

BAU- UND KUNST-DENKMÄLER THÜRINGENS.



Im Auftrage der Regierungen

von

Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach, Sachsen-Meiningen und Hildburghausen,
Sachsen-Altenburg, Sachsen-Coburg und Gotha,
Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt,
Reuss älterer Linie und Reuss jüngerer Linie

bearbeitet von

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und

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Conservator der Kunstdenkmäler Thüringens.



HERZOGTHUM SACHSEN-MEININGEN.

I. Band. 1. Abtheilung.

Kreis Meiningen.

Amtsgerichtsbezirk Meiningen. (Die Stadt Meiningen und die Landorte.)

Von G. Voss.

Mit 74 Tafeln und 356 Abbildungen im Texte.



J E N A,

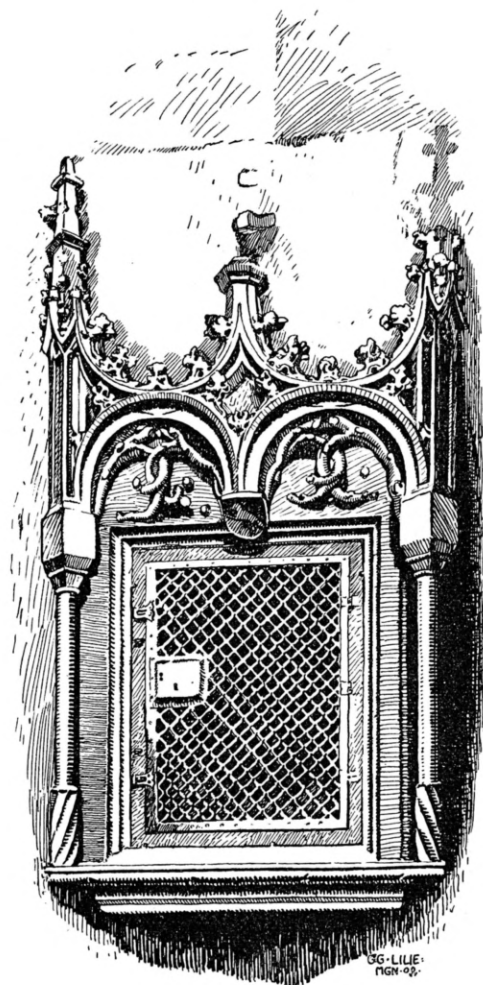
VERLAG VON GUSTAV FISCHER.

1909.

nitz, Weischwitz, Loquitz, Göllitz) legen Zeugniß dafür ab. Eine besondere Gruppe innerhalb dieser slavischen Ortsnamen bilden die mit *-wind* oder *Windisch-* zusammengesetzten Formen, wie *Poppenwind* oder *Windischenrosa*: aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach deuten sie auf eingesprengte Ansiedelungen von slavischen Kriegsgefangenen oder auch Sondergemeinden friedlicher Arbeiter und Gewerbetreibender, jedenfalls sind sie für die Frage nach der Ausdehnung des einst von Slaven (Sorben, Wenden) besetzten Gebietes auszuscheiden. Im einzelnen ist die Untersuchung noch nicht abgeschlossen; namentlich hat man erst in jüngster Zeit begonnen, die Dorfanlagen unserer Gegend systematisch nach dieser Richtung hin zu durchforschen. Specifisch slavische Funde, insbesondere Urnen oder Scherben mit Wellenornamenten, sind in unserer Gegend bisher nicht zu Tage gefördert worden.

Ungefähr gleichzeitig mit der schliesslich doch erfolgreich durchgeführten Abweisung der Slavengefahr heben die Bemühungen glaubenskühner Sendboten an, in unseren Gauen das Licht des Christenthums zu verbreiten. Anscheinend begegneten sie bei unseren Vorfahren keinem besonderen Widerstande: Gerade die althehrwürdigen Stätten, die Berggipfel, auf denen bisher die Opferfeuer zu Ehren Wotans und Donars flammten, die Hänge, an denen die von den Idisi und der Hulda behüteten Quellen sprudelten, die Haine, in deren Rauschen man die geheimnissvollen Mächte der Ueberirdischen verehrte, — diese Stätten erkoren die Glaubensboten zu Mittelpunkten der neuen Lehre. Die blutigen Opfersteine verschwanden; an ihrer Stelle erhoben sich schmucke Kapellen, anfangs wohl aus Holz gezimmert, die weit hinaus ins Land lugend mit ihrem Geläut die Beter aus der Umgegend einluden*).

Der eigentliche Apostel des Meininger Unterlandes scheint Winfrid-Bonifatius gewesen zu sein, der gleichzeitig als Sendling Roms wie als politischer Beamter der



Sakramentsnische
in der Kirche zu Bibra.

*) Das erste derartige schlichte Kirchlein soll der heilige Kilian, der von 668—689 im Würzburger Sprengel wirkte, auf dem *Kilianshauk* (mundartlich „Kühlichskoppe“, d. i. kaulichte, kugelige Kuppe!) bei Frauenbreitungen erbaut haben; an ihn soll die „mehr als tausendjährige“ Eiche erinnern, die noch heute diesen geschichtlich merkwürdigen Punkt beschattet. Die Kilianskapelle bildete angeblich den kirchlichen Mittelpunkt für die Bewohner des dortigen Werrathales und die zahlreichen Siedelungen am Bless.

Die Gemeinschaftsregierung währte bis 1660, in welchem Jahre eine endgültige Auseinandersetzung zwischen den Albertinern und den einzelnen ernestinischen Häusern stattfand. Von den auf die letzteren entfallenden $\frac{7}{12}$ empfing Friedrich Wilhelm II. von Sachsen-Altenburg (ält. Linie), der von 1639—1669 regierte, unter anderem Stadt und Amt Meiningen, Amt Massfeld und Kammergut Henneberg. Ihm folgte Friedrich Wilhelm III. (1669—1672). Bei seinem Tode fielen die altenburgischen Lande, somit auch Meiningen, an Herzog Ernst den Frommen (1640—1675). Dessen 7 Söhne theilten das wohl abgerundete, einen grossen Theil von Thüringen umspannende väterliche Reich in 7 Theile und legten damit den Grund zu der noch heute bestehenden politischen Zersplitterung Thüringens.

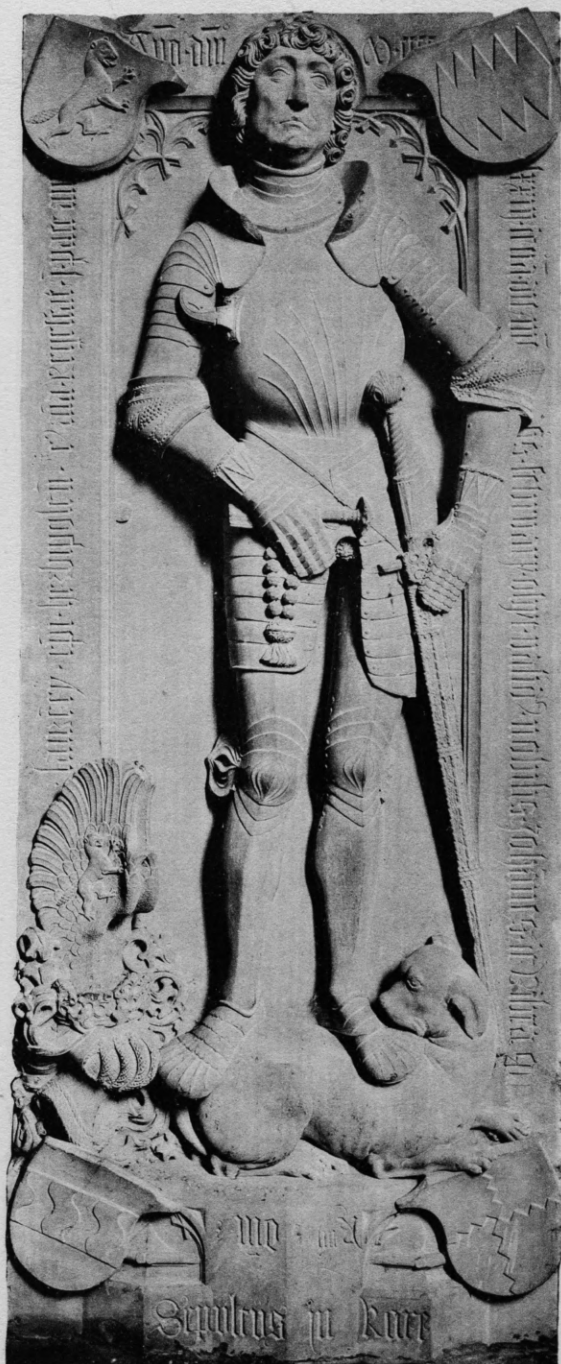


Die Burg zu Bibra. Aus der Vogelschau, von Osten.

Zeichnung von Georg Lillie.

Mehreren 1680 und 1681 geschlossenen Theilungsrecessen zufolge erhielt Bernhard, Ernsts des Frommen dritter Sohn, die Aemter und Städte *Meiningen*, *Wasungen* und *Salzungen*, die Aemter *Massfeld* und *Sand*, Amt und Schloss *Frauenbreitungen*, dazu die einzelnen Dörfer *Herpf*, *Stepfershausen*, *Utendorf* und $\frac{1}{2}$ *Mehlis**), sowie das Kammergut *Henneberg* als besonderes Herzogthum, zu dessen Hauptstadt er Meiningen erkor. Bernhard I., der von 1680 bis 1706 regiert, ist also der Begründer des noch jetzt blühenden sachsen-meiningischen Herrscherhauses, er ist auch der Erbauer des Residenzschlosses zu Meiningen. Von den 3 hinterbliebenen

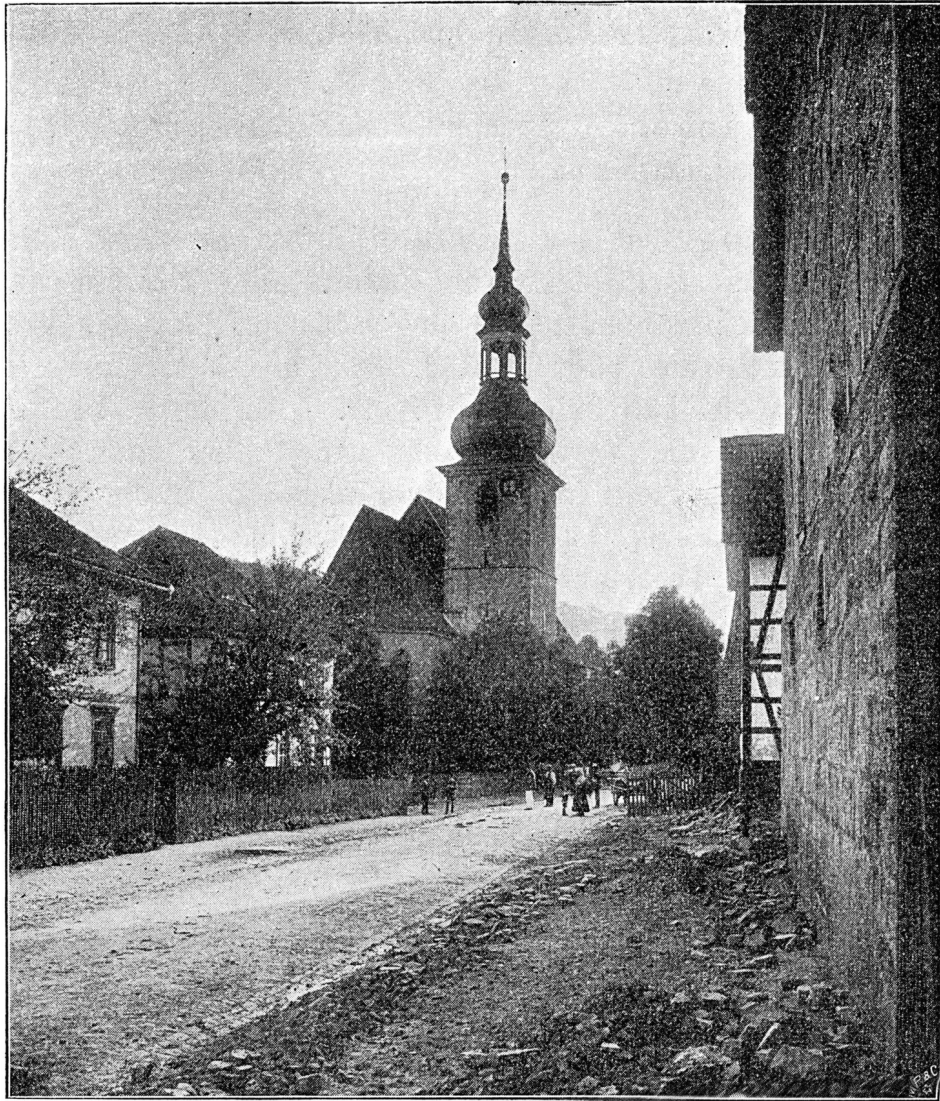
*) Die Hälfte von Mehli trat Herzog Bernhard 1687 wegen der „Uebermasse“ seiner Einkünfte an Gotha ab.



Aufnahme von Junghanß & Koritzer, Meiningen

Lichtdruck von Junghanß & Koritzer, Meiningen

Grabstein des Johannes von Bibra
In der Kirche zu Bibra
Aus der Werkstatt Tilman Riemenschneiders



Kirche zu Bibra.

Bibra History of the village. Bibra (Bibera, Biberah, Biberaha), 12 km south of Meiningen, is, as the name suggests *), undoubtedly an old settlement, even if it can be proven with certainty quite late in a document. There are places with the same name in Fulda

* J a c o b, Zur Vorgeschichte des Herzogthums Meiningen, Neue Beiträge zur Gesch. deutschen Alterthums, Lief. 14, S. 35.

documents in front of *), but without it being clear whether this refers to our Bibra or rather one of the places near Fulda, Langen-, Hof- and Niederbieber, which is why we have to be concerned that these mentions for to take advantage of our Bibra **), and if members of a noble family v. Bibra appear as witnesses several times as Hersfeld Ministerials, it remains equally questionable whether they have anything to do with our Bibra ***)

If, on the other hand, Bertholdus de Bibera is listed as a witness in a Würzburg document next to Poppo von Irmelshausen and Lichtenberg, Count von Henneberg, then we may assume, because of the proximity of the castles mentioned, that he was in our library. The same applies if members of the v. Biblical gender are named as witnesses in Vessra documents, e.g. B. 1189 occasionally a gift from the knight Berthold v. Swiggershusin (Schwickershausen, 1 hour from Bibra †) and in 1220 in a letter of purchase regarding goods to Ottelmannshausen and a deed of donation from Count Palatine Liutgard, regarding goods to Mühlfeld and Massfeld ††). But the fact that in 1207 the bishop Otto von Würzburg allowed his cleric *Detaitus parachianus in Bibera* to sell the income of this parish for three years in order to pay off debts speaks for the age of Bibra, and in 1223 *Wernherus vicarius in Biberah* in a Würzburg Document is named as a witness ††††) So the income of the parish and the parish need not be small. The churches in Neubrunn, Jüchsen and on the Queienberge (Queienfeld), probably also in Rentwertshausen and Wölfershausen, belonged to the same church until the introduction of the Reformation, and in addition the pastor still had collatur and patronage over the church in Nordheim and owned the church at Wolfmannshausen, which was later separated from it, while two vicars stood by his side in the exercise of his pastoral duties. From this it follows, however, that at the time of the founding of the extensive parish, at the end of the 8th or beginning of the 9th century, Bibra must have had a certain importance for the area.

In 1486 the place was from Emperor Friedrich III gifted with the market rights (§§) and the owners the customs and escort rights awarded at the same time with

*) Schannat, Tradit. fuld. S. 2, 154, 244, 245, 253, 254, 263. Buchen. vet. 330, 377. - Dronke, Tradit. et ant., S. 55, 111, 114, 120 u. a.

**) Wilhelm Frh. v. Bibra, Beiträge zur Familiengeschichte d. Reichsfreiherrn v. Bibra I, S. 4. Dagegen Dobenecker, Reg. dipl. I, 141, 788, 1037, II, 307, 315, 317.

***) Gesch. d. Frh. I, S. 5.

****) Gesch. d. Frh. I, S. 18.

†) l. c. S. 18. Dobenecker II, 839.

††) Gesch. d. Frh. I, s. 130. Dobenecker II, 1907.

†††) Gesch. d. Frh. I, S. 91. Dobenecker II, 1360.

††††) Gesch. d. Frh. I, S. 91.

§) Noch nach dem dreissigjährigen Kriege werden zwei neben der Kirche Stehende Hänger neben dem Pfarrhofe als obere und untere Vicarei bezeichnet. Vergl. auch Neue Beiträge zur Gesch. deutschen Alterthums von Brückner, Lief. 2, S. 153.

