Elaine C. Block is president and founder of Misericordia International, an association for the multi-disciplinary research and dissemination of information on the history and iconography of choir stall sculptures. Impassioned by medieval misericords, Dr Block has traveled from church to church for the past twenty years to catalogue the images carved on choir stalls throughout Europe. Her photographic archives, the largest in Europe, numbers over 50,000 slides and prints. Professor Emerita from City University of New York, she has created and produced five films, Misericords: Hidden Mirrors of Medieval Life, which are distributed by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. She has published fifteen articles on medieval iconography, publishes a biannual journal, Profane Arts of the Middle Ages, and is completing a five volume Corpus of Medieval Misericords. Misericords in the Rhineland is the first book in English on German choir stalls. Much of the content has never been published in any language.
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Title Page:  
Cologne Cathedral NL-21 Salome (Page 53)

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MISERICORDS
IN THE RHINELAND

Elaine C. Block
**Introduction**

Misericords are carvings under the hinged seats of choir stalls. They support little ledges which serve as supplementary seats when the main seat is raised. Monks and canons could perch on these ledges and still appear to be standing as required for the long hours of prayer. Only a stick was necessary to support these ledges but wealthy religious communities often wished to beautify their choir stalls, including the spaces under the seats. The congregation never saw these carvings since the “monk’s church” was separated from the “people’s church” by a large screen which remained in place until the 17th century. Because of the invisibility of the choir stalls, especially of the misericords, the carvers had greater liberty to create. Rather than follow the religious program of church sculpture, they revealed many aspects of daily life of the middle ages. This book is concerned with the misericords in the Rhineland.

The Rhineland region of Germany extends from Trier on the south to the Ruhr Valley on the north and includes the mountainous regions of the Eifel and Bergischerland to west and east. It includes the two provinces: Rhineland-Pfaltz and Northrhine Westphalia. The Rhine region has an exceptionally rich collection of over 300 medieval narrative misericords. In addition other Rhineland misericords have foliate designs and still other choir stalls in this region have lost their misericords to war or other disasters.

The Cathedral at Cologne has over 80 medieval misericords in addition to hundreds of other carvings on the choir stalls. Most of the other churches in Cologne once had medieval choir stalls but they succumbed to war, as at St. Gereon, or to changes in fashion. Only those at St. Andreas, a few at Santa Maria Im Kapitol and a few fragments now in the Schnütgen Museum remain. A half dozen small churches from Boppard-on-Rhine south of Koblenz, to Emmerich at the Dutch border and several others in the mountainous areas bordering the Rhine Valley have miraculously retained at least part of their medieval stall carvings. These churches are all open to the public and still use the choir stalls as a regular part of the church furnishings. Some churches, such as St. Nicholas at Kalkar, Saint Mary at Kempen, and Saint-Victor at Xanten have, in addition, remarkable paintings and sculpted altarpieces. St.
Chad's Cathedral at Birmingham, England purchased choir stalls from a Rhineland church in the 19th century. They are still in use.

Choir stall carvings in several small churches north of Cologne — Cleves, Kempen, Kalkar, Straelen and Emmerich, as well as the cloister at Steinfeld near Aachen — show distinct Flemish influence. The indecisive man sits on the floor between two chairs at Kempen as the Flemish carvers have portrayed this Flemish proverb at Hoogstraten, Belgium, and as far south as Toledo, Spain, and Coimbra in Portugal. At Kempen a woman, and at Marienheide a man try to outgape the oven, an impossible task. The Flemish carvers showed such gapers from Amsterdam in the Netherlands to Isle Adam and Rouen in France and across the Pyrenees to Toledo and Coimbra. The dog puts his paw or his head in the pot on several misericords as well as on an armrest at Boppard. While this must have been a frequent kitchen scene it also illustrated the proverb *When the master comes late to dinner the dog will lick the pot clean.* The same scene appears on 17th century emblems to illustrate a parable of Plutarch. The poorly trained dog eats from the pot while the well trained dog hunts for food. The farmer strews roses (not pearls) to swine at Kempen as he does at Hoogstraten, Aarschot, Rouen and Toledo. It is mainly at Kempen that we see Flemish proverbs but Emmerich also enjoyed an important collection, which was largely destroyed during World War II. We still see the stupid man there on an armrest as he tries to shear a bristled pig. At one time a smart man must have sheared a sheep on one of the stalls destroyed during World War II. Two scenes on misericords at Hoogstraten in Belgium illustrate the proverb: *Much wool, few squeals; little wool, many squeals.*

