental bands of sophisticated leaf motifs. Against this the crouching beasts and figures on the plinth, four and four, do seem to fit the octagon. The font is weathered and it is unsatisfactory to rely on a photograph for an unequivocal opinion.

salvation from bottom to top. At the base of the column by the feet of St Peter is a kneeling figure supported on a staff, probably the sponsor. The basin is hemispherical.

On the top surface is an inscription which points to the symbolism of baptism and reads: 'HOS · DEUS · EMUNDA · QUOS · JSTIC · ABLUIT · UNDA : FIAT · UT · JNTERIUS · QUOD · FIT · ESTERIUS +'. This may be translated as: 'Cleanse, O God, those whom the water touches, so that which cleanses them without may purify them within.' According to the style of the lettering, the elongated figures and the lineal and oval portrayal of the folds in their garments, the font must date from the last quarter of the twelfth century, though Pretzien suggests just after 1200, seeing a link between the ornamental mouldings and the decoration of the portals of the Neumarktkirche.<sup>117</sup> Schubert and Ramm note that only Peter has his attribute, the key, and query if the font was originally in the abbey of St Peter, not in the Neumarktkirche, in which case a revision of the dating would be required, though they do not suggest how.<sup>118</sup>

### @e Brenken

The Brenken font [196], dated by Noehles forty years later than Freckenhorst, is a very much more rustic product but full of interest. The font is of a greenish sandstone and consists of a relatively small but broad cylinder with narrow plain bands top and bottom.<sup>119</sup> It stands on a tall base with a high vertical plinth and is supported by four lions of which the maned heads and forequarters are visible. One of the lions is separate and may be pulled forward from beneath the bowl but is nowhere near a close fit. It has been suggested that the space beneath is for warming the baptismal water, or for access to the drainage system but the former suggestion, at least, seems most unlikely. On the side of the bowl are eight relief panels, divided from each other by slender columns complete with capital and base; these support the upper edge as a lintel, except with one panel, surmounted by an arched canopy. Here the capitals are beneath the springing of the arch, with colonnettes above them which run vertically to the upper rim. Beneath the canopy sits

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<sup>117</sup> G. Pretzien, 'Die Beschreibung der Neumarktkirche und ihre Kunstgeschichtliche Bedeutung', *Erinnerungsblatt zur Einweihung der wiederhergestellten Kirche St Thomas auf dem Neumarkt zu Merseburg*, 17 August 1913, pp. 2–6.

<sup>118</sup> E. Schubert and P. Ramm, *Die deutschen Inschriften, II Band, Berliner Reihe, 4 Band, Die Inschriften der Stadt Merseburg*, 1968. They also give dimensions for the Merseburg Cathedral font: Height 1.27m, Diameter. 1.31m, each side 51cm long. The width/diameter seems an error.

<sup>119</sup> The dimensions are: height. 61cm, diameter 1.08m, height of base 42cm.

a figure holding a book in his left hand and a crosier in his right. He is wearing mass vestments, the pallium clearly visible, and the mitre is shaped like a beehive, suggesting that he was also Pope, though local tradition says that the figure is St Kilian, archbishop and patron of the church. Flanking the seated figure stand two bishops, books in the left hand, crosiers in the right; they too are fully vested for mass. The second figure to the archbishop's left is St Dionysius, his bowed severed head, still wearing the mitre, beside his upright headless body and the crosier standing upright beside him, though not held in any way. On the opposite side to the archbishop is the nimbed Agnus Dei, standing on the holy hill from which springs water. The last two panels contain a castle or section of fortified wall, within which stands a knight brandishing a sword, and a Romanesque church with tower, nave and apse. The tower is very like that of the Brenken church itself, the surviving part of the original church on this site. The font probably dates from around 1170.

### **@e Gernrode**

The font at Gernrode [197] is an octagonal tub with basin of the same shape. It is of grey sandstone and stands on a plinth which is chamfered to meet the bottom of the bowl. This sloping portion is decorated with finely carved trefoils alternately point upwards and inverted, within a ziz-zag beaded band. Otte says that the font originated from Alsleben and dates from 1150.<sup>120</sup> Each of the eight sides is framed with a round-headed arch without capitals and the columns all have stepped bases, except for those flanking the Nativity and the Ascension, where the feet of the Virgin's bed and the two apostles leave no room. The adult Christ appears twice, on both occasions flanked in the neighbouring panels by similar figures.