§§) Gesch. d. Frh. I, S. 261.

the right to surround the place with walls and ditches, which, however, was not done except for two gate buildings that were removed in the middle of the last century.

The peasants' war found lively participation here, as the sexton at the time, known from the re-Tauber movement, who died in Augsburg, a friend and like-minded colleague of Thomas Münzer, who stayed with him in the autumn of 1524 after he left Allstedt, still felt uncomfortable especially excited *).

The Thirty Years' War was fateful for Bibra, the misery of which she, like the whole region, had come to know in full since 1634. Even if details are not known, the fact that from 1634 to 1650 no church and parish accounts were drawn up and, as is expressly emphasized in 1651, during this time no inclines could be ascertained from the dissolution of all existing orders, and if in 1668 only 20 of 34 Güterhofstätten (homes?) were rebuilt, this suggests the devastation caused by the war. The seven-year wars and the Napoleonic wars later brought heavy loads again, so that it was only more recently that the population could rise to prosperity.

In 1805 the former imperial knighthood place, which was only subject to the prince-bishop's cent Mellrichstadt with regard to the four high reprimands, after efforts to this end had been asserted since 1803, became Bavarian. In December 1806 he was transferred to the Grand Duchy of Würzburg and came to Meiningen by the State Treaty of June 20, 1808. The Thurm flag still reminds of the imperial knighthood, the wind side of which shows "the beaver" (the Biblical heraldic animal), while the other is formed by half an imperial eagle.

All the changes of time that have passed over Bibra over time have survived three buildings: the castle, the lower castle and the church.

Nothing is known about the origins of the castle; In any case, however, because of the significant land ownership that has always been connected with it, it must have taken place at a time in which such areas could be taken possession of without damaging the rights of third parties, or in which such areas did not need to be taken into account, what indicates the time of the beginning battle between Franconia and Thuringia. From the beginning of its historical appearance up to the present day it has been in the possession of the family that bears its name and has been baronial since the end of the 18th century and often likes the enemy in front of its walls in the various war weather and feuds that raged through the area have seen. In 1525, in the week between Cantate and Rogate (May 14th and 21st), after a number of neighboring castles, it became the destructive frenzy of the rebellious peasants

*) Schriften d. Hist. Ver. von Schwaben, 1874, II, S. 216-253.



Phot. von Bräunlich & Tesch, Jena

Lichtdruck von Junghanß & Koritzer, Meiningen

Die Verkündigung
Holzschnitzerei von Tilman Riemenschneider
In der Kirche zu Bibra

had fallen victim, captured and burned out by them, probably through treason. The damage caused by this was estimated at 5965 fl., which was compensated to the owners from the contribution imposed on the peasants after the suppression of the uprising. As early as 1526 Hans von Bibra had a new building built inside the castle for his share of the sum mentioned ***). In 1547 the part to the left of the old (eastern) entrance was still undeveloped. In 1597, however, everything seems to have been built up again, because apart from the towers, the following are mentioned: the house that Barbara von Schrotzberg previously lived in; a Kemnate against the fountain, to the right of the entrance; the other Kemnate by Christian von Bibra blessed next to it; one originally from Lampr; a Kemnate on Entrance to the left hand and a house, which was to be built with the central tower to the Arnberg †). Occasionally a division made in 1605 between the still existing three i Owners were allowed to build a wall through the courtyard in order to separate it into a western and an eastern half ††). This is probably due to the construction of a second entrance on the west side under the central tower, to which a wooden bridge supported by two stone pillars in the castle moat (one of which has only recently been removed) led, which in 1840 led through the current stone one with simultaneous construction a new entrance in the courtyard was replaced.

But if at that time the castle was completely expanded again, all of this was to be put to an end in the Thirty Years' War. Even if it sometimes served as a welcome base for the army that had been surging through our area since 1634, it had remained intact until 1646. Then, according to one statement on August 14 †††), according to another, in the spring soon after March 10, §), imperial men who were being persecuted by a Hessian-Oassel detachment, threw themselves into the castle, which, with wreaths of bad luck thrown at, after a short time went up in flames, to which everything except for an insignificant house and the surrounding wall fell victim. Later, some buildings were re-listed on the west and north sides, which have been converted into a stately apartment since 1870; the house mentioned was also converted into an apartment in 1907 by converting and adding to it. The southern half of the castle courtyard has remained undeveloped.

The lower castle was built by Heinrich v. Bibra, who was also willing to build in other Bibra places, built in 1558 (year on the portal) §§). It seems to have survived the Thirty Years' War without any major damage. The letters *H. O. V. B. 1696* in the middle of the bay indicate an extension or at least a thorough renovation of the same

*) Bechstein, Deutsches Museum II, S. 73. 78.

**) Gesch. d. Frh. I, S. 89.

***) Gesch. d. Frh. I, S. 89.

†) I. c. II, S. 163 u. 164.

††) I. c. II, S. 164.

†††) Brückner, Landeskunde II, S. 180.

§) Gesch. d. Frh. II, S. 179.

§§) I. c. I, S. 89.

Hans Caspar v. Bibra († 1701). Under the bay window on the north side there is a stone walled in with the following inscription:

“On 110 Domini 1525 the Bibra Castle was completely burned out by the Beurian uprising and the strict, noble and honorable Hern Hausen von Bibra Ritter started to build again in 1526 and continued with God's blessing. This stone is erected in memory been anno domini 1592. ”

Next to it are the coats of arms of Bibra and Voit von Salzburg on the left, Schenkenwalt and Schenk von Schweinsberg on the right. Painted over it and already weathered: *Ren. 1768*. However, this stone does not belong here, but was bought in 1592 by Heinrich v. Bibra attached to the Kemnate built by his grandfather Hans in the castle in 1526 (see above) and, occasionally excavated from the rubble caused by the Thirty Years' War, leaned in the courtyard until he was given his current position in 1768. On the penultimate page of the church book, Vol. I, there is the following entry by the pastor Chr. Em. Freisslich (1748-89): “In the old castle next to the tenant of his apartment there is a stone leaning against the wall that teaches the following inscription: NB this stone was attached to the new lock on the wall and can now be seen there. ”

Construction of the church began in 1492 to replace the old ecclesia parochialis in Bibera apud Henneberk (1336 *), which has probably become dilapidated. A stone tablet attached to the outside of the southern choir wall reports on the laying of the foundation stone:

"1492 on the 16th day of the month of July 1, in God the Father, Georg bishop | zu nicopolitan of our gracious lord von Würzburg Sutfragan born with divine conviction | laid the first stone on these kirgen to the present value of the mature and Willigen hern Kilian von Bibra in spiritual rights doctor thumprobst and rehearsals for the | Neu Münster zu Würzburg spiritual vicarii, hern di | therich techant to st. burkhardt hern Lorentz zu Menz and Albrechte two thumhern zu Würzburg and Bamberg, karlen, Hans, Philips, Anthon , Hartung, | Valentin, Lorentzen, Petern, Fritzen and hausen den jungeren1 by Bibra and sunst vil frawen and junkfrawen | of the same sex and other authentic people. "

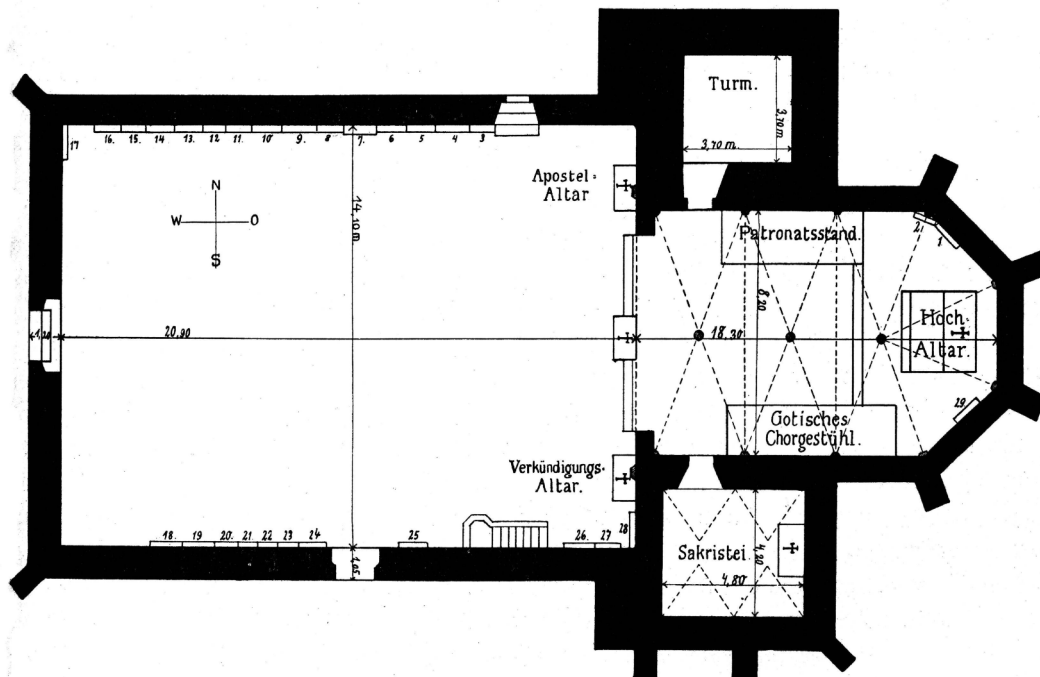
Kilian, Albrecht and Lorenz, who later became Bishop of Würzburg (1495 to 1519), made special contributions to the building. A part of the property of the imperial councilor Wilhelm v., Who died in Verona in 1490, is to be added to the construction costs. Bibra have been used. Kilian and Albrecht, as executors of their recently deceased caretaker Paulus, Domvicar and pastor of Geroldzhofen, also gave "a noticeable sum of his left-over belongings" to the building. Kilian died in 1494 and bequeathed the church a validity of 40 florins to Mütterstadt for a vicarie and perpetual mass and its printed matter,

*) Gesch. d. Frh. I, S. 91. Mon.-boica, Heft 40, S. 19. 21. 27.

splendid works of the art of printing, some of which have still been preserved, but have unfortunately not been spared.

Since the funds probably flowed more sparsely after his death, they were content to complete the originally planned three-aisled building (arches on the north and south side walls of the Triumphbogen) as a single-aisle with a wooden ceiling from Hacher. The second tower that may have been envisaged, which contains the sacristy (formerly a chapel) and an upper floor, was only built up to the height of the choir vault.

So even if the finished work did not quite correspond to the originally great complex, the donors also took care of the corresponding interior fittings. They used the Würzburg master Tilman for this



Grundriss der Kirche zu Bibra.
(Die Grabsteine an den Wänden sind mit den Nr. 1—29 bezeichnet.)

Riemenschneider, from whose workshop, in addition to various individual figures, the grouping of which can no longer be determined, the shrines of the main and the north and south side altars emerged. The church had five altars; besides the three named one in the middle under the triumphal arch and one in the sacristy. The shrine of the north side altar did not originally have this place, but was only erected in 1860, while until then it had been leaning under the stairs. Where it came from is uncertain. At its current location there was a 2.20 m high sacraments hanger, which was crowned by an equally high, airy structure, which was probably removed as annoying as early as 1768 when the northern side gallery was built. The coat of arms of Bishop Lorenz attached to one of the two side parts marks it as the foundation of the same.

The church owed its beautiful sound to the generosity of the above. The big bell, weighing 25 center, bears the inscription on the upper edge next to the coat of arms of the founder:

Castoreae praeful gentis Laurentius Annam me iuffit magno facra boare tono. 1513. The second, Anna Maria, cracked and in 1782 was cast in pancakes. A third, older bell of almost cylindrical shape with majusc inscription on the upper edge (Briickner is said to have tried to decipher it in vain), perhaps from the old church, was cast around the second bell in 1875 when the second bell was again necessary.

After Bishop Lorenz had his father Hans, who was buried in Rohr, erected a memorial stone in the new church by Riemenschneider, the same was used by the family as a grave for a long time, thanks to the circumstances, apart from 2 monuments not related to the family *), and 17 from the years 1506-1572 and 8 from the period 1672 to 1729. The memorial of those buried in the crypt in the cemetery since 1832 and buried in the newly established family burial place since 1904

Family members are consecrated 7 memorial stones.

Apart from the fact that the tower had to be crowned in 1731, the church survived the storms of the time well. Basically only insignificant changes have taken place inside the Church. In 1668 the only previously existing gallery on the west side was rebuilt for the installation of a small organ, on which there was also the estate, which was accessible from the outside through a staircase and which was relocated to the altar hall on this occasion. In 1749 a second gallery was built above it and the wooden ceiling was replaced by a "fine" one from plaster of paris. In 1768 the two galleries were installed on the north side. After the first organ had been replaced by a new one in 1698, the current one was built in 1854-55. Occasionally a "restoration" carried out in 1860, the wood carvings were unfortunately painted in a disfiguring manner with screaming colors.

In 1892, on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone, the flooring in the choir and part of the nave was renewed and a painted window with the pictures of the evangelists was inserted in the choir closure on the north and south sides, to which the central window with a crucifixion group was added in 1902 has been. The coats of arms of Bishop Lorenz and Cathedral Provost Albrecht v. Bibra "the old ones from 1503 and 1892 are only slightly restored, that of Dr. Kilian v. Bibra was completely renewed in 1892 **). Heinrich Hartmann.

The **Church** is one of the few Gothic houses of worship in the district whose architecture is of higher artistic importance. For a village church in this area, there is something surprising about the size and beauty of the Ghores. The original blueprint of the church is only in this one

*) Balthasar Merkel primus vicegerens h. ecclesiae, gest. 1506, und Kaspar Adam von Witzleben auf Rentwertshausen, gest. 1659.

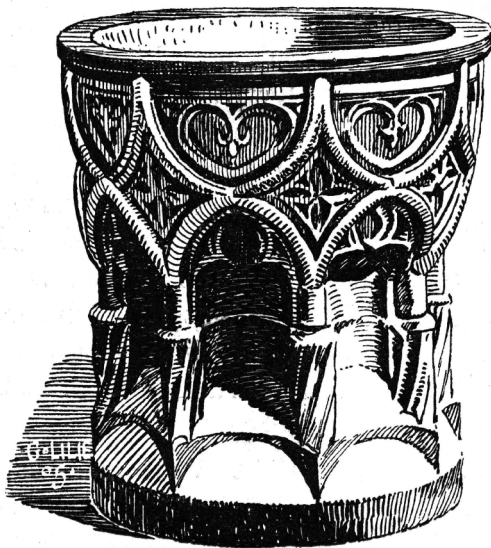
***) Nach J. O. Salver, Proben des Teutschen Reichsadels, Würzburg 1775, S. 275, Tafel XIV, Nr. 23.



Phot. u. Lichtdruck von Junghanß & Koritzer, Meiningen

Die Kirche in Bibra

Choir, carried out in the sacristy and the lower part of the tower. In contrast to many other churches in the area, no old walls from an earlier church or kernate were used in the construction. Hence the unified artistic character of this ear system, in the interior of which the beauty of form of the late Gothic style is expressed. An artistic installation of this size and beauty can only be understood from the fact that at that time, six years before the construction of the church began, the emperor granted the place market rights and that Messrs. Bibra were concerned with the old ancestral seat of their family with very special devotion. However, part of the originally planned system was given up during the construction period. The nave seems to have originally been planned with three aisles. Even an apparently planned arching of the nave was not implemented. Construction started in 1492. Chorus and Sacristy seem to be finished in a few years. Then - probably - since 1494 there was a lack of money and the nave was completed much more simply. In 1503 the construction seems to have been essentially completed.



Taufstein in der Kirche zu Bibra.



Erzengel Michael mit dem Drachen.
In der Kirche zu Bibra.
Werkstatt Riemenschneiders.

The choir has the stately span of 8.20 m in width and 12.30 m in length. The eastern end is constructed from the octagon. The ceiling of the choir consists of three cross vaults, the easternmost of which is closed off from the outside by three vaulted caps. The ribs of these vaults rest on ten consoles on which individual half-figures of saints, from the workshop of the sculptor Tilman Riemenschneider, are depicted in strong relief. One of these half figures, St. Michael with the dragon, is shown on this page. Five high, ogival windows with late Gothic tracery are located on the east side of the choir. The sideshift of the vault is largely absorbed by the strong walls of the tower and the sacristy. There are four buttresses only at the four corners of the east side of the choir. The same

have a thickness of 0.75 m. The walls of the choir, as far as they protrude freely on the east side, are 0.80 m thick. Two steps lead up to the front part of the choir, and one step up to the rear part of the choir. The perspective effect of this choir with its remarkable depth is of great beauty.