A number of Rhineland choir carvings deal with eggs. At Cleves, Kalkar, and Kempen a man cracks eggs by beating them with a flail, an unbelievable waste of energy. There was also a saying, *When you break eggs you end up with a lot of shells.* A little man sitting on an armrest at Kempen cries bitter tears as his basket of eggs turns over, breaking some of the shells. At Cleves, Emmerich, Kempen, and Steinfeld a fool sits in a basket and hatches eggs. In the 15th century there was a tax on eggs during Lent and concentration on these images may be due to the anger of the people at this ecclesiastical tax.
Another distinctive quality of the Rhineland choir stalls is the number of anti-Judaic motifs. The best known of these sculptures is the Judensau on a middle panel of the north lower choir stalls of Cologne Cathedral. In one scene a Jew, identifiable by his judenhut, sucks a sow's milk while another Jew clutches the upright pig. On an adjoining panel two Jews overturn a barrel and a couple of pigs tumble out. On the reverse side of this panel, two tiny pigs eat acorns under a tree while a humanized pig, possibly a caricature of a Jew, walks with them. The scene undoubtedly associates the Jew with pigs and marks the dirty and gluttonous pig as the companion of the Jews.

We also see a Judensau at Xanten, not on the choir stalls, but on the base of a statue of the Visitation of the Virgin. Other Judensaus exist on buildings and choir stalls, all in Germanic countries. Two Jews drink sow's milk on a misericord at the Cathedral of Basel. Others are on the facade of Saint-Martin at Colmar, on a corbel in a chapel at the Cathedral at Metz, on capitals of the Cathedrals at Upsalla, Brandenburg and Magdeburg, and one is in a small church at Lemgo in the Hartz mountains.

Other anti-Judaic signs appear on the Rhineland stalls. On an end panel at Kalkar the bent head of a man with large hat and large
nose peers hazily through his eyeglasses as he fingers his rosary. The eyeglasses are a sign that he does not see the light and his features identify him as a Jew. At the other end of the stalls, to balance this figure, a donkey says his rosary. These two images convey the same idea: some pray by pretense without thought or spirituality. An owl on an end panel of Saint-Andreas in Cologne, wears a pair of eyeglasses, another instance of the Jew who allegedly does not see the light. At Cologne Cathedral an ape-physician treats an owl, while a human physician treats a faithful Christian wife.

The choir stalls at Xanten are much older than the other Rhineland ensembles and are simpler. Each misericord is composed of a single leaf. Each armrest has two human or animal heads, one at shoulder and one at hand level. The dark varnish hides their details.

The choir stalls of Cologne Cathedral, early 14th century, are some of the most beautiful and extensive in Europe. The end panels are intricately carved with hundreds of figures and animals encrusted between vines and foliage. Below these elaborate scenes, and on pillars between the rear stalls are old testament scenes. These are the events depicted in the Biblia Pauperum and the Humanis Salvationis which prefigure the Christological cycle. The sacrifice of Abraham for example, predicts the crucifixion of Christ.

Sculptural traditions on choir stalls in other parts of Germany are quite different from those in the Rhineland and show little of the Flemish influence. In the stalls in southern Germany, such as those at Menningen, Nördlingen and Maulbronn Abbey, storied misericords are not part of the choir stall tradition. Instead the sculptural emphasis is on portraits on the ends of the stalls. At Ulm, the renowned sculptor Jorg Syrlin sculpted the heads of the great men of antiquity — with his self-portrait masquerading as Cicero — on the north stalls, and the heads of pagan sibyls on the south stalls. The stalls at Blaubeuren, sculpted by Syrlin the Younger, also focus on end panels with prophets. The misericords at Ulm and Blaubeuren are small and of less artistic merit than these portraits. The choir stalls of Saint-Andreas in Cologne follow these traditions with emphasis on pairs of prophets who sit on monsters at the end of each bank of stalls while the misericords are foliate designs.
Other German stalls with exceptional misericords are in churches at Magdeburg, Stendal, Constance, Bardowick near Luneville, Breisach, and Einbeck in the Hartz Mountains. The important sets at Bremen and Lubeck were destroyed in World War II or before. None of the sets outside of the Rhineland shows extensive Flemish influence although a few proverbs are evident. The misericords at the Cathedral of Magdeburg are at least partially based on those of Cologne, although they were carved about thirty years later. Several of the “dancing girls” of Cologne also dance on Magdeburg misericords. The iconography that illustrates charity, a woman breast-feeding her father, is on an armrest and end panel at Cologne and on a misericord at Magdeburg. Most of the other Magdeburg stalls are very different in style and appear to follow, at least in part, a distinct program showing the battle between virtues and vices.