Christ as Judge of the world is enthroned upon a rainbow in a mandorla and blesses with His right hand, holding an open book with His left. The apex of the mandorla forces the framing arch into a point. In the two adjacent panels two nimbed angels, *en face*, bless with the right hand and hold an open book in the left. The long robes, which fall to just above the turned-out feet, seem to include an alb. The angels are identical except for one being bearded, the other clean-shaven. In the Crucifixion Christ, wearing a *collobium*, stands on the *suspendeum*, feet apart, arms horizontal, head up and facing out. He is not nailed and could

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<sup>120</sup> H. Otte 'Bericht über einen Taufstein aus Alsleben an der Saale', *Neue Mitteilungen aus dem Gebiet historischer-antiquarischer Forschung*, VIII, 1846, pp. 125–38. Otte gives the old dimensions which equate roughly to height 58cm, width 75cm, depth 50cm.

step down from His death if He chose. He wears no crown, even of thorns, and is unnimbed but seems to be alive and triumphant and not a 'Man of Sorrows'. The cross has enlarged ends and the junction of the two arms is stepped. In place of the normal pairings of figures flanking the Crucified Christ, the sorrowing Virgin and St John, Stephaton and Longinus, Ecclesia and Synagoge, the two adjacent panels contain nimbed male figures in clerical robes, hands to their heads in grief. Otte states that in the bay to the right of the Crucified Christ is Mary, sorrowing and John the Evangelist is on the left, holding his chalice in the left hand, something rare in Crucifixion scenes. He may be correct about John, though it is not easy to be certain about the chalice, but the other figure is definitely male.

The remaining two sides are juxtaposed and depict the beginning and end of Christ's time on earth. At the foot of the Nativity scene the Blessed Virgin Mary is portrayed in bed, her head to the right, her hands outside the covers; above is the Christ-child in the crib, head also to the right and at the top are the ox and ass. Joseph is not present. The Ascension takes place in a second mandorla, this time in double outline and with the top bowed down by a curved projection, perhaps a cloud, from beneath the framing arch. Christ, with cruciferous nimbus, holds a small cross in His left hand, looks up to the right and gestures towards Heaven. The parted position of the feet placed on the bottom of the mandorla and the fluttering of His robes suggest movement. In the spaces either side of Christ's feet are the nimbed busts of two apostles who look up at their levitating Master.

### **@e Altstadt**

Altstadt, in Bavaria, has a font of very high quality now on a modern plinth. It is contemporary with the church, that is of the mid-twelfth century. The font is of a fine sandstone and is decorated with scenes directly related to the symbolism of baptism. At the bottom of the bowl the font is round and adopts its quatrefoil shape at about one third of the height. On each of the four rounded lobes is a scene contained within a semicircle of which the diameter is the upper rim. Each pair of semicircles is crossed with a circle, so that there is space at the bottom of each full circle for the figure of one of the symbols of the Evangelists. Below the centre of each half-circle is the mask of a lion with wavy lines emerging from its mouth on both sides, horizontally. These lines have the appearance of water and it is possible that the masks might be intended to symbolise the Rivers of Paradise, recalling the lion-mask outflows for Classical baths and baptisteries. The bottom of the bowl consists of a low vertical band, like a cuff, from which the swelling of the bowl above emerges like a hand. This cuff is decorated with a meander of vine tendril, each shoot terminating in a fleur-de-lis. A similar decorative band encircles the top of the bowl between two plain narrow bands but, unlike the bottom, its decoration differs above each lobe, with plaitwork, interlacing and foliate ornament.