The nave, on the other hand, is very simple. It is a rectangular hall with a flat wooden ceiling, connected to the choir by a pointed triumphal arch of 6.55 m. The plaster cladding of the ceiling dates from 1749. Before that there was a simple wooden ceiling. Two-story galleries rise on the north and west sides of the church. They rest on square wooden pillars. The railings consist of square carved balustrades in the style of the Baroque period.

Originally the church only had one gallery, the lower one on the west side. This was where the rulership was located. This was accessible from the outside through a staircase, which was located on the west facade of the church north of the portal. In 1668 the old gallery was torn away for the installation of an organ and a new one was built. The ruling class was transferred to the choir, to the north of the same, where it still stands. A major repair of the gallery took place in 1698. In 1730, when the "Pohr churches" were changed and rebuilt, ie the galleries, carpenters, joiners and stonemasons, 25 gulden 14 Batzen were paid the parish resolviret to increase them with two others, these are probably the two lofts lying one above the other on the north side of the nave, which are shown on our collotype after p. 296.

The interior of the church is whitewashed in 1860. The church records tell of an earlier painting and whitewashing of the church in 1772. In 1817 the church was redesigned (Hartmann, Der Marktflecken Bibra, p. 167).

The fact that side aisles were originally planned inside the nave seems to emerge from the two vaults of two broad belt arches, which are located near the triumphal arch of the choir wall. (The beginning of the vault is shown on the collotype according to p. 296. Now the portrait of Luther painted in oil is hung above this beginning of the vault.) The belt arches planned here have certainly never been implemented. If the plan was originally to be made to vault the nave, this intention must have been given up early on, even before the walls of the nave were built. Otherwise the north and south walls, which are only 1.05 m thick, had to have buttresses. No trace of such can be seen on either long side. Only at the two corners of the west facade are two buttresses, which may well be related to an originally planned vault construction.

Another trace, which points to larger buildings originally planned for the nave, can be found on the outside of the tower: on the west side of the tower there is a sloping cornice at about the height of the roof.

The same apparently indicates that at least at this point the church roof should descend in a much greater width. Perhaps a porch was planned here on the north side of the nave. It cannot be assumed that the entire nave was intended to be much wider on both sides. Also, the side reeds intended in the original design would certainly not have been intended outside the nave, but inside it.

The Exterior.

The exterior of the church is very simple and does not suggest anything of the interior richness of the artistic furnishings. Probably the outside, when the means failed, was accomplished much more simply than was originally planned. This is particularly noticeable with the tower. (Illustration on p. 290.) The walls of the same are only made of stone up to about 2 m above the height of the roof ridge of the nave. We don't know what the original Thurmspitze looked like. The current one was made in 1731 when the old Thurmspitze was damaged. An octagonal, slated, onion-shaped wooden dome is placed on the 23 m high stone walls of the tower. This is followed by an octagonal lantern. Then again an octagonal onion-shaped tail stick, which is crowned by a slim octagonal helmet tip with a spherical button and the weather vane. On the windward side of the weather vane is the beaver of the Bibra coat of arms, on the other side the imperial eagle, the symbol of the former imperial immediacy. The windows on the lower floors of the tower are narrow slits of light. Wide windows with late Gothic stone tracery are only in the walls of the top floor, they are the sound holes of the bell chamber. They are 2 1/2 m high and have late Gothic stone tracery. An unfinished piece of stone cornice is on the east wall of the tower, about a meter above the main cornice of the choir. At this point, a different, probably richer architecture was originally intended. This point can be clearly seen on the exterior of the church on p. 290.

The symmetrical shape of the floor plan indicated that a second tower was originally built on the south side of the church, above the sacristy. But probably wrongly. For the walls of the sacristy are weaker than the walls of the tower. They are 1.00 m thick on the south and east sides, while the walls of the tower are 1 1/2 m thick in the corresponding places. This lower wall thickness would not be motivated if a tower of the same height as on the north side had been planned above the sacristy. The sacristy has two floors. Each floor is covered with a barrel vault in which four cross caps are cut. The windows are arched. A late Gothic cloverleaf arch is inserted inside the round arch. The original stone altar is still in the sacristy.

The cellar below the sacristy was formerly used as an ossuary. Above the entrance of the door there was a superstructure, which was removed in 1882.


PAGE 300

The portal on the south side is ogival; the frame is formed by three round bars that cross at the top. The round bars have a helically structured base.

On the south side of the choir is the excellently chiselled coat of arms of the family v. Bibra. The gothic tendrils of the helmet ceiling, chiseled in openwork, suggest the period around 1500. The stonemason is probably the same one who chiseled the beautiful coat of arms stone in Grimmenthal.

There is also a stone with an inscription on the south side of the Choir. The same see above on p. 294.

There is an ogival [*ogival arch is a pointed, "Gothic" arch, drawn with compasses as outlined above, or with arcs of an ellipse as described. A very narrow, steeply pointed ogive arch is sometimes called a "lancet arch"*] portal on the western front. The same is framed by round bars that cross each other. Above it is a very large, wide window. It is vaulted with a flat arch, which is filled with late Gothic tracery made of fish-bubble patterns. Next to the west portal there are two long circular windows, which probably date from the 17th or 18th century. The vault is made of bricks that have not been used in other parts of the church. Up until the 17th century there was a staircase on this side which led up to the estate. This porch was probably made of wood, as can still be seen in many churches in the area.

On the north front of the church there is a small gothic portal, which is crowned in this way:  The frame is made of round bars that cross at the corners.

The Contents of the Interior.

The following parts of the interior furnishings date from the Gothic construction period around 1500 to around 1520; the church:

1) The sacrament niche in the choir, on the north wall. (Illustration on p. 5.) The structure is carried out in the latest forms of the Gothic style. The angular pegs on both sides look very pleasing. The original ornament has broken off in the middle. Attention; deserves the naturalistic, winding branches within the two arches above the sacrament niche. At the point where the two arches meet, there is a small coat of arms with the beaver.

2) The choir stalls with nine folding seats and high armrests on the south side of the Choir. (See the collotype after p. 296.) These stalls are crowned by a roof sloping diagonally towards the wall, which is supported by side cheeks with octagonal carved Gothic pillars.

3) The five altars (four altars in the church, one in the sacristy). On the high altar and on the two side altars next to the triumphal arch, the carved and painted altar shrines from around 1500-1520 described below on pp. 313-4318 are set up. The altar below the triumphal arch is used as a gap chair.

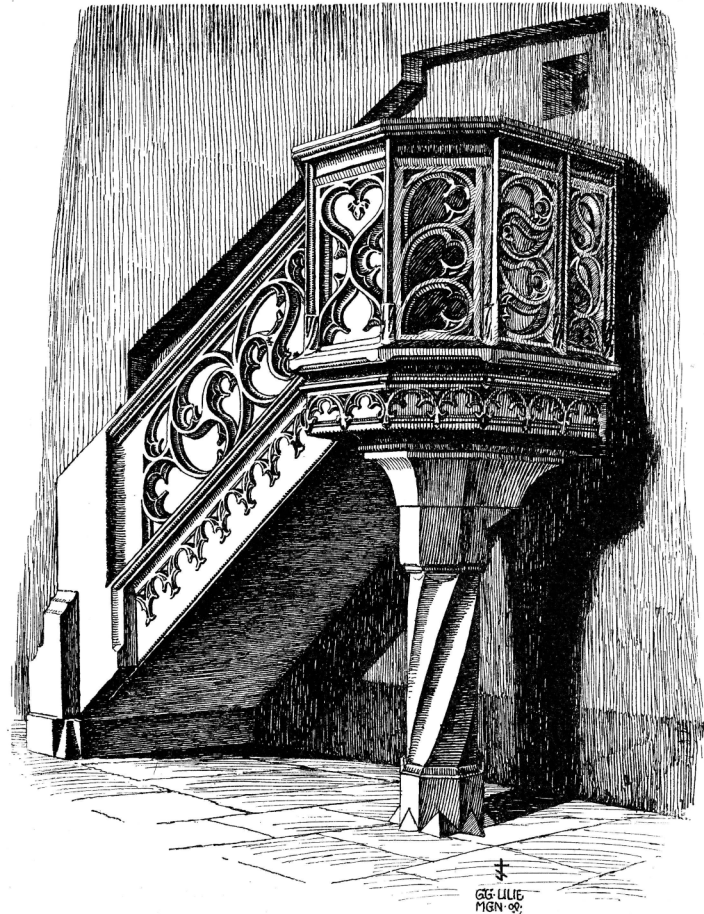
4) The monument of Johannes v. Bibra, died 1473, built around 1501. From the workshop of Tilman Riemenschneider. In the choir of the church.

Marked with no. 1 in the floor plan on p. 295. (Collotype after p. 48. For more details see below in the section: "Monuments of the Church")

5) The coat of arms of Bishop Lorenz von Bibra, erected in 1514. In the choir of the church. Marked with no. 2 in the floor plan on p. 295. (See below p. 308 No. 2.)

6) The ruins of a rich late Gothic tabernacle. The fragments of it lie in the nave on the west wall. Heinrich Hartmann reports about it:

“Up to the year 1860 there was a 2.20 m high sacrament house on the north side altar, the five main parts of which are still present. The 43 cm high, 68 cm deep and 70 cm wide base stone was set 36 cm deep into the wall and protruded 32 cm from it. It shows a 20 cm high, 1/3 stone carved column, which carries a capitell, which consists of a 2 ½ cm thick round bar crossed at the corners, an 8 ½ cm wide, upwardly protruding groove and the 6 cm strong plate decorated with a ledge and round bar. The column and background are decorated with three passes. The continuation of the columns protrudes from the capitell only slightly more than the foot.



Kanzel aus Stein in der Kirche zu Bibra.

On this pedestal stood the two 80 cm high and 46 cm deep side pieces, which on the stone pulpit in the church at Bibra. the two smooth outer sides show the coat of arms of Bishop Lorenz held by an angel, and the handkerchief held by an angel with the image of the Savior. The smooth sides merge into a 3/4, elaborated slender column through the mediation of two narrow, approx. 5 cm obliquely projecting coves and ledges, to which two, again 8 cm projecting diagonally inwards, through a 1 1/2 cm wide, smooth bar adjoin separate 8 and 7 cm wide covings, in the first of which there is a 32 cm high angel figure standing on a pedestal and crowned by a pinnacle-like canopy. The whole wtn-de crowned by an 80 by the high, 85 cm wide and 55 cm protruding from the wall, with five

PAGE 302

Gothic canopies adorned with finials, which protruded forward about 25 cm above the lower parts.

On top of it there was undoubtedly an airy structure at least as high, consisting of three parts assembled at right angles and rising on three floors, tapering upwards, which was probably removed as an obstacle to the construction of the northern gallery as early as 1768. The stones on the first floor are completely missing. They were probably whole, basically 10 cm thick, slightly thinner at the top, which were worked into a pillar towards the front and tapered slightly towards the top.

The 72 cm high middle section of the second floor has still been preserved, which is still full up to 34 cm high, but from there to a 12 cm wide pillar to the front, to an 8 cm thick, twisted column base and 10 cm high column stump to the rear (probably the axis of the whole structure) is worked out. In front it showed a 38 cm high pillar crowned by a 32 cm high pillar.

On top of it sat the 80 cm high third floor, which also shows a pillar crowned with a pinnacle towards the front, which is about 55 cm high in total. At a height of 25 cm, still under the pinnacle, the roof of the 63 cm high tower crowning the whole is attached, which is decorated with crabs and closed with a finial. One part is complete, albeit in fragments, the second partially preserved, the third completely missing. "

7) In the windows of Ohores: the coats of arms of Lorenz and Albrecht v. Bibr a, both executed in 1503 (see p. 321). [The other stained glass are new.]

Pulpit and baptismal font, both made of sandstone in the Gothic style. The stiff, sober shapes indicate the way the Gothic style was treated in these areas in the 17th century and into the 18th century. The better artists of the time used to work in the forms of the Renaissance or the Baroque style. Such imitations of the Gothic style were, however, often ordered for churches in which older traditions of ecclesiastical art were gladly retained. But the Gothic style had become internally alien to the artists of that time, so that works of this type can usually be recognized as late imitations by the rigid type of ornamentation.

Pulpit made of stone (17th century). It stands on a helically wound column. The parapet and the railing of the stairs are decorated with late Gothic masonry made of fish bladders in strong relief. (Illustration on p. 301.) In the church records it is reported that in the years 1749 and 1751 the sum of 18 guilders was laid, which was to be used "for building the pulpit." Even in this later period the Gothic forms of the pulpit could have been executed.

The baptismal font has a shape similar to that of the pulpit. The round bars that surround the baptismal font grow out of eight helical short columns. The structure is shown in our illustration on p. 297. The baptismal font has stood in the middle of the church, near the triumphal arch, since 1860. Pastor Hartmann reports: "In the last century the baptismal font was replaced by a so-called baptismal angel, a rather crude work, and placed under the stairs, but during the renovation in 1860 it was brought back to its right."

PAGE 303

The seating for the community has side cheeks, which are carved in the simplest forms of the Rococo style. These stalls probably come from the middle of the 18th century.

The organ from 1854 is placed on the uppermost west gallery. Hartmann reports on the two earlier organs from 1663 and 1698 in his book on Bibra on p. 170.

Stone sculptures.

A. The console of the vault in the choir.

On each of the above-mentioned ten services of the vaults of the choir, a half-figure is carved in the sandstone, good work from Riemenschneider's workshop:

- 1) A bishop with an ax and a model of a church.
- 2) The Archangel Michael with a raised sword, on his chest the dragon depicted on a small scale (illustration on p. 297).
- 3) Saint Sebastian clothed, holding two arrows in his hand.
- 4) A Pope with a cross staff and a book.
- 5) God the Father.
- 6) Mary.
- 7) John the Evangelist with the chalice.
- 8) A bishop with a sword.
- 9) A young martyr with a palm branch and a closed book.
- 10) A young martyr with a palm branch and an open book.

B. Gravestones and monuments.

Monument to Hans v. Bibra, † 1473. From Tilman Riemenschneider's workshop (collotype after p. 48). The deceased is probably not shown until around 1500, around 28 years after his death. The knight stands on the back of a lioness *). Tilmann Riemenschneider has probably never seen him in his life, the relief is just an ideal character image. Riemenschneider probably made the sketch for it. The then very busy master probably assigned the execution in sandstone to an assistant in his workshop. The right hand holds the broken dagger and the rosary. The left hand rests on the parire bar of the sword, which is hung on a long leather strap around the waist. Of particular beauty in expression is the slightly tilted head, which extends into the upper frame of the stone. The head is uncovered. The short, curly hair appears less artistic in its hard, regular lines than the execution of the hair in Riemenschneider's own works. At the bottom of the knight's feet is his helmet. The beaver is depicted in its crest.

*) The head of the animal with the floppy ears, however, has great resemblance to the head of a dog. It has therefore been erroneously assumed that Hans v. Bibra is shown here as a hunter; the broken dagger is the hip horn, the tassel of which is the rosary. (Weber, Life and Works by Riemenschneider, p. 59. Received information from Pastor Hartmann.)

The inscription in the frame see on p. 308 under inscriptions and coat of arms no. Schaumberg in the Marienkapelle zu Würzburg. This tomb also comes from the Riemenschneider workshop. Both differ from the master's own work by a certain superfluity of execution. The beauty of the composition, however, points to the great master. Even from the implementation, much of the spirit of the Master still rings out to us. Height of the tombstone 2.39 m, width 0.98 m.

(Hans v. Bibra was bailiff of Mellrichstadt in 1456. He lived there for a long time and probably also frequently at Bibra. He was involved in several feuds, such as the dispute over the Henneberg pledges of Themar and Osterburg, the feud of Canon Heinrich von Henneberg with his nephew, as well as that of his cousin Bartholomäus against Duke Wilhelm von Weimar.) HH

Literature: Aug. Wilh. Doebner, The monument of the knight Johannes von Bibra in the church of Bibra, in: Neue Beitr. Business d. Alterth., 3. Lief., Meiningen 1867. Carl Streit, Tylman Riemenschneider, Berlin 1888. A. Weber, life and work of the sculptor Dill Riemenschneider, Würzburg and Weimar 1888, 2. Aufl.-Eduard Tönnies, life and works Riemenschneider schneiders, pp. 96-97.

The tombstone of Jörg v. Bibra. Jörg died in 1510. The history of the family v. Bibra gave no information. The knight is shown in plate armor. With the hanging right hand he holds the short lance; the raised left hand rests on the pommel of the sword and holds the rosary. The figure makes a slight turn with the upper body so that the left side steps back a little. Even more to the side, turned to the right, is the head, which appears in three-quarter profile. It is precisely this artistically perceived twist and the beautiful symmetry in the slim proportions of the figure justify the assumption that the whole thing was made from a sketch by Riemenschneider. Also in the tombstone of Hans v. In Bibra we see a similar turn of the body, which gives the self-conscious, thoughtful posture a beautiful inner life. But the rough execution of the facial features in Jörg v. Bibra suggests that only one of the master's assistants worked according to his design. Height of the tombstone 2.19 m, width 0.92 m. The stone is on the north wall of the nave, No. 11 of the floor plan. Inscription and coat of arms see below under No. 11.