The storied misericords, armrests and back panels of the Rhineland choir stalls are described in this book. Each sculpture is described and where possible, an analysis or explanation of the iconography is added. Since 20th century eyes and minds have lost much of the information available to medieval society, some of the analyses are made through comparison, extrapolation and imaginative inference, and are therefore tentative. Other interpretations are supported by evidence in manuscripts, paintings and engravings. The same iconography, for example, that is used to express proverbs on misericords is repeated on a number of engravings where the proverb is explicitly stated.

Each misericord and armrest is numbered according to its place in the north (N), South (S) or West (W) row of stalls and in the lower (L) or upper (U) stalls. Numbering begins at the west, the usual entrance to the choir and moves toward the altar at the east end. End panels, if they include more than one carving, are identified as Top, Middle or Low panels. Armrests have the prefix A: and end panels have the prefix E:.

This book concludes with a short iconographic glossary. A bibliography includes only those books and articles related directly to the Rhineland choir stalls. All photographs were taken by the author within the past few years.
Armrest: SU-03  Dog in the Pot
Carmelite Church of Saint-Severus

Number: 34 choir stalls with 10 storied misericords.
Date: 15th century.
Arms: The arms are intriguingly carved. Squirrels eat nuts, monks read books, lions tangle and wildmen struggle to survive. Ordinary people as well as monsters and domestic animals occupy the arms. Those that are not listed are foliate.
End panels: These are composed of two basic sections. The upper part, known in England as the “Poppy” is carved in the round and the lower rectangular panel is carved in relief. The upper sections contain prophets with scrolls, angels, and on the south side, fools who laugh or fight. The lower sections show saints with symbols of a holy event in their lives. John has an eagle by his side. Saint Anthony accompanies the donkey who kneeled before the holy sacrament at Padua. Saint Peter is with the cock who thrice crowed and Barbara holds the tower in which she was incarcerated by her father.

Misericords: 34 choir stalls are each adorned with a misericord. There are 17 in two rows on each side of the altar with three fixed seats by the altar. Mingling with the predominant foliate patterns are a few animals and some expressive heads and figures. The few carvings on the partitions show monks and animals.

The stalls were transferred for a time to the Boppard parish church and were then restored in the 1980s. Misericords with foliate patterns are not listed.

Misericords

NL-03 Two Animals Eat Tails.

NL-07 Woman’s Head: Fabric Coif over Ass Ears. Such ears are a symbol of foolishness. It is unusual to see them on the head of a woman.
NU-02 **Man Squats.** Hands are on his knees. The man wears a belted coat with a small sack, imitating the shape of genitals, at his waist.

NU-04 **Green Man.** Foliage stems from his mouth. A head or mask in foliage is a pagan symbol representing Bacchus and wine festivals.

NU-06 **Hybrid-Bat.** It has a curly tail, clawed feet and a human head. This mammal was associated with the devil.

NU-08 **Head with Ass-Eared Cap.** The ass-ears are on fools' hats and show man as a fool.

SL-02 **Leaf and Calyx.**

SL-04 **Gourmand or Grimacer.** A head, usually male, with the mouth stretched by two hands can mean either the sin of gluttony or the game of grimacing. The game, common on English choir stalls, is a party game. The first to laugh at the funny face becomes the next grimacer. Gluttony is one of the seven deadly sins.

SL-05 **Vine Leaves with Grapes.** This motif might celebrate the wine industry in the region and the September harvest of grapes.
SL-07 **Bat with Talons.** Wings are spread and nailed to seat. Possibly the bat represents one nailed to a barn wall to keep away evil spirits.

SU-04 **Pair of Birds.** Tails are crossed, beaks are closed with tongues extended and touching.

SU-07 **Aged Head.** He has wavy hair.

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**Armrests**

NL-02 Figure on knees, top missing. A clasp ties his jacket to his pants.
NL-04 Man in belted coat holds cup.
NL-05 Man in belted coat holds flask.
NL-06 Monk drinks from flask.