In the first panel St Michael (patron saint of the church), wearing a chain-mail tunic and armed with short spear, sword at his belt and kite-shaped shield, overcomes the dragon;

Michael is winged and nimbed. The dragon lies on its back at the bottom of the panel and Michael's right foot is on it in the victory pose. The monster's tail, complete with double knot, frames the archangel on the right and a small devil escapes from the dragon's mouth top left. In the second panel Christ and His mother enthroned are shown with the Virgin seated on a rainbow, like the *Majestas Domini*, her feet bottom centre of the panel. Both are nimbed. In the top corners are the heads and shoulders of two nimbed angels. They fly down and seem to hand over the two crosses made of lilies which Christ and His mother hold in their left and right hands respectively.<sup>121</sup> The Virgin places her left hand around Christ who sits on her left knee. The Baptism of Christ takes up both the remaining panels. Christ is unusually shown standing in front of the waters of the Jordan, naked, hands *orantes*. At His shoulder level two angels seem to clothe Him in vestments. In the panel to the right stands the figure of the Baptist, wearing his cloak of camel hair, turning towards Christ, to whom he points with his right hand. In his left he holds a ring containing the *Agnus Dei*, pointing to Christ, the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world. At the top left, above the *Agnus Dei*, a bird representing the dove of the holy Spirit faces out of the scene towards Christ in the next panel. Top right is another bird, with broken wing, which seems to hold a cloth suspended from its beak; behind it is a small doorway with closed door. The guidebook suggests its broken wing makes it a symbol of the unconverted soul, weighed down with original sin, the closed door of Heaven behind.

### **@e Rohr**

Rohr is a two-piece font with a support not quite large enough for the barrel-shaped bowl. The base consists of a round plinth, concave section, thick cable moulding and short plain section. The lower part of the bowl has short, thick fluting below the decoration of the face and below the rim is a broad plain band bearing an inscription in Latin. Between the two and framed by two narrow cable-mouldings of opposite twist, is the main band of geometric decoration of an interlocking ring-pattern. Large rings to the full height of the band butt against each other, while semicircles of the same radius, with the cable-mouldings as their diameters, spring from the top and bottom of the large rings, making contact where the large rings touch. Around this meeting point as a centre smaller rings are described, with diameters a little over half that of the larger rings. This design creates within each small ring a cross *paty*, in each large ring a cross of curved diamond shape and across each pair of adjacent large rings a four-lobed cross. The pattern is simple in construction but with an elegant complexity of effect, in contrast with the somewhat top-heavy silhouette of the whole.

### **@e Vornbach**

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<sup>121</sup> These sceptre lilies are said in the guide book to the church to represent the Cross and the Tree of Life.

The font from the former Benedictine abbey of Vornbach is all elegance in shape, proportions and decoration. The bowl is an almost perfect hemisphere, flattened at the bottom where it transmutes into a thick roll-moulding which rests on the support. The overall shape is like a heavy goblet, with a bowl somewhat taller than the support. The base consists of a square plinth, plain roll-moulding, concave section and a smaller moulding at the top. Leaf-spurs ornament each corner of the plinth. The large moulding at the bottom of the bowl is decorated with a continuous loop motif with the appearance of a slightly distorted figure-of-eight. The only other ornament, set between a pair of narrow plain bands at the top of the bowl, consists of a broad series of motifs constructed of pairs of letters 'S', back to back. Where they meet at top and bottom, they open out into a five-leaf fleur-de-lis and at the points where the stems of each pair of 'S' shapes touch, they are strapped together with short horizontal bands. Like Rohr, the decoration displays a high degree of skill, not just in the execution but also in the setting-out.

#### **@e Hannover – Landesgalerie**

In the Landesgalerie, Hannover, are two bowls from pedestal fonts, both with decoration unusual in Germany. There are no known parallels in the country for the bowl of one metre diameter from a single-support font which was previously in Kloster Marienstein. Pudelko sees not only the form but the ornament too as linked with England.<sup>122</sup> Around the upper rim is a band of ornament which consists of beaded arcs interspersed with radiating foliage and on the body of the bowl is a confusion of beaded stems, inhabited by monsters which threaten naked men. The confused leaf decoration, sprouting from beaded tendrils, is reminiscent of Harpole. The sides are straight, rounded to the bottom, and around the lower part are the remains of four equally spaced protrusions which are all that remain of location points for colonnettes. They are too low to have been salient heads, as has been proposed. Also in the Landesgalerie is the bowl of a large hemispherical single-support font, c. 1200, originally in Burgdorf church.<sup>123</sup> The surface is covered with Biblical scenes, mainly from the Old Testament. At the bottom of the bowl, above two slender roll-mouldings, is a band of interlaced tendrils and around the rim are the remains of

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<sup>122</sup> G. Pudelko, p. 110 and pl. XII/4. F. Bond, *Fonts and Font Covers*, 2nd edn, 1985, p. 223.