The style from the first decades of the 16th century is shown in the double tomb of Lamprecht v. Bibra and his wife Margarethe, née Schwaigern, on the choir wall, to the right of the triumphal arch. (Illustration on p. 305, floor plan no.28). Here there are individual features that are still completely reminiscent of the conception of the 15th century. Above the Crucifix, at whose feet the couple kneels with hands clasped in prayer, the sky is indicated by the wavy line with which the fifteenth century represented the clouds. Just as primitive are the sun, the sickle of the moon and a star carved into the stone. Between the two parents, their children are shown on a smaller scale, three girls kneeling and one boy standing. The year of death of the knight is 1542. The year of death of his wife is not filled out. She has her husband survived.



Phot. von Bräunlich & Tesch, Jena

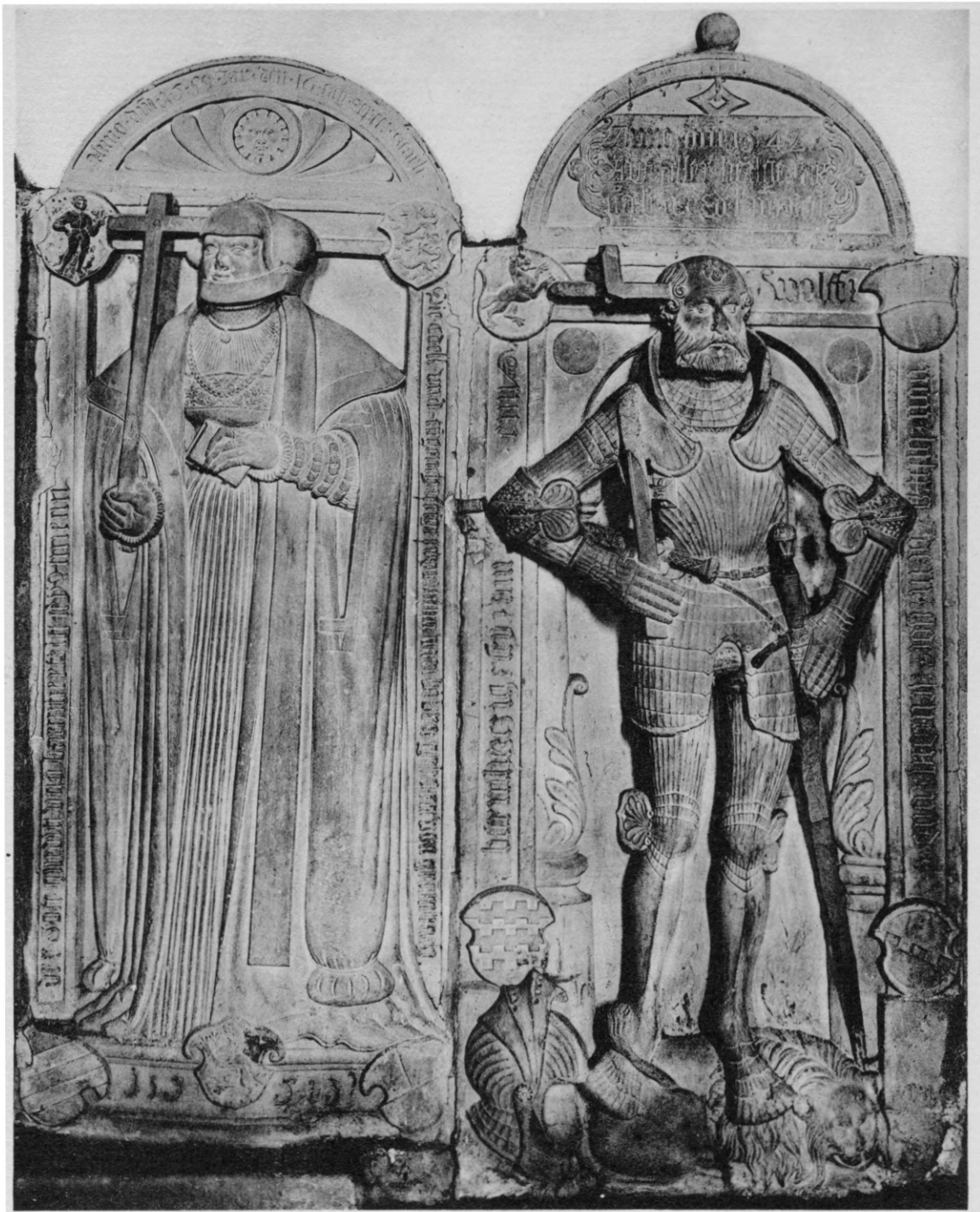
Lichtdruck von Junghaß & Koritzer, Meiningen

Michael und Hester von Bibra

Bertold von Bibra

Grabsteine von dem Meister J. H.

In der Kirche zu Bibra



Phot. von Bräunlich & Tesch, Jena

Lichtdruck von Junghaß & Koritzer, Meiningen

Anna von Bibra † 1559

Wolff von Bibra † 1542

Grabsteine von dem Meister J. H.

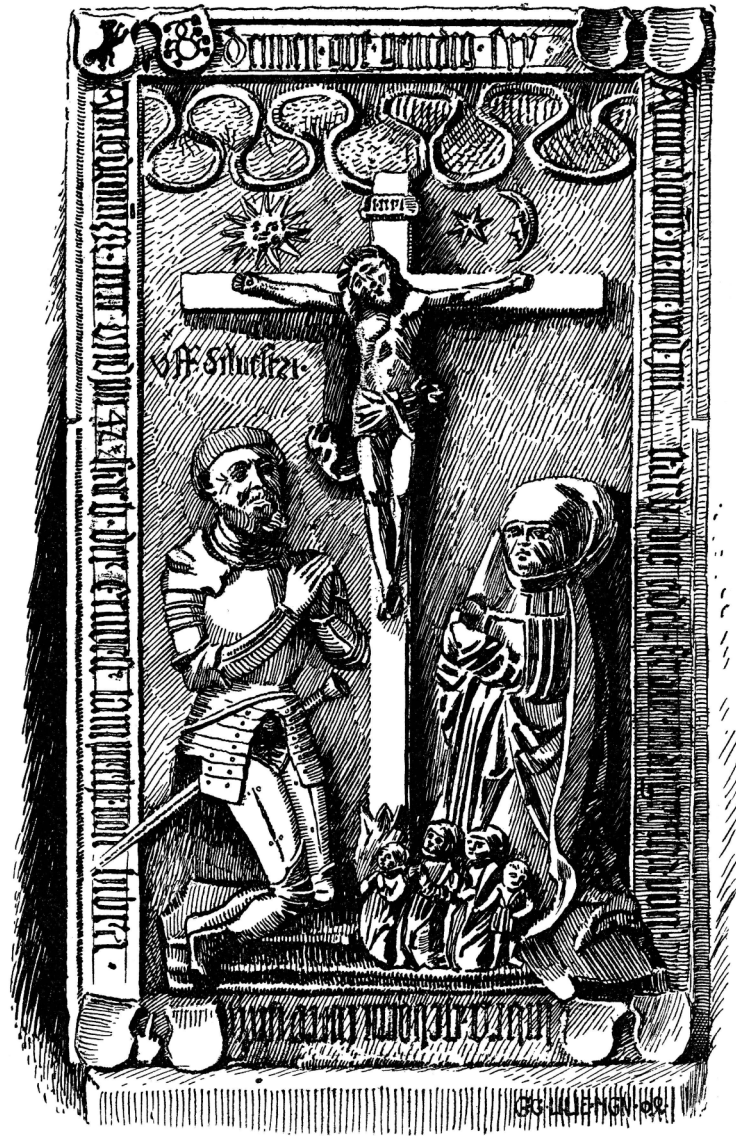
In der Kirche zu Bibra

With the time around 1542, however, the artistic character of the composition is not in harmony. "The tomb seems to have been executed several decades earlier. The relief occupies a special position among the grave nials of the church. The style of the by no means artistically high-ranking sculptor leaves cannot be found in any of the other tombs. Inscription and coat of arms see below under No. 28.

The Tombstones of Master I. H.

The main master, who has chiseled the grave stones of the church since the middle of the 16th century, is an unknown artist who usually uses the symbol attached.

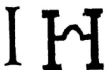
I have also been able to prove gravestones by the hand of the same master in the town church in Meiningen, in the churches in Nordheim im Grabfeld and in Ellingshausen and, with a high degree of probability, also in O e p f e r h outside. The sculptor was probably based in this area, perhaps in Meiningen. His portrait art shows a simple, sober sense of reality, but the posture of the body and the expression of the features usually have something technically biased; this is especially true of the clumsy figures of the men, stiff in their plate armor. and are depicted without a finer artistic feeling for the liveliness of the posture or the beauty of the lines. The gap separating the art of this time from the portrait reliefs from the workshop of Tilman Riemenschneider, created half a century earlier, becomes clear here.




Lamprecht und Margarethe v. Bibra.
Grabmal in der Kirche zu Bibra.

The earliest work among the tombs of the church, which the master marked with his monogram, is that of Bertold v. Bibra (collotype after p. 304, floor plan No. 3). It is marked with the year 1550, i.e. 13 years after the death of the deceased. The sculptor has therefore possibly not modeled the facial features from life, but a portrait seems to have been in front of him during his work, because it is precisely in this gravestone that he has given the head a certain personal character. To be sure, this is partly due to the costume of the hair and beard. The hair is in a tightly fitting net hood from which the hair only protrudes a little at the temples. The face is clean-shaven, only a narrow strip of whiskers has remained on the ear. In most of the remaining tombstones, the heads appear much more uniform. The men with the long beards have something serious about them. The women in their well-nourished curves are something phlegmatic. This is reinforced by the clumsy folds of the thick coats and the wide bonnets with the bandage that covers the chin.


The special style of the master is naturally most evident in the depiction of the heads. He loves to emphasize the wrinkles of old age with individual lines carved into the stone in a rather handcrafted manner. These schematically executed folds in the middle of the forehead and on the side of the eye can be found several times in his head. He is just as pedantic in the finely drawn lines with which he depicts the hair of the head and the beard. He chisels curly hair in regular volutes, which look almost like stylized ornaments, but his style can also be recognized when depicting straight hair by the fine lines set close to each other, with which he would like to chisel each hair individually into the stone. This also shows his bias in imitating older role models. The ornaments in the crowns and frames of the tombstones show the forms of the Renaissance, but in rough lines, without any particular artistic charm. From all these features it can be assumed that the master did not live in a place of higher art practice.

The letters of his monogram must be interpreted as I H. This is undoubtedly evident from one of his tombstones in the church in nearby Nordheim. It is the grave relief of Katharina v. Stein, a child who died 1 year and 20 weeks old. The master chiseled the letters:  on this tombstone. The style of execution shows that the relief is the work of the same artist. The child depicted here died in 1583. This is the latest date that I have found on the works marked by the master with his monogram. The tomb of Wolff v. Bibra was not made until several years after his death. Next to the artist's monogram are the numbers 155. The last number can no longer be recognized. Its activity has thus hitherto been demonstrated in the years from about 1550 to 1583. This would include an activity of about 33 years. It should be noted, however, that the tombstones were not always made in the year of death of the person depicted. Sometimes this happened later, but in other cases earlier, as in some cases


PAGE 307


Gravestones showing in Bibra. It should also be noted that the artist's monogram on some gravestones has the somewhat simpler form:  In this way he depicted his monogram in Bibra on two works: On the tombstone of Wolff v. Bibra, † 1542 (No. 5), and on that of Stephan v. Bibra, † 1572, the Hereditary Marshal of Würzburg (No. 8), which the master worked in the meantime as early as 1564. (In plan no.8.)


The master's monogram can be found on the following tombstones of the church --- as far as --- this is arranged according to the year of execution:

a) Berthold v. Bibra, † 1537, chiseled 1550. Collotype after p. 304. (Floor plan No. 3.)
Inscribed lower left: ¹⁵ ^{50.} Height 2.60 m. Width 0.97 m.


b) Wolff v. Bibra, executed after 1550 (floor plan no.5). Inscribed lower right: ¹⁵ ^{50.}
Height 2.52 m. Width 0.97 m.

c) Michel v. Bibra and Mrs. Hester v. Bibra, born by Grumbach. Double monument. Gemeisselt 1550. Represented with the aforementioned tomb on the same collotype after p. 304. Inscribed between the feet of Wilhelm: ¹⁵⁵⁶ height 2.78 m, width 1.22 m.

d) Anna v. Bibra. born v. Grumbach, † 1559, chiselled in 1553. With the tombstone of Wolff v. Bibra on the same collotype before p. 305 (floor plan no. 6). Marked below  . At the bottom the year 1553. Height 2.30 m. Width 0.91 m.

e) Wilhelm v. Bibra, hereditary submarschalk of the Abbey of Würzburg and Duchy of Franconia, † 1558. Chiselled 1553 (floor plan no.7). Inscribed lower right on the base of the pillar: ¹⁵⁵³ . Height 2.52 m. Width 1.05 m.

f) Susanne v. Seckendorff, III born v. Wichsenstein, † 1558. Gemeisselt 1559 (floor plan no. 27). Inscribed with the master's monogram between the numbers 15--59.

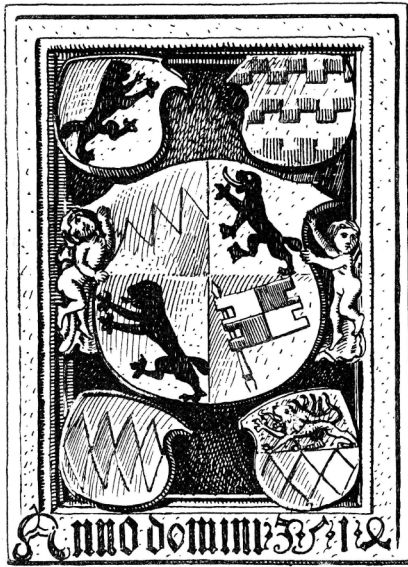
g) Steffen v. Bibra, hereditary marshal of the Würzburg monastery, † 1572. Chiselled in 1564 (floor plan no.8). Inscribed on the lower right, next to the left foot: ¹⁵ ^{64.} - Height 2.83 m, width 1.17 m.

Five tombstones point to a sculptor from the end of the 17th century. The artist usually has the letters *J.E.* carved in the stone. Once only the letter *E* and the year of the execution of the individual tombs. The artistic characteristics of his work are low. The earliest year on his gravestones in the church in Bibra shows the double monument, which depicts two nappy-changing children, Hans Ernst v. Bibra and Philipp Heinrich v. Bibra, represents. (Floor plan no. 18.) The year in which the tomb was made was not specified by the master in the monogram. He did this only once. At the tombstone of Martha, Sophia v. Bibra, nee Truchsess v. Pommersfelden. Here the master added the year 1695 to the letter of his name *J. E.* The stone is still in the sitter's lifetime, namely 34 years

PAGE 308

before her death, chiseled. (Floor plan No. 24.) By the master *J.E.* the following tombstones in the church are designated as handwritten works:

- a) The above-mentioned double grave of the two nappy-changing children Hans Ernst v. Bibra and Philipp Heinrich v. Bibra, † 1674, inscribed *J. E.* (floor plan no. 18. The inscriptions see below under no. 18.)
- b) Double grave of the two children Gustavus v. Bibra, born in 1688 and died seven days later, referred to as *J. E.* and that of Karl Ludwig v. Bibra, born 1688, and died at the age of 1 1/2 years in 1690. Inscribed *T*. (Floor plan No. 19. The inscriptions see below under No. 19.)
- c) Figure of a little girl. Sophia Johanna v. Bibra, † 1690. Inscribed *J. E.* (floor plan no. 22. The inscription see below under no. 22.)



Wappenstein des Lorenz v. Bibra.

- d) Gravestone of Sophia Augusta v Bibra, † 1680., without the figure of the deceased, only with the one below. on p. 3111, Nr. 231 printed grave inscription. The tombstone is marked *J. E.*

- e) Martha Sophia v. Bibra, T 1729. Designated *J. E.* 1695 (see also above). (Floor plan No. 24. The inscriptions and coats of arms see below under No. 24.)

- f) Hans Caspar v. Bibra of Höchheim, Under Marshall of Würzburg; † 1701 at the age of 73. Set up in the south-east corner of the choir. (Floor plan no. 29. For the inscriptions see no. 29.) The deceased is shown in full plate armor, a stick in his right hand and a sword in his left hand. The face is shaved. The hair parted in the middle falls into the coat of arms stone of Lorenz v. Bibra. simple natural wavy lines down the neck. The maker's mark *J.E.* is between the legs below the spurs. The execution is better than the average performance of that time.