NU-01 Seated monster, mouth open.
NU-03 Squirrel holds nut.
NU-05 Monk reads.
NU-07 Man rides monster.
NU-08 Animal holds hands to eye and mouth, perhaps illustrating the senses.

SL-01 Lion mounted on another lion.
SL-03 Hybrid with cowl.
SL-05 Winged man with hat.

SU-01 Wildman tames lion.
SU-02 Man plays flute.
SU-03 Dog with head in pot.
SU-05 Combat between lion and dragon.
SU-07 Seated lion.
Elaine Block

Boppard: A:NU-05  Monk Reads

Cappenburg: A:NU-05  Pagan Head
A: SU-01  Wildman Tames Lion

E: NL-01  Couple Seated on Animals
Elaine Block

End Panels

NL-01 Top: Couple sits on animals whose tails are wound around a central stick. The man and woman each hold the neck of one animal, hold the central stick with their other hand and pull apart.
Middle Panel: Saint Paul with sword.
Lower Panel: Cat licks self.

NL-02 Top: Bearded prophets with scroll.
Middle Panel: Bishop with staff and book stands by a tiny figure, probably the donor of the stalls.
Lower Panel: Donkey licks belly.

NL-03 Top: Bearded prophets with scrolls.
Lower Panel: Knight holds shield.

NL-04 Top: Two prophets kneel with banderole. [ISAIAS VII 14] (Modern)
Middle Panel: Saint Peter with key and book.
Lower Panel: Cock.

Lower Panel: Saint with book.

NU-02 Upper Panel: Saint John with eagle.

SL-01 Top: Men with banderoles sit on monsters.
Middle Panel: Saint George and Dragon.
Lower Panel: Dragon bites its back.

SL-02 Top: Fools fight with sword and lance. One strikes the other.
Middle Panel: Barbara with tower.
Lower Panel: Monk kneels, hand to head.
E:SL-02 Fools Fight

SL-03 Top: Fools with clubs pull at center column.
Middle Panel: St. Catherine.
Lower Panel: Dog with pole and pails over his shoulder.

E:SL-03 Fools with Clubs

Upper Carving: St. Appolonia and fire.
Lower Panel: Dragon.

SU-01 Top: St. Luke writes, ox at his feet.
Lower Panel: Christ with orb blesses.

SU-02 Top: St. Mark writes, lion at his feet.
Lower Panel: Crowned female saint, hands crossed.
Elaine Block

Partitions

NL-01 Hybrid friar preaches at lectern.
NL-02 Cowled head with wrinkled forehead.

NU-01 Hooded head.

SL-02 Bird Bites Its leg.
SL-04 Cowled head.

SU-01 Aged cowled head.
SU-02 Hybrid with taloned feet, lower half only.

Cappenburg: NU-03 Sacrifice of Abraham
Northrhine-Westphalia

Cappenburg

Stiftskirche St. Johannes (Castle chapel)

Number: 44 choir stalls, each with a misericord.
Date: 1509-1520

Comments: Ten additional stalls were in the original set. Four were removed, two on each side, to widen the aisle between the north and south stalls so that the congregation could view the Eucharist. This was done some time in the XVII century and no one knows what happened to the carvings. In addition, a door was cut into the high stalls on each side eliminating two carvings each north and south. In addition the middle aisle from the lower to upper row of stalls was widened thereby eliminating two more stalls. The work is apparent since the end panels were replaced against the adjoining stall which already had an end carving. Some of the interior end panel carvings are almost hidden by the armrest carvings of the stalls which are now at the ends of each row.

Misericords

NL-01 Monster-Jester Grabs a Man. The monster has a “crocodile” mouth and wears a scalloped jacket. His lower body is only a tail which ends in a ball. He holds the tip of his tail with one hand and grabs the man’s shoulder with the other. The man, dressed in tights, belted jacket and low shoes, half turns his head toward the monster, possibly to plead with him. His hands are raised as if surprised or he has given up trying to flee the monster. His knees are bent slightly as if he is walking or is being dragged back.
NL-02 **Man Shoots Arrow at Eagle.** The man is seated on the ground as if he has fallen. He wears a square neck outfit and a helmet-like hat. He pulls his cross bow to shoot the eagle in the neck. The eagle, however, already has one foot on his knee and the string to the bow in his mouth as if to bite it and make it ineffective.