Pudelko sees the decoration at Marienstein as of English inspiration, but Iford itself is plain.

<sup>123</sup> Its diameter is 1.1m and it is 61cm high.

inscriptions which refer to the scenes depicted around the bowl. The scenes are correctly ordered, beginning with the creations first of Adam then of Eve, the latter rare in including a watching angel. Next comes either the introduction to Paradise or God's warning to Adam. The Fall is succeeded by the Expulsion and then Eve is shown with an enormous spindle and Adam axing a tree, two branches already depicted as stumps; St Michael does not appear. The final scene is the Baptism of Christ which follows the normal conventions. John stands on the left wearing a cloak with decorated edge, not his usual garment of camel hair. An angel holding Christ's tunic waits on the right. In the centre stands the Saviour, above whose head the dove of the Holy Spirit descends. Christ is shown standing naked in front of a low pile of water as on the Altenstadt font; fish swim around His feet.<sup>124</sup>

### **@e Freudenstadt**

This is one of a very few fonts, anywhere, with a cup-shaped bowl set on a low base with figure supporters. The nearest parallel to the Freudenstadt font [198] is at Castle Frome and both happen to be made of a pinkish sandstone. It came from another church in the neighbourhood, from Alpirsbach, like the contemporary painted wooden lectern now also at Freudenstadt. A compact plinth with aggressive lions and human figures support the bowl which is characterised by massive cable mouldings at top and bottom. The whole surface is covered with crude carvings which would be difficult to explain in iconographic terms were it not for the faint incised inscription above the stag swallowing a snake: 'EVOMIT INFUSUM HOMO CERVUS AB ANGUE VENUM' (Like the stag, man spits out the serpent's poison). The iconography of the snake-swallowing stag is linked with the continuing struggle between good and evil, a message conveyed by all the other scenes depicted on the bowl and on the base.<sup>125</sup> Spaced equally around the stubby support are three pairs of lions and a human figure. In each pair of lions one grasps in its foreclaws the rump of the next which is placed at right-angles. Two adjacent pairs face left, the third looks to the right. The man sits on the floor, feet and hands pressed against the base and

<sup>124</sup> G. Pudelko, p. 110, and pl. XVII. Both bowls are pictured.

<sup>125</sup> The iconography of the stag swallowing a snake is explored in detail by H.-C. Puech, 'Le cerf et le serpent: note sur le symbolique de la mosaïque découverte au baptistère de l'Henchir Messaouda, *Cahiers archéologiques*, IV, 1949, pp. 17–60.

looks over his shoulder, his head turned through 180°. Close examination from the side shows the head on the end of a separate neck emerging from the base and not attached to his shoulders at all. On the bowl are several distinct scenes. Two winged dragons with their necks interlaced look over their shoulders in the manner of the fonts at Lichtervelde [111] and Nouvion-sur-Meuse [91]. A bearded man with long plaits holds the neck and the tail of the right-hand dragon in his hands. Next comes the antlered stag swallowing the serpent, then a pair of confronted beasts which appear to be a lion and a rhinoceros (unicorn). Above the tail of the left-hand dragon is a lion or dog swallowing a second serpent tail-first and directly in front of the animal's mouth is a fleur-de-lis with the stem terminating in a ring.

### **@e Halberstadt Cathedral**

The font of Halberstadt Cathedral, *c.* 1195 [199], is another large shallow cup on supports. It is absolutely plain and impresses with its size and with the purity of its lines. The bowl is almost a hemisphere with an extension at the bottom where it returns in a double curve to the junction with the top of the base. This is circular, with a tall vertical plinth and describes a concave line to meet the bottom of the bowl. The junction between the two is defined by a pair of slender roll-mouldings between which is another, much thicker and of greater diameter. The total height is in excess of 1.2m and requires a platform for the officiating priest almost level with the top of the plinth. To set off the whole ensemble, four lions *couchant* radiate from the base at equal intervals. They have only the rearmost part of their bodies engaged with the plinth and are sculpted in considerable detail, with curling manes, nostrils, eyes and ears. Two look directly out from the font, tongues visible in their open mouths. The others, with closed mouths, look to right and left. Made of a hard limestone with a marbled finish, it is a font worthy of a major cathedral.