Inscriptions and Coats of Arms on Monuments.

Recorded by Pastor Hartmann.

1) *Anno dom. M. CCCULXXIII decima die mensis february; obyt valid. nobilis Johañes de Bibra gen (itor) Rmj (Reverendissimi) dm (domini) laurency epi. herlripolen. c. (cujus) ama, (anima) reqescat i. pace. am. -- Sepultus in Rore.* Coat of arms: Above Bibra and Voit v. Salzburg; below Thüngen and Lichtenstein *).

2) Coat of arms stone. In the middle the coat of arms of Lorenz v. Bibra, above the coat of arms v. Bibra and Schenk v. Schenkenwalt, below Voit v. Salzburg and Schenk v. Schweinsberg. (Illustration on this page.)

3) *Anno domini 1537 mittwoch nach martini starb der edel unb ernenvest* [[1537 Wednesday after Martini the noble and Erenuest died]]

*) See *Gesch. der Frh.*, Vol. II, p. 243.

PAGE 309

Bertold von Bibra dem Gott genedig und barmherzig sey. Amen. [[Bertold von Bibra be kind and merciful to God. Amen.]] --- 15 I.H. 50. Above the arms of Bibra and Thüngen, below of the Kere and Hirschhorn *).

4) Double monument. **Nach Christi Geburt 1543 Jar auf Montag nach Walburgis starb der ebel unb ehrenvest Michel von Bibra zu Gemune dem Got genedig sei. Amen.** [[After the birth of Christ in 1543 Jar on Monday after Walburgis, the evil died without honoring Michel von Bibra zu Gemune, the god is genedig. Amen.]]

Nach Christ. Geburt 15. . | Jar auf. . . starb bie Erbar und rugenthastige frau Hester von Bibra geborne von Grumbach) der: Got gnabt: Amen. [[After Christ. Birth 15. . | Jar open. . . died bie Erbar and resilient wife Hester von Bibra (born von Grumbach) who: Got gnabt: Amen.]] 1550 I.H. Double coat of arms: Left Grumbach and shield with two lions to the right (after Siebmacher, Abgestorb. Bavarian Aristocracy, Vol. VI, Plate 63 1884. von Wolffstein; right Bibra-Seckendorf **).

5) **Anno dom. 1542 auf allerheilgen tag starb der edel und veste Wolff von Bibra bem dem Got genedig und barmherzig sey. amen.** [[1542 on all saints day Wolff von Bibra the noble and vested died, god gracious and merciful. Amen.]] 155. I.H. Above the coats of arms Bibra and Breitenstein, belowsehenkenwalt and Wildenberg ***).

6) **Anno dom. 1559 Jar den 16. tag septr. starb bie Edel und tugenthastige Fraw Anna von Bibra geborn von Grumbach) der Gott gnedig unb barmherzig fey. Amen.** [[1559 the 16th day September died of noble and virtuous wife Anna von Bibra born von Grumbach) God gracious and merciful fey. Amen.]] 1553 I.H. Above the coats of arms Grumbach and Wolffstein, below Hutten, Bibra, Schaumberg †).

7) **Anno dom. 1558 Jar den VI. Tag decembr starb ber Edel unb Ernvest Wilhelm von Bibra zu Schweben Erbuntermarschalk bes Stiffts Wirtzburg und Herzogthumbs zu Franken Dem Got genedig sey. Amen.** [[1558 the 6th day Decembr died over noble and Ernvest Wilhelm von Bibra zu Schweben arch-under-marshal Würzburg and ducal advisor of Franconia. Amen.]] 1553 I. H. Above the coats of arms Bibra and Breitenstein, below Schenkenwalt and Wildenberg ††).

8) **Anno 1572 den 22 Octobris ist in Gott verschieden Der Edel und Ernveste Steffen von Bibra zu Klein Bardroff unber Erbmarschalk des Stiffts Wirtzburg der selen Gott gnedig und barmherzig sein wolle. Amen.** [[1572 the 22nd October is different in God The noble and Ernueste Steffen von Bibra of Kleinbardorf hereditary marshal of the Würzburg who wants to be merciful and merciful to God. Amen. - 15 I. H. 64. Above in the essay the coats of arms Bibra and Hessberg, to the right and left of the head Breitenstein and Aufsess †††).

9) double long time. On the left a kneeling knight, on the right a kneeling noblewoman with 11 children, in the middle a crucifix. On top of that: **Alfo hat Got die Welt geliebt das er seinen eingebornen Son gab auf das alle die an in glauben** [[God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son to all who believe]]

*) Gesch. d. Frh., Bd. II, S. 228.

**) Gesch. d. Frh., Bd. II, S. 455--460. Sie war nach S. 364 der Familiengeschichte eine Tochter des Conrad v. Grumbach und der Eva v. Schwaigern. Es müsste demnach an Stelle des Löwenwappens das Wappen der Schwaigern (Schwanenhals auf blauem Grunde) stehen. Bei Anfertigung des Denkmals 1550 lebte ihre Schwester Anna († 1559) noch. Dieselbe hätte über die Abstammung ihrer Schwester doch die sicherste Auskunft erteilen können, aber auch auf ihrem bereits 1553 gefertigten Denkmale findet sich das Löwenwappen. Da die Tinktur fehlt, liess sich zunächst nicht genau feststellen, ob es das der v. Wolffstein (rother Löwe auf goldenem Schilde) ist. Die Sache ist aber Dank der Bemühungen des Herrn Oberstleutnant Reinhard v. Bibra in Würzburg aufgeklärt. Derselbe hat nämlich festgestellt, dass nach Biedermann, Canton Baunach, Tab. CCLVII der Vater der beiden Schwestern Esther (Stein 4) und Anna (Stein 6), Conrad v. Grumbach, zweimal verheirathet war und zwar 1) mit Eva v. Schwaigern, der Mutter der beiden Schwestern, † 1504; 2) mit Anna Freiin v. Wolffstein. Es scheint demnach der Umstand, dass die beiden Schwestern das Wappen der Stiefmutter als ihr mütterliches Wappen angenommen haben ein etwaiger Irrthum der Nachkommen ist ausgeschlossen, da das Denkmal der 1559 gestorbenen Schwester Anna bereits bei ihren Lebzeiten 1553 laut Inschrift angefertigt worden ist ein schöner Ausdruck kindlicher Pietät und Dankbarkeit der Stiefkinder gegen die Stiefmutter gewesen zu sein. [[According to p. 364 of the family history, she was a daughter of Conrad v. Grumbach and Eva v. Eager to see. In place of the lion's coat of arms, the coat of arms of the Schwaigern (swan neck on a blue background) would have to appear. When the monument was made in 1550, her sister Anna († 1559) was still alive. She could have given the most reliable information about her sister's ancestry, but the lion's coat of arms can also be found on her monument, which was made in 1553. Since the tincture was missing, it could not be determined exactly whether it was the v. Wolffstein (red lion on a golden shield) is. Thanks to the efforts of Lieutenant Colonel Reinhard v. Bibra in Würzburg cleared up. The same thing found that, according to Biedermann, Canton Baunach, Tab. Grumbach, was married twice, namely 1) to Eva v. Schwaigern, the mother of the two sisters, † 1504; 2) with Anna Freiin v. Wolffstein. The fact that the two sisters adopted the stepmother's coat of arms as their maternal coat of arms seems to be the fact that any error of the descendants is excluded, since the memorial of sister Anna, who died in 1559, was already made during her lifetime in 1553, according to the inscription, a beautiful expression of childlike Piety and gratitude of the stepchildren to have been to the stepmother.]]

***) Gesch. d. Frh., Bd. II, S. 366.

†) Gesch. d. Frh., Bd. II, S. 365, bezüglich der Wappen siehe Anm. 1.

††) Gesch. d. Frh., Bd. II, S. 359.

†††) Gesch. d. Frh., Bd. II, S. 372.

nit verloren werben sonber das ewig leben haben. Amen. [[and have eternal life.]] Legend: *Anno domini M.DLVIII Jar am freitag nach der heiligen drei Koenig Tag zwischen vier u. fünf Or ist in Got felliglichen entschlaffen der Edel und Ehrnvest Jörg Diemar zu Waldorff dem Got ein fröhliche Ausserstehung durch Christum verleihen wolle. Amen.* [[1558 on the Friday after the holy three kings day between four and five o'clock fallen asleep, the noble and Ehrnvest Jörg Diemar zu Waldorff wanted to give the Got a happy appearance through Christ.]] Left the coat of arms of Stiebar and Diemar, right Bibra and Schwaigern *).

10) Double monument. Kneeling knight and noblewoman. In the essay: *Anno 1543 . . . Anno dom. 1533 . . .* everything else is blurred. According to Weinrich, Henneb.Kirchen- u. Schulenstaat, 1720 can be read: *Anno 1543 Jar Abend Cathedra Petri starb der edle und ehrenveste Christoph von Bibra der Aelteste zu zieren Zeiten. ----- A. d. 1533 uf Neujahrstag starb die . . Agatha von Bibra geb. Zöllnerin m. Halberg.* [[1543 evening Cathedra Petri died the noble and honorable Christoph von Bibra the Eldest to adorn times. ----- A. d. 1533 died on New Year's Day. . Agatha von Bibra née customs officer m. Halberg.]] On the left the coat of arms Bibra and Schenkenwalt, on the right Zollner von Hallberg and Sparneck **).

11) *Anno dom. M.CCCCC Und Im Jar uf Dinstag nach Jubilate verschidt der Erber und vest Jörg von Bibra dem Got genedich sey. U.* [[And the year of Dinstag after Jubilate the heir of God graciousnes, Jörg von Bibra]] Wappen: Oben Bibra und Schenkenwaldt, unten Schwaigern und Schenk von Schweinsberg ***).

12) *Anno dom. M.CCCCC und . . . Jar uf . . ist verschieden der Erber und vest Karle von Bibra dem Got genade. Amen.* [[1500 and ... year of ... is separated the heir and clothed Karl von Bibra in God's grace. Amen]] Unten das Bibrasche Wappen †).

13) *Anno dom. M.CCCCCVI. Jar auf Sant Gregorius Tag ist verschieden bie Erber Fraw Anna von Bibra geborne von herbstedt der Got gen.* [[1506 on Sant Gregorius day is separated Anna von Bibra born von Herbstedt]] . Below the coat of arms of Voit von Salzburg ††).

14). *starb die erber fraw Ana von Bibra* [[died the heir wife Ana von Bibra]]. Apparently the Rosenberg coat of arms below.

15) *Anno dom. M.CCCCXVI. uff freitag nach Katharina ist verschieden der Erber und veste Jörg von Bibra dem Gott genadt. U.* [[On the Friday after Katharina, the heir and fortress Jörg von Bibra is separated to god.]] Coat of arms: Above Bibra and Seckendorf, below Stiebar and Vestenberg †††).

16) Tomb of pastor Balthasar Merkel, † 1506. *Anno dom. M.CCCCCVI. obyt dns Balthasar Merkel in die Cecilie primus vicegerens h. ecclesie c. anima* (rest in peace has broken away).

17) *Unter diesem Steine ruhet der wohlgebohrne herr herr Caspar Adam von Witzleben*

uff Rentwertshausen gewesener hochfürstlich würgburger obristwachtmeister zu Pferdt, ward gebohren anno 1650 dienstags vor Thomae, starb in Bibra d. 6. Martij Nachts zwischen 9. u 10 Uhren anno 1695 seines Alters im 45ten Jahr. Gott verleihe ihm eine sanste Ruhe und am jüngsten Tag eine fröhliche Auserstehung. [[Under this stone lies the well-bored Mr. Caspar Adam von Witzleben uff Rentwertshausen, who had been a high-prince of Würgburger obristwachtmeister on horseback, was born in 1650 on Tuesdays before Thomae, died in Bibra d. 6. Martij at night between 9 and 10 o'clock in 1695, his age in the 45th year. May God give him a gentle rest and a happy resurrection on Judgment Day.]] Coat of arms: Witzleben, Diemar, Erinhauss, Sitzel on the left; right Hanstein, Thann, Hoheneck, Laubenberg ††††).

*) I. c., S. 435.

**) I. c., S. 37-40. 227.

***) Ueber die Persönlichkeit ist nach der Familiengesch, Bd. II, S. 455, Anm. 1, nichts bekannt.

†) Nach Weinrich zu lesen 1506. Gesch., Bd. II, S. 24. [[Nothing is known about the personality according to the Familiengesch, vol. II, p. 455, note 1.]]

††) Weinrich hat fälschlich 1500, wohl Verwechslung mit dem vorhergehenden. Gesch. d. Frh., Bd. II, S. 25. [[Weinrich wrongly has 1500, probably confusion with the previous one. Business d. Early, Vol. II, p. 25.]]

†††) Gesch. d. Frh., Bd. II, S. 454. Bruder des Bischofs Conrad. Deshalb haben die Denksteine dieselben Wappen wie auf dem in der Familiengesch, Bd. II abgebildeten des bischöflichen Bruders. [[Brother of Bishop Conrad. Therefore, the memorial stones have the same coat of arms as on that of the episcopal brother depicted in the family business, vol. II.]]

††††) Er wurde des Nachts in der Kirche beerdigt. [[He was buried in the church at night.]]

PAGE 311

18) Double monument. Two babies. *Hans Ernst von Bibra natus 3. Martij ao 1674 obijt 8. ejusdem Mensis et Anni. --- Philipp Heinrich von Bibra primo genitus natus 3. Martij anno 1674 obijt 22. ejusdem mensis et Anni. - Here lies a pair of twins | not separated at death either*

*Your body is loosed from the balance
Your soul now floats in Christ's bosom
Left this wanderer and wish:
Rest in peace. J. E.*

19) Double monument. *Here lies Gustavus von Bibra born the 14th November 1688 Blessedly separated the 21st of this month and year - J. E. Light text: Sap. 4: He soon became popular. His soul pleases God, that is why he hurries with him out of the evil life.*

Little gentleman Carl Ludwig von Bibra was born on November 14th, 1688 and passed away on June 22nd, 1690. - E.

*Supper a pair of twins
God given a short time
Now so that the number increases
His blessed men of heaven.*

Light text Jeremiah. 31. But the Lord says thus: Stop your crying and weeping, and the tears of your eyes, for your work will be rewarded, says the Lord. You should come back.

20) *Miss Eva Eleonore von Bibra was born on June 29, 1687 and is well. blissfully died the 25th measure 1688. Light text Apoc. 12: And your child was caught up to God and his throne.*

21) *Here rests in Jesus The once imperial free Highly noble born Miss Maria Amalia von Bibra was born. d. October 8. 1678 died 1679 d. April 18.*

*Exclaims joyfully
The Cross has been overcome
Heaven has been found.*

22) *Figure of a little girl. Miss, Sophia Johanna von Bibra was born on July 31, 1685 and departed and blessed in Jesus on June 27, 1690*

*The body rest gently
the soul be eternally well. --- J. E.*

23) *Font and frame only. Here in God rests the once imperial free. Highly noble born Miss Sophia Augusta von Bibra who was born in 1672 on July 28th died in 1680 on the 4th of March. Call goodbye*

*Away world, away you beaver [pun on Bibra] too
I prefer to be in heaven
You parents live well
I am now full of joy. J. E.*

Text. fun. Baruch IV: Go dear children go. But I am lonely. I've taken off my joyful girl and put on my mourning dress, I want to scream to the eternal for and for.

24) *Time passes forever.
My heart is full of agony and sorrow
All coffins have now been released.*

The 28 July 1729 is in God blessed separated, the free, well-born woman

Mrs. Martha Sophia von Bibra drilled woman from Pomersfelden your age 81 years 1 month 4 days.

*I'm ending the run
My suffering stops
It's done
World good night. J. E. 1695*

Therefore the coats of arms: Left: Grumbach, Rabenstein, Lichtenstein, Truchsess v. Pommersfelden; right Assberg, Mossbach, Kuno v. Kollenberg; Münster; below Bibra and Truchsess v. Pommersfelden *).

25) *Anno dom. 1561 den I. Martÿ verschid In Gott die Edle und tugentsame fraw Dorothea von Bibra geborne von Heßberg Der Gott gnedig sey. amen.* [[1561 the I. Martÿ differed In God the noble and virtuous lady Dorothea von Bibra born von Hessberg The God be gracious. Amen.]] Coat of arms: Above Hessberg and Aufsess; below Esel, Bibra, Witzleben **).

26) In the semicircular essay: *Christus ist mein leben und sterben ist mein Gewin.* [[Christ is my life and dying is my gain.]] Phi. 1. Transcription: *Anno 1561 den 7. Augusti verschid in Gott die Edell und thugenthastige Fraw Anna von Wichsenstein Geborn von Bibra der Got gennedig sey. Amenn.* [[1561 on August 7th, in God the noble and virtuous lady Anna von Wichsenstein Born from Bibra the God be gracious Amen.]] Coat of arms: In the middle Wichsenstein, Bibra above left, Schenkenwalt below, Zollner v. Above right. Hallberg, below Sparneck ***).

27) Above in the semicircle: *Christus doe erlöse mich von bar Günden not.* [[Christ does deliver me from needless reasons.]] E. S. - E.N. Inscription: *Anno domini 1558 Donnerstag nach Pfingsten den 2. tag Juni starb die Edell und tugendhastige fraw Susanne von Seckendorff geborn von Wichsenstein der Gott genad. Amen.* [[1558 Thursday after Pentecost, the 2nd day of June, the noble and virtuous lady Susanne von Seckendorff, born von Wichsenstein, died. Amen.]] - 15 I.H. 59 ---- Coat of arms: Above Wichsenstein, Seckendorf, Bibra; below Zollner v. Rothenstein, Zollner von Hallberg.

28) Double monument like 9 and 10. *Anno dom. M.CCCCC and in 42 uff Silvestri the Ehrenvest Lampert von Bibra died. --- Anno dom. M.CCCCC and im. . . . died the noble lady Margretha of Bibra born silence because God is gracious †).* Top left the coats of arms of Bibra and Seckendorf. The two on the right above Margaret can no longer be seen.

29) *The imperially free high well born lord Hans Caspar von u. zu Bibra auf Höchheim Aubstatt and Brennhausen of the Hochfürstlichen Stiffts Würzburg and Herzogthumbs Franken Unter Erbmarschalk Is in God blissfully different April 12th, 1701 his age 73 years. --- J. E. --- 1701.* He was the husband of Martha Sophie née Truchsess von Pommersfelden (Stein 24) and father of the children of Stein 18-23. The coat of arms of the Bibra, Münster, Witzleben, Marschalk v. Ostheim.

On these personalities see W. v. Bibra, contributions to the family history of Freih. v. Bibra II, Munich 1882 in the places listed.

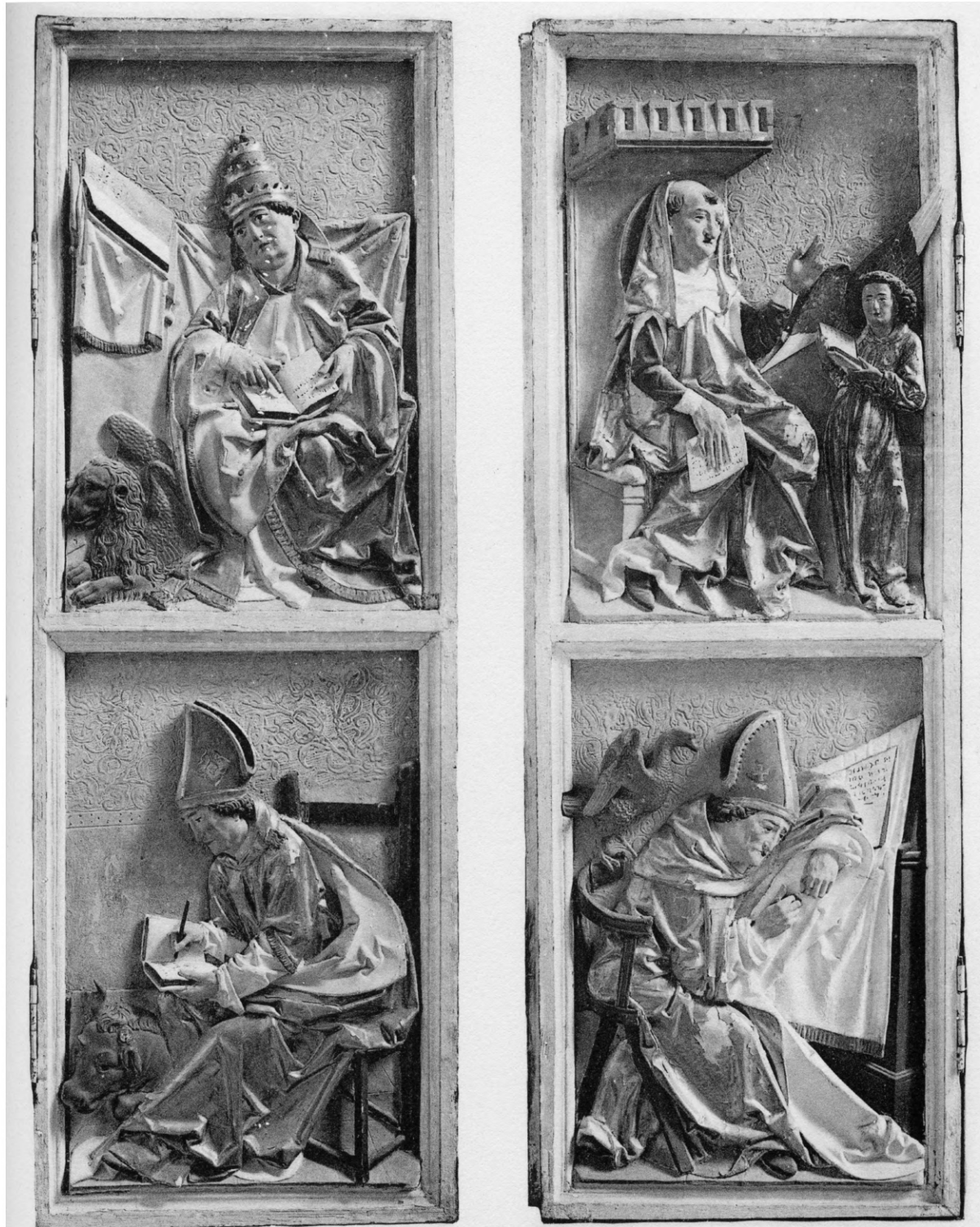
The coats of arms were, as far as necessary, determined according to Siebmacher, 1884, I. plate 100, 105; II. Pl. 72, 74; VI. Coordinated Bavarian Nobility, deed. '26, 30, 63, 64, 150. H. Hartmann.

*) She was the mother of the children Stein 19-23 and the wife of Hans Caspar v. Bibra, Stein 29. She had the dispute with Pastor Woytt, which L. Bechstein describes in his Philidor on the basis of the Woyttschon pamphlet "The well-shadowed Jünger" etc.

**) Gesch. d. Frh. II. S. 367.

***) 1. c. II, p. 39.

†) 1. c. II, p. 432.



Phot. u. Lichtdruck von Junghaß & Koritzer, Meiningen

Gregorius und Ambrosius

Hieronymus und Augustinus

Geschnitzte Reliefs am Hochaltar der Kirche zu Bibra

Aus der Werkstatt Riemenschneiders



Vom Hochaltar



Vom Apostelaltar



Vom Hochaltar

Altar-Gemälde in der Kirche zu Bibra

Altars.

The high altar.

Only the four wings remain from the original altar shrine. The (probably carved) middle field has been lost and filled with a modern painting, Christ instituting Holy Communion. There are four carved wooden bas-reliefs on the two initially adjoining altar wings, which depict the seated figures of four high church dignitaries with the attributes of the evangelists. (Collotype after p. 312.) When these two inner wings of the altar are closed, one can see on the back of the inner wings and on the two outer ones fixed wings four individually standing painted figures. Two of these altar wings are shown on the collotype in front of this page.

The carved reliefs are works from the workshop of Riemenschneiders. The original character is, however, severely distorted by later painting. The faces were still thickly painted with flesh paint around the year 1860, the robes were gilded and the carpet patterns of the background, originally modeled in gold-gray, were painted over in bright blue. Nevertheless, much of the beauty of the carving can still be seen, especially in the four expressive heads of old men. The church princes depicted here are undoubtedly the four church fathers. The triple crown points to Pope Gregory, the cardinal costume to St. Jerome, the two bishop's hats to St. Ambrose and St. Augustine. However, the usual attributes of the church fathers are missing. But sometimes the church fathers were also represented with the attributes of the four evangelists. The vault paintings at Partenheim in the Palatinate, which also date from around 1500, are an example of this; There, too, as in the wings of the altarpiece at Bibra, is Pope Gregory with the horny lion of the Evangelist Marcus, the Cardinal Hieronymus with the angel of the Evangelist Matthew, the Archbishop Ambrose with the bull of the Evangelist Lucas and the Bishop Augustine with the eagle of the Evangelist John depicted. Also in Riemenschneider's workshop, church fathers once again have the Protestant symbols in a very similar way: on the stone pulpit in Karlstadt, which was made in 1523 by a student of Riemenschneider's. The distribution of the attributes is a little different there. In Karlstadt, Hieronymus is shown with the lion and Gregory with the angel. In the case of the two bishops, too, the attributes are reversed to those on the high altar in Bibra. The naming of these two church fathers is therefore not possible with certainty. (Each of the two wings is 1.56 m high, 0.56 m wide. Each relief is 0.82 m high, 0.49 m wide.)

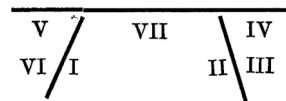
The paintings on all the altars in the church were whitewashed until 1896. Pastor Hartmann only recognized from individual traces that paintings were hidden here. He washed off the whitewash, the colors, for the most part, having reappeared intact. Only on that

One wing of the Annunciation altar was completely peeled off before the whitewashing.

The four paintings on the wings of the high altar have nothing to do with Riemenschneider's artistic style. It is independent work from the hand of another, much lower-level assistant in the workshop. All the paintings in the three altar shrines in the church and the carvings on the apostles' altar, as well as a few other carvings in the church at Bibra, were certainly made by the same assistant. The artist's style is unmistakable. The heads in his paintings have something strangely uniform about them, pressure of the eyes. The cut of the face, the profile of the nose, the arching of the bones of the eyes and the lines of the mouth have a very definite resemblance in all heads, regardless of whether the painter depicts youths or men of mature age. A characteristic trait in his paintings is the joy of a bright vermilion and the lively green in the robes and curtains. The hands in his paintings have something artificial about their posture. The fingers are excessively narrow. The drawing of the eyes has something evenly about, just like that of the ears, whose lobules have usually grown are. Also note the lilies of the valley on the paneled floor. The flowers hang down only on one side of the stem. A lily of the valley with two stalks growing out of a single leaf stand appears on two of these altars: on the altar of the apostles at Paul's feet; at the Annunciation altar on the painting of the Annunciation at the feet of Mary. (Illustration on the plate after p. 316.) The artistic characteristics of his paintings are quite modest. Its carvings are higher. The shape of the carved faces, especially the broad jaws, have features similar to those of the painted ones.

The names of three saints are on the following paintings on the high altar: *Saint Timothy* at the height of the forehead. *Saint Bonifacius* on the hem of the mantle. *Saint Burchardus* in the open book which the saint holds in his hand. Saint Martin can be recognized by the fact that he cuts the cloak with the sword in order to give the cloth to the beggar.

- The distribution of the wings shows the following scheme in the floor plan:
- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| I | Pope Gregory and Bishop Ambrose. Carved reliefs. | |
| II | Cardinal Jerome and Bishop Augustine. Carved reliefs. | |
| III | Saint Burchardus. Painting. | |
| IV | Saint Martin. Painting. | |
| V | Saint Timothy. Painting. | |
| VI | Saint Bonifacius. Painting. | |
| VII | Christ instituting Holy Communion. Modern painting. | |



The whole altar with all four wings is 2.24 m wide and 1.56 m high. The carved wings are 0.56 m wide and 1.56 m high.

Literature: Eduard Tönnies, *Leben und Werke des Würzburger Bildschnitzers Tilman Riemenschneider*, Strassburg 1900, S. 172. *Katalog der Fränkischen Ausstellung im Jahre 1893*, Nr. 1195. ---- Weber, l. c. S. 60. Streit, l. c. S. 14, Tafel 8.

The Altar of the Apostles
Choir Wall North of the Triumphal Arch.

The altar, opened, is shown on a very small scale on the overall view of the interior of the church (light print after p. 296).



Christus mit Maria und fünf Aposteln.



Drei Apostel.

Holzschnitzereien am Apostelaltar der Kirche zu Bibra.

The carving on the central field and the two open wings depicts Christ with St. Mary and eleven apostles. The Savior towers over his comrades by half a head. He has raised his right hand

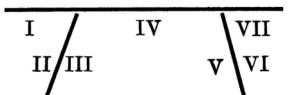
in blessing, in his left hand he is holding the globe. Stand close to him the disciples in four groups, each with three figures in harmony. First to the Savior on the left, Peter with the key, then Jacob with the pilgrim's shell on his hat. Maria on the right; her head is wrapped in a cloth, she is reading in a book. Next to it, John with the chalice and Matthew with the halberd, which protrudes over John's head. The face of Matthew is hidden by the head of John. These two groups on the sides of the Savior fill the center of the altar. (Illustration on this page.) On the right wing you can recognize the apostle Matthias by the ax, the apostle Andreas by the oblique cross that he holds with both hands. (From-

PAGE 316

education on p. 315.) On the left wing Bartholomäus can be recognized by the knife, Thomas by the angle measure. The carvings are considered works from the Riemenschneider workshop. The figures have recently been painted over so thickly that all of the finer character traits have become unrecognizable as a result. But in the squat proportions of the figures, but especially in the broad shape of the faces, e.g. B. the strong jaws of the two beardless heads, one can see that another artist than Riemenschneider was active here. The unknown artist treated the same subject in these carvings as Riemenschneider did on the small altar of the apostles in Heidelberg Castle. But the composition is completely different in every artistic detail. Above all, the Heidelberg Altar has the slender, worn-out, thoughtful heads of Riemenschneider's art. The figures of the apostle altar in Bibra have nothing to do with it.

A standing saint is depicted on each of the four wing paintings. On the first wing on the left: the evangelist Marcus, who extends his hand to the lion. The saint wears a red beret, not the cardinal's hat. One should therefore not assume a representation of St. Jerome here. The halo around the lion's head also shows that the evangelist Marcus is represented with his sacred symbol. (Shown on the collotype in front of p. 313, central figure.) On the next altar wing: Paul with sword and book. A frog and a may flower on the paneled floor. On the third wing of the altar: Peter with the key. On the paneled floor a green siskin and a mayflower. On the next wing of the altar: Hubertus. In his left hand he holds the deer head, between whose antlers the crucifix is depicted. (Illustration on the plate after p. 316.)

The altar of the apostles stood on the floor of one of the walls of the church until 1860. At that time the altar was given its current position. Pastor Hartmann suspects that the altar originally stood in the chapel of Bibra Castle. The room of this chapel is still well preserved. It is in the tower above the east gate. The stone substructure of the altar, on which this altar shrine may originally have stood, is also still preserved. The distribution of the wings of the apostle altar shows the following scheme in the floor plan:

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| I | Marcus, painting. (Mittelgür on the collotype before p. 313.) | |
| II | Paul. Painting. | |
| III | The apostles Bartholomäus, Thomas and a third apostle. Wood carving. | |
| IV | Christ with Mary and five apostles. Wood carving. (Illustration on p. 315.) | |
| V | The apostles Matthias, Andreas and a third apostle. Wood carving. (Illustration on p. 315.) | |
| VI | Peter. Painting. | |
| VII | Hubertus. Painting. (Illustration on the plate after p. 316.) | |
- 

The apostle altar with all four wings is 1.96 m wide and 1.29 m high. In the place of the apostle altar there was a stone sculpture until 1860, which was removed to make room for this altar shrine.



Der heilige Hubertus.
Flügel vom Apostelaltar in der Kirche
zu Bibra.



Die Verkündigung.
Flügel vom Verkündigungsalter
in der Kirche zu Bibra.



Die Heimsuchung.

Geschnitzte Flügel vom Verkündigungsalter in der Kirche zu Bibra.

Verlag von Gustav Fischer in Jena.

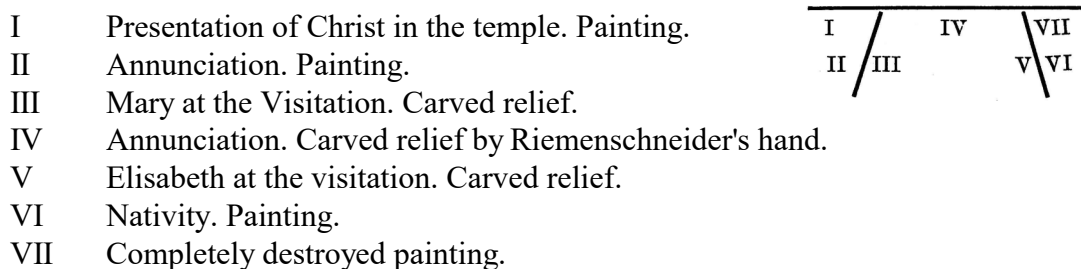
The Altar of Annunciation
 On the Choir Wall South of the Triumphal Arch.

The carved middle field, the Annunciation, gives the impression of a largely handwritten work by Riemenschneider. The master's style is aptly expressed in the agitated posture of the two figures, in the beautiful turn with which both heads are directed towards the shoulders and in the cut of the narrow faces. The narrow chin with dimples is particularly characteristic of both heads. The expressive, narrow hands are also characteristic of Riemenschneider. The hanging right hand of Maria, which grasps into the folds of the cloak, is particularly beautiful. (Collotype after p. 292.) The two wings next to it represent the visitation, also in carved relief; left Maria, right Elisabeth *). Both women hold out their hands to each other in greeting. Both the posture and the shape of the heads and hands point to a different artist than Riemenschneider. The cut of Elisabeth's face is similar to some of the heads in the carvings of the apostle altar, only the narrow proportions in the figures of the two women, including the bust of Mary, point to the workshop of Riemenschneider, who may have sketched both figures. The faces are roughly painted over in a later period. (Illustrations on the board in front of this page.)

Of the four paintings on the wings of the Annunciation altar, there are three receive:

- a) The presentation of Christ in the temple.
- b) The Annunciation: Two winged angels pull back the green curtains of the Betthimmel. You can see a mountain landscape through the window in the background. (Illustration on the plate after p. 316.)
- c) The birth of Christ. Mary and Joseph with the candle in their hands kneel in front of the Christ Child, who is venerated by three small angels. Above the Maria the heads of an ox and a donkey are visible. The painter of the three pictures is the same as the painter of the pictures of the apostle altar and the high altar. The similar traits are highlighted on p. 314 above. The fourth painting is completely destroyed.

The distribution of the wings of the Annunciation altar shows the following scheme in the floor plan:



The whole altar with all four wings is 2.40 m wide and 1.52 m high. The carved central field is 1.52 m high, 1.20 m wide. The four wings are an average of 60 cm wide.

*) Heinrich Hartmann interprets the two figures as Elisabeth and Hannah. See Hartman, Der Marktflecken Bibra, p. 155.

We do not know the name of the artist who carried out the paintings on the three altars at Bibra and some of the wood carvings. He certainly belongs to the large group of artists who were connected to the Riemenschneider workshop. When he was at work on these three altars in the church of Bibra, he probably worked as an assistant in the master's workshop. This is all the more remarkable as his works differ so visibly from the actual style of Riemenschneider. This throws an interesting light on the operation in Riemenschneider's workshop. The works became so piled up that the master's strength was no longer sufficient to make the drafts for all the individual works, let alone to direct the execution in all parts according to his own artistic views. It is therefore understandable that an artist of a completely different kind, like the unknown painter and picture carver appearing here in Bibra, was able to develop such a striking independence at some of the altar shrines, which in individual parts clearly show the character of Riemenschneider's workshop.

To determine the activity of this unknown painter and carver in the large number of creations from the workshop of Riemenschneider goes beyond the scope of the inventory work. Since the name of the artist is unknown, he will first have to be called the master of the Bibra Apostle Altar after his completely autograph work, the Apostle Altar described above. The works that are in the Church of Bibra must be attributed to his hand are the following:

- 1) The altar of the apostles, all of the carvings (images on p. 315) and all of the paintings (collotype after Marcus before p. 313 and image of Hubertus on the panel after p. 316).
- 2) From the Annunciation altar: a) The carved wing with the figure of Elisabeth (illustration on the panel in front of p. 317); b) all 3 paintings (illustration of the Annunciation on the panel after p. 316).
- 3) All paintings from the high altar. (Collotype after Timothy and Martin before p. 313.)
- 4) One of the two deacons carved in low relief, who holds the book in his right hand. (See below, p. 319, No. 4, illustration on the plate after p. 320.)

Wooden Figures.

1) Bishop, probably St. Kilian, the patron saint of Franconia. In his left hand he holds the flag of the broken crook, in his right hand the hilt of the broken sword. Carved. Limewood.

The figure comes from the Riemenschneider workshop. The expressive modeling of the narrowly cut facial features is good. Given the importance of St. Kilian, also as the patron saint of the Provost Dr. Kilian von Bibra (d. 1494), at whose actual suggestion the construction of the church began in 1492, it can be assumed that this statue was executed with particular care in Riemenschneider's workshop (illustration on P. 319). Height of the figure 1.17 II]. Set up in the sacristy.

Literature: Catalog of the exhibition in Würzburg in 1893, No. 1192, there referred to as "St. Burkhardus".
---- Streit, Riemenschneider, p. 14, plate 9. - Eduard Tönnies, Riemenschneider, p. 258.

2) The seated colossal figure of a Pope, probably St. Gregory, the tiara on his head, holding a closed book on his lap in his left hand. The right hand is broken off. The individual pieces of wood that make up the figure have split lengthways at different points. Despite the very severe damage, Riemenschneider's style is unmistakable. Height of the figure 1.33 m. Linden wood. Set up in the sacristy.

(Eduard Tönnies names the figure in his book on Riemenschneider: "Probably the only personal work by Riemenschneider in the Bibra parish church from a good time around 1505".)

3) Two statuettes of angels, which were formerly used as candlesticks. Both dressed as deacons. With your left hand you delicately pick up the upper garment. The undergarment falls in long folds on the floor, so that only the tip of the foot is exposed. One angel holds a helically wound rod in his right hand, the candlestick base on which the candle has been placed. The other angel's right hand has broken off. But that this hand also held the foot of a candlestick standing on the ground in a similar way, is proven by the hole at the feet of this angel. The wings have broken off. Both angels are shown on the picture board on p. The figures are heavily painted over. But the style of the Riemenschneider workshop is unmistakable in the charming attitude. Height of each angel 0.48 m. Now the angels are placed on top of the Annunciation altar.



4) Two young saints in spiritual dress. According to tradition, they are interpreted as Colman and Totnan, the companions of St. Kilian during the conversion of the Franks. But the three stones on the book of the one young man could just as well be related to Saint Stephen, who suffered martyrdom by stoning. Flat reliefs carved in wood. (Illustration; on the plate after p. 320.) The heads

Holzfigur aus der Werkstatt Riemenschneiders.
In der Kirche zu Bibra.

indicate two different artists. The head of one young man, who is holding the book with the three stones lying on it, is reminiscent of the workshop of Riemenschneider, especially in the delicately curved lines of the chin. The garment and hand, on the other hand, are treated superficially. The head and neck were originally pasted with canvas and covered with chalk ground. Both are peeled off. Nevertheless, the carving still shows some beauties. The head of the other young man, who is holding the book in his right hand (illustration on the panel after this page), with its compact facial features, has great resemblance to John of the Apostle's altar. The broad shapes of the hands show a similar, less artistic conception. The figure is therefore probably by the same hand that carved and painted the altar of the apostles. Height of each figure 1.05 m with the console, without the same 0.97 m. Set up in the sacristy.

Literature: E. Tönnies, Riemenschneider, p. 263.

5) Mary with the child with the moon at her feet. The Christ Child holds the toes of his right foot with his right hand and his left knee with his left hand. A few decades ago the carving was so thickly painted over with paint that one cannot judge finer properties. But some features in the posture suggest the work of a skilled carver. The washing off of the painting is very desirable. Originally, the figure probably stood in the middle of a carved altar shrine. This is also what the moon points to. On the background the golden rays of the halo were probably depicted, which elliptically encompassed the entire figure of Mary (according to Revelation John 12, 1). Now the figure is placed on top of the Annunciation altar. (Illustration on the board before p. 321.)

6) Two groups of three figures each 30 1/2 cm high, leaning their backs against each other. Both groups probably originally served as crowning an object that was freely visible from all sides. The carvings date, to judge by the style, from the period around the year 1500. However, due to the thicker overpainting carried out at a later time, any closer examination is impossible. In one group stand together: St. Anne, the third, a pope and a bishop. In the other group: Mary with the child, St. Barbara and a young saint with a book. Both groups are now set up on top of the altar of Annunciation. One group, albeit very small, can be recognized on the collotype with the view of the interior of the church according to p. 296.

Various Art Objects.

1) Gothic cupboard, with beautiful carved and colored painted anken friezes, crowned by a crenellated wreath. Probably from around 1500. Nice work. On the inner door is written in Rothstift: *Anno dom. In 1534 the chalice was stolen on the evening of the Assumption of the Virgin. Underneath with chalk: Nisi duobus. . . presbiter missam celebrare non potuerat de consecra Dis. . . hoc quoque spolierant.*



Colman und Totnan,
die Begleiter des heiligen Kilian.
Geschnittene Reliefs in der Kirche zu Bibra.

Verlag von Gustav Fischer in Jena.



Holzfiguren in der Kirche zu Bibra.

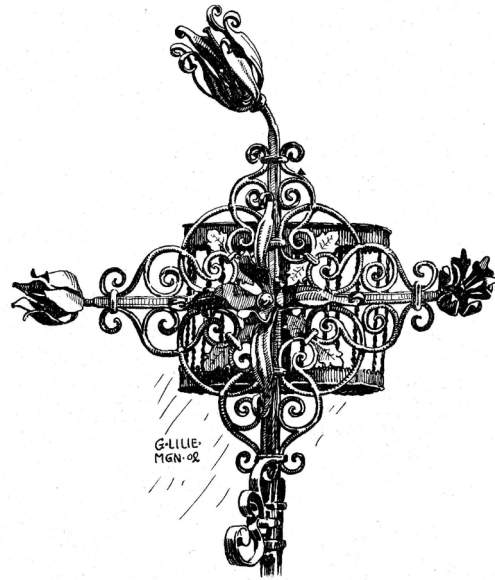
Aufgestellt auf dem Verkündigungsalter, an der südlichen Chorwand.

Verlag von Gustav Fischer in Jena.

2) Baptismal font in the shape of an angel, second half of the 18th century. Wood carving, painted with bright colors in the manner of the Rococo style. In the lid the inscription: *Meister Georg Mannfeld, Wagner in Nordkeivn April 18, 1783*. The baptismal frame is no longer in use, until 1860 it stood where the baptismal font is now.

3) Hourglass, wrought iron with tendrils made of round rods, which end in three places in flower cups made of forged leaves. Early 16th century. Formerly placed on the pulpit, now in the sacristy. (Illustration on this page.)

4) Paintings. Portrait of Moritz Schatz, pastor of Bibra, † 1568, with a long gray beard, beret and Luther skirt. Inscription: *Mauritius Schatz Fuldensis natus est anno domini 1500 the 22 Septembris emigravit ex hac mortali et aerumnosa vita anno Chri 1568 the 20th Mensis decembris*. Next to it is a sign with an open money box on a red ground.



Sanduhr aus Schmiedeeisen. In der Kirche zu Bibra.

Stained Glass.

In the three eastern windows of the choir, the Gothic masonry is filled with new colored glass paintings. Only two coats of arms in the middle window are old:

a) The coat of arms of Bishop Lorenz von Bibra. The red in the helmet cover and the curly horns of the helmet ornament are particularly beautiful. Signature: *Lorenz by the grace of God, Bishop of Würzburg and Duke in Franconia 1503*.

b) The coat of arms of the Provost Albrecht von Bibra. Artistically very attractive due to the bright golden yellow of the color and the excellent painting with black solder. Inscription: *Albrecht von Bibra Provost Bishopric of Würzburg anno Dm 1503*. The coat of arms is also in the middle window, on the right below the aforementioned coat of arms. Both coats of arms are somewhat restored in 1892, but only slightly. A third coat of arms, that of the Provost Dr. Kilian von Bibra, was formerly in the same window. This coat of arms also bore the year 1503. (Kilian, Albrecht and Lorenz von Bibra were the main protectors of the church who carried out the construction of the church.)

Altar Utensils.

Chalices. 1) Small silver cup, heavily gold-plated. Engraved on the foot: Christ on the cross. Below the letters: B. v. S., two coats of arms and the year 1588. The chalice is probably from Barbara v. Schrotzberg, née Marschalk v. Ostheim donated.

2) Silver goblet, gold-plated, with the letters: *E. C. F. G. Z. 1749*. The letters mean the name of Eleonore Christiane Freisslich née Zink.

Communion vessels. 1) Pewter jug with inscription: *M. S. V. B. G. T. V. P. Ao. 1690*. The letters mean the name of the woman Martha Marie Sophie v. Bibra, nee Truchsess v. Pommersfeld.

2) Pewter jug with the inscription: *C. A. W. To the memory of 1846*. The same was given by Ottilie Wachs, wife of Georg Wachs.

Host box made of silver, gold-plated inside. Another pewter host box. Two silver paten, gold-plated. Spoon, gold-plated.

Bells.

1) The big bell from 1513 with the coat of arms of Bishop Lorenz von Bibra, who gave the bell, and the inscription: *Castoreae praesul gentis Laurentius Annam me jussit magno sacra boare tono 1513*. (In German translation: A bishop from the The family of the beavers [Bibras], Lorenz, told me, Anna, to ring the sacred with a loud bang!) The bell gave rise to a legend which Bechstein reports in the legends of the Rhön Mountains. Diameter 1.30 m. (Printed by Hartmann, p. 171.)

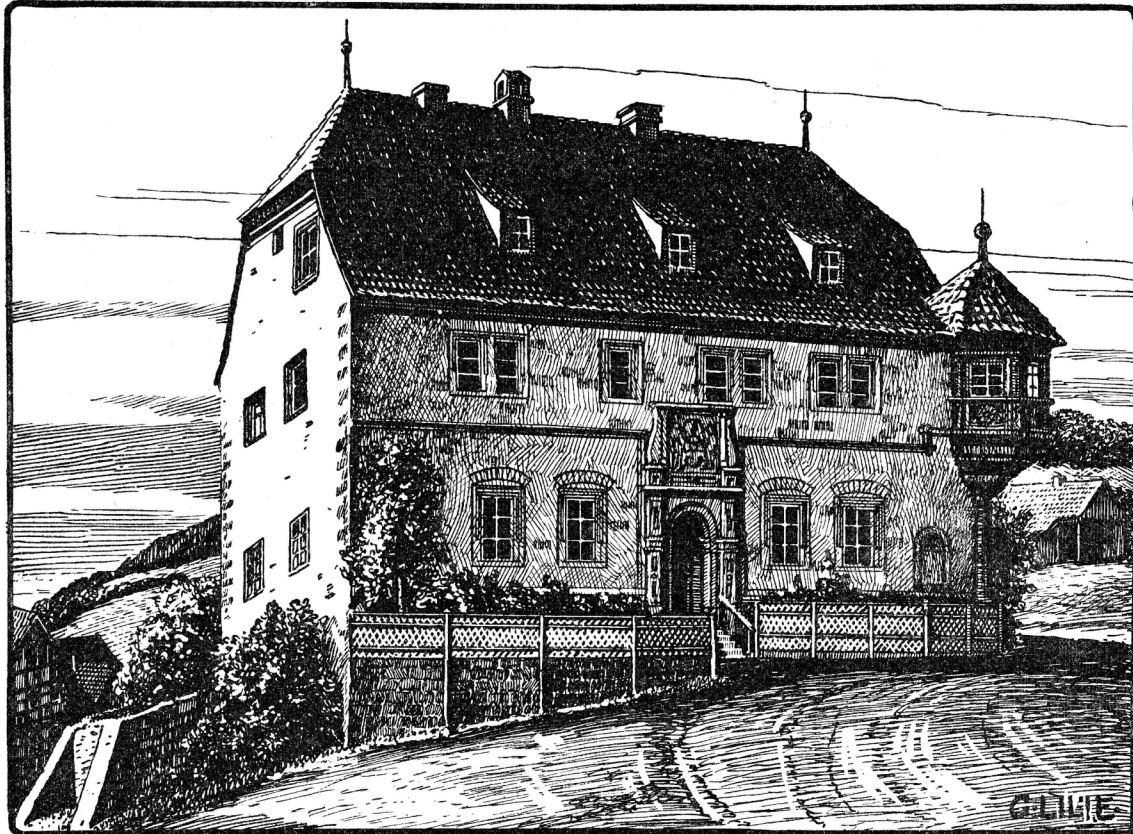
2) Two bells from 1875. Cast by the Ulrich brothers in Apolda. [A bell with the year 1514, which was named Anna Maria, is no longer there. It was a gift from Bishop Lorenz von Bibra and was cast in 1781 after it burst]

Bergner, Die Glocken des Herzogthums S.-Meiningen, S. 32.

The Castle. On the highest part of the village, but only a few meters higher than the road, lie the ruins of the late Middle Ages castle of the Lords of Bibra. Of the buildings of the Middle Ages, only the high inner curtain wall with eight towers and part of the Zwinger are mainly preserved. The residential and commercial buildings standing on part of the courtyard are largely of a recent age, but in part have been built using the walls of bins of the 15th and 16th centuries, and also of the walls of the 17th century. (Image from the bird's eye view above on p. 11.)

The fortifications of the castle have a shape that recurs several times in this area. The curtain wall forms an almost regular square, which is occupied by towers (or bastions) at the four corners and in the middle of each of the four sides. The layout is very similar to that of the nearby Untermassfeld Castle. Also the fortifications on the fortified church hill at Walldorf an der Werra, which originally was the ring walls of a castle

are built show a similar system. In Walldorf, however, a central tower has only been built on one of the four sides of the curtain wall. The fortifications of the church of the nearby Ostheim vor der Rhön are also closely related. There, however, the defense towers are only erected at the corners of the inner curtain wall; on one of the four sides the curtain wall forms a semicircular bastion in the middle. But the outer enclosure wall of the Ostheim church fortifications, with its bastions at the corners and in the middle of the side walls, has almost the same basic shape as the inner curtain wall of Bibra Castle.



The only entrance to Bibra Castle was a drawbridge, which led over the moat on the east side. The drawbridge was in the same place where the fixed wooden bridge is now built. The Gatetower standing there is the strongest tower in the castle. To the outside, the tower protrudes almost in the shape of a three-quarter circle from the center of the curtain wall. The portal is arched in a round arch. The frame dates from the 16th century at the earliest. Above the gate there is a relief in the wall with the coat of arms of the family v. Bibra from around the year 1500. High above it is a corbel, which probably originally had to bear a cast bay to defend the gate. The gateway is inside the tower

a high vaulted hall. The stone chiseled hinges for the gate wing and the slots for the locking bar have been preserved on both the outer and inner arches. The castle chapel was located above this gateway in the 15th century, before the village church was built. The room that is still preserved is covered with a cross vault. The stone altar on which one of the church's altar shrines once stood (see above, p. 316) is still preserved. The archive is now located in this room.

The other towers are also round, but less strong and only intended for defense. The two corner towers on the east side are the tallest. They tower over the curtain wall by one floor. The other towers are only as high as the curtain wall. They are open to the castle courtyard, so that the individual floors of the towers, formerly made of beams, could easily be climbed from the castle courtyard on ladders or easy-to-break stairs. The tower in the middle of the west side, like the Thorthurm on the east side, is wider than the other towers. The upper part was added in 1838. The coat of arms of the Bibra family on this tower is also from more recent times. The stone bridge, which at this point leads in two high arches over the moat, was built in 1840. A floor was added to the north-west tower in the years 1871-1872. The remains of the old battlements of the high inner ring wall can be seen in the courtyard on the east and south sides. The above otteneu loopholes on the south side of the inner wall were broken out in 1905 for decorative reasons.

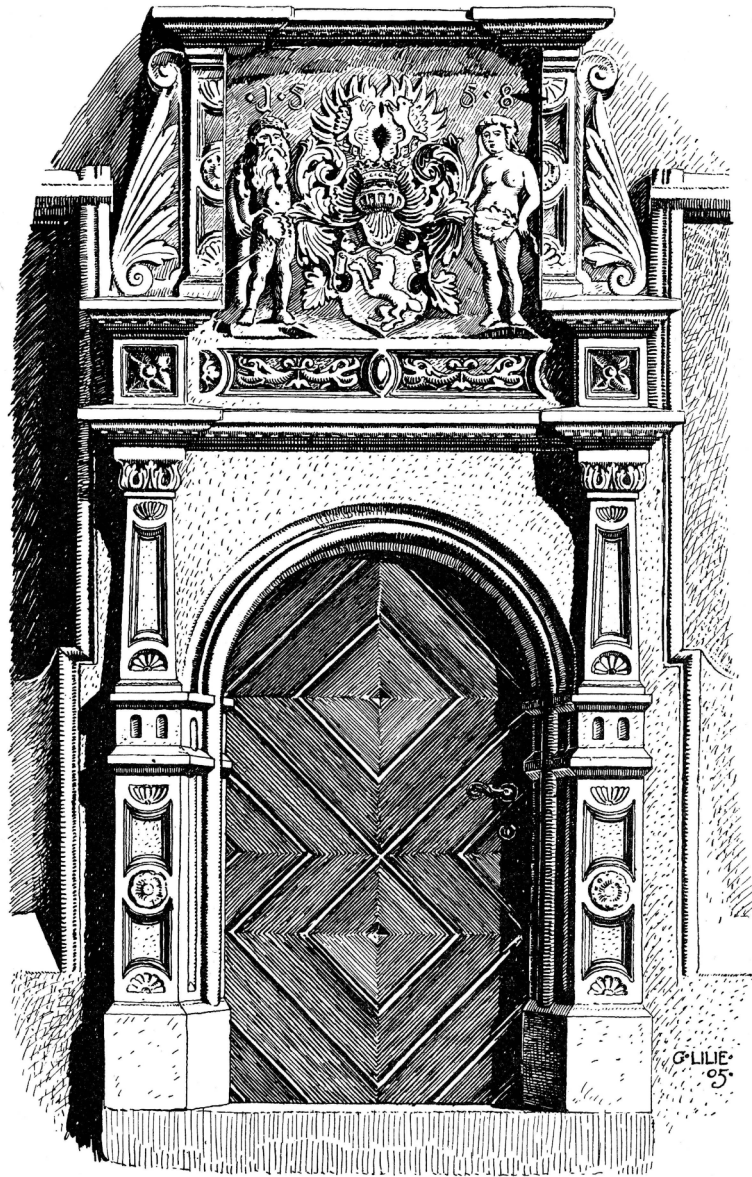
The old moat is still preserved on the north and east sides. It was put under water in ancient times. In the beginning of the 19th century the ditch was partially filled with water and served as a horse pond. Around the moat there is a high fence wall, which is still largely preserved on the east, west and north sides. In addition, the moat was protected on the south and east by a wide wall. Through this wall, opposite the Lower Castle, an arched gateway led into the moat. The wall was removed in 1838. The palace garden is now located here. The moat was originally much deeper. When the southern wall was removed, the bottom of the trench was raised by backfilling. Hence it has come that the bottom of the trench now partly reaches up to the loopholes.

An inscription stone reports about the construction of a bower in 1526, which was later walled in at the Lower Castle, below the bay window. The stone also indicates that the castle was burned down with all the buildings during the Peasants' War in 1525 (see above p. 294).

In the courtyard there is a residential building made of strong walls, the so-called "White House". The window frames probably date from the 16th century. Some of the windows have frames, the profiles of which show notch-like shapes at the lower end. On a window on the south side, four coats of arms are carved into the stone on each of the two vertical posts.

is mentioned in 1516, but whether this building is meant remains to be seen. A "new private apartment" is also mentioned in 1496. Heinrich Hartmann brings various reports about other bunkers and buildings in his book on Bibra on p. 62. Under the old residential and commercial buildings there are spacious dry cellars, which are used for fire-proof and bulletproof storage of stocks during sieges were of great importance.

The castle courtyard was opened in 1605 when the castle was divided between Bernhard v. Bibra on the one hand and Hans and Georg v. Bibra on the other hand, through a wall is divided into an eastern and a western half. "Perhaps as a result of this, the second entrance was created on the west side, the arch of which can still be seen in the masonry, and which was reached by means of a wooden bridge laid over two stone pillars in the moat, which was only reached in 1840 through the current stone bridge has been replaced. (Hartmann)



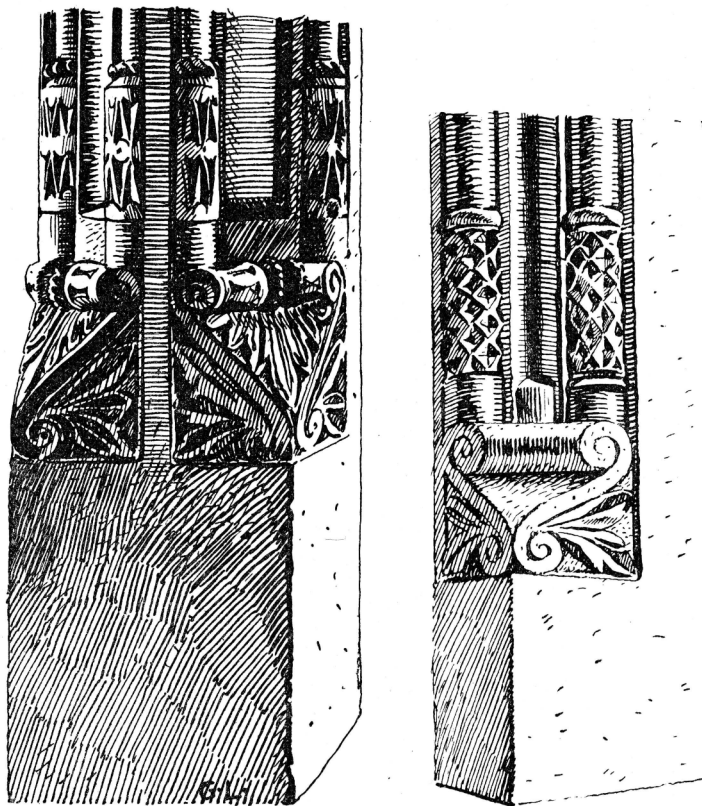
Thür des Unteren Schlosses in Bibra. Erbaut 1558.

A stone relief with the coat of arms of the family v. Bibra from 1507 and the name of Heinrich v. Bibra is located in a stable building on the outer estate. The relief was originally walled in over the door of an older farm building.

For the determination of the time in which the ring walls of the Bibra Castle were built, the very similar layout of the Untermassfeld Castle gives at least some evidence. A coat of arms stone with the year 1466 is walled in on one of the bastion towers. This stone with the coat of arms of Henneberg

and Hanau is certainly authenticated by the history of Untermassfeld Castle and most likely dates from the time when these bastion towers were built. It is therefore not unlikely that the nearby Bibra Castle also dates from roughly the same era. It is precisely because a building with such clarity of structure has so rarely been preserved from the castles in the plain that the castle of Bibra deserves increased attention.

The Lower Castle. The small castle of the family v. Bibra outside the castle district, located in the village, is one of the most charming stone-built residential buildings from the Renaissance period that have been preserved in this area. The structure is shown in our illustration on p. 323. The castle was built in 1558.



Pfeiler eines Fensters
am Unteren Schloss zu Bibra.

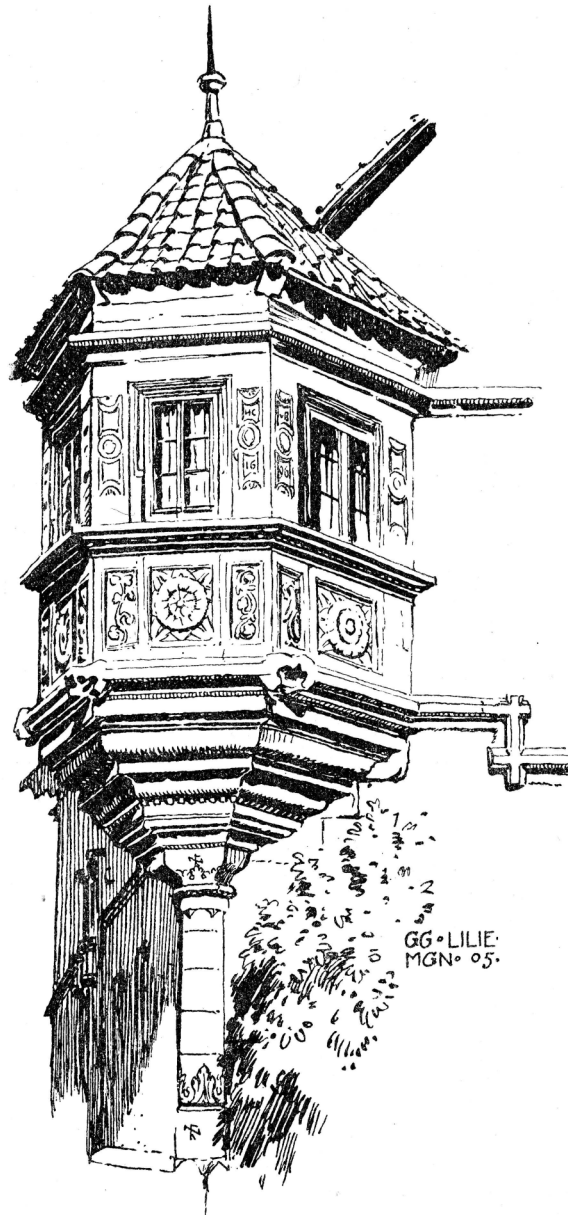
Fensterumrahmung

The sculptures on the portal on the main front are of great beauty. The round gate is framed by two pilasters, the upper part of which tapers sharply upwards. A toothed cornice rests on the two acanthus capitals, which is cranked over the pilasters. Four dolphins are depicted in the wide frieze. A large relief with the coat of arms of the family v. Bibra, which is held by two naked figures, a long-bearded man and a young woman. Above their heads is the year 1558. This relief is framed on each of the two sides by a pilaster that is halved in length, against which a raised triangular acanthus leaf is leaning. The proule in the reveal of the archway is very attractive. The strong round rod cuts through the cornices of the pilaster at the height of the warrior. The following stonemason marks are found on the sculptures of the gate: $\text{P} \Gamma \text{R}$. The gate is shown on p. 325.

The bay window (picture on p. 327) at the corner of the castle is also made entirely of stone. It rests on a round corner column, which is decorated with acanthus leaves on the lower part of the shaft. Above this column the substructure of the bay rises from several in the form of an inverted cone

protruding cornices. The bay window has the shape of an irregular polygon. Ornamental reliefs adorn the parapets and pillars of the windows. On a corner pilaster on the west side is written in the recessed fields: **H C V B 1690**. Work on the bay window seems to have been carried out in 1690. That the bay window does not go from the outset to that belonged to the artistic design of the house, it also seems to emerge from the different heights of the girdle, which separates the two floors of the building. The Gurtgesinis is higher in the bay window than in the other parts of the front wall. But the way in which the different heights of this cornice is conveyed by a simple crossing point definitely points to the style of the 16th century and not to the construction of the bay window in 1690. --- Below the bay window is an inscription stone from 1768 walled in a former bower of the Upper Castle in Bibra. The wording of the inscription is reproduced above on p. 294.

The windows of the bay, like those of the main front, are profiled with round bars, but the lower third of the window pillars have remained free from this frame. The framing of the windows in the interior of the castle's rooms has been worked with particular care. Some samples are shown on p. 326. The artistic motifs in the frames are the same as those found in these areas up to the beginning of the 17th century, especially on the portals of the churches. But there the ornaments are mostly badly weathered or otherwise damaged. Here, on the other hand, they are preserved intact. The main motive are the console-like volutes against which the thin round bars of the window frame run out. The ornaments at the foot of this round rod are reminiscent of the notch-cut patterns of wood construction. In the interior of the ground floor, some of the old stone bench seats have been preserved in the window niches. A beautiful old door frame is in the hall. The stair tower with the old stone spiral staircase also has two carefully crafted entrance doors.



Erker am Unteren Schloss zu Bibra.

Among the older objects of art of the interior furnishings should be emphasized:

A richly carved writing cabinet from around 1740. It stands on carved kneeling angels. The surfaces are painted with different colored types of wood (walnut, cherry and pearwood). Good old bronze fittings.

A bedstead with richly gilded carvings, lion feet, acanthus leaves and pine cones.

Numerous pastel portraits of Meiningen painters from around 1800 (see E. Doebner und W. Simons, Katalog der Meininger Pastellausstellung 1904. Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte deutschen Alterthums, herausgeg. vom Henneb. Verein, 19. Lief. [catalog of the Meiningen pastel exhibition 1904. New contributions to the history of German antiquity])

There is an inscription plaque from 1518 at house number 88, which was rebuilt in the first decades of the 19th century. The stone comes from the old house, which is called the Lower Vicarie after the Thirty Years' War. A beaver jumping to the right is depicted at the left corner. The inscription consists of five lines, the top of which is almost completely weathered: *De bibra. . . ps* (erat episcopus? / *laurentius olim altaris / sundator erat dom. Kilian / Andreas reuther meller statinus / alumnus* (?) *hoc opus ex strurit primus / possessor ab uno* (anno?) *1518*. The inscription probably refers to the one above mentioned foundation Kilians v. Bibra.

House no. 13 has a very simple wooden architecture with slightly grooved beams and old, sliding shutters in frames made from simple fretwork.

Tavern sign, cut from sheet iron, with the year 1745 and the painted coat of arms of the family v. Bibra is at the Haach restaurant. The shield comes from Irmelshausen, where it was purchased a few decades ago.

Two gate houses that closed off the village, as well as the two gate houses of the neighboring village Einhausen, were demolished in the middle of the 19th century. A beam decorated with the Bibra coat of arms on house no. 50 comes from this.

In the village layout, E. Fritze recognizes clear traces of the Slavic round shapes, which in the meantime have been broken up and blurred in places as a result of major destructive events, such as fire damage and war or as a result of enlargement buildings.