NL-03 **Old Man with Shield Kneels.** The bearded man with belted tunic and square hat rests on one knee while the other knee is slightly raised. He holds the shield in both hands as if defending himself but is not prepared to fight.

**NL-04 Two Men Fight.** They are tied together by a cord that stretches around their necks. The apparent winner is bald and wears a scalloped jacket, tights and low shoes. He stands with bent knees and holds one knee while he raises the other hand. The curly haired loser faces him on bended knees. He wears a deep V-neck belted outfit and his arms are probably tied behind him.
NL-05  **Man Blows Trumpet.** Simply dressed, he leans forward and blows into a wind instrument which he holds toward the ground.

NL-06  **Absalom before His Death.** His hair is caught in a tree. He wears a loose scalloped jacket and stands under a branch of the tree. One foot and one hand touch the tree trunk and his hair is caught in a branch.

NL-07  **Sacrifice of Cain and Abel.** The two men kneel before an altar on which rest a sheaf of grain and an animal. Abel kneels and prays before the wheat which is being consumed by fire. Cain, on one knee, turns away from the altar with one hand near his offering.

NL-08  **Salamander.** Head is turned, mouth open.

NL-09  **Fox Preacher.** He is behind a lectern and three rather large fowl stand before him. The fox is cowled and a goose, or chicken, head now gone, is already in his hood.

NU-1  **Jonah Emerges from Fish.** The head of the open-mouthed fish is above the water. Bearded nude Jonah, hands in prayer, rises from its mouth, symbol of the resurrection.

NEW-2  **Two Men Fight.** The older man grabs the other's leg and raises his arm. The other restrains the raised arm and kicks the older man in the groin.

NU-01  **Monster Reads Book.** Monster has a furry body, snake-like tail and cloven hooves. It wears a pointed hat on its humanoid head.

NU-02  **Man Carries Heavy Weight.** The bearded man wears a belted jacket, leggings and low shoes, has a flat hat with upturned brim, a large purse at his belt and carries the weight by a rope over his shoulder. This image appears on several other misericords, such as Dortmund, as well as in Bruegel's proverb painting. It means to be unlucky in love.
NU-03 **Sacrifice of Abraham I.** Isaac, wearing a belted coat and hat with small upturned brim, carries a bundle of wood over his shoulder as he walks behind his father. Bearded Abraham wears a long robe with small cape and hat with elaborate upturned brim. He leads the way, carrying fire in one hand and a knife in the other, as in the biblical verse. See Amiens. (See page 16.)

NU-04 **Griffin and Devil.** A griffin-like monster with hanging fox ears stands over the humanoid devil with its front paw on the devil’s chest. The devil kicks the griffin in its groin.

NU-05 **Man Ready to Whip Man.** One bare-headed man, wearing a knee length belted coat with reveres, raises his whip or flail over a crouching curly headed man who wears a long robe.

NU-06 **Jerome and Lion.** The saint, clad in robe and cardinal hat, faces the seated lion as he takes a thorn from the lion’s paw.

NU-07 **Angel Plays Lute.** The kneeling angel has large spread wings and both hands on the strings of the lute.

NU-08 **Marital Combat.** Woman with a huge distaff mounts her husband. Her braided hair is visible under her loose coif and she wears enormous shoes. She holds out a carder to her husband who holds a crossbow in both hands. The implication is that he is being forced to do woman’s work rather than the manly art of hunting. The enormous shoes may symbolize her sexual energy.

NU-09 **Noah Sends Dove from Ark.** The ark is a half timber structure with a slat roof. Bearded Noah, scarf on his head, leans out the window and holds the dove in his extended hand.
NU-10 **Atlas Holds Seat.** Bearded man in simple shorts and hat looks sideways as he enfolds the molded corbel under the seat with both hands. His knees are apart and also press against the corbel.

NU-11 **Seated Man Holds Bag.** He is bearded and simply dressed with a flared jacket, low shoes and a hat that looks like an upside down pot. A large purse with a scallop shell on it is open and is possibly attached to his belt at the back. A bag, also with a scallop shell on it, is on a three-legged table before him. The scallop shell, symbol of Saint-Jacques, indicates that he is a pilgrim or has been on a pilgrimage. There are several references to people with pots on their heads, including an armrest at Walcourt in Belgium and dialogue from Shakespeare’s Falstaff.
SL-01  **Atlas.** Rear view of an old man with hat holding up seat. This may be the same figure as NU-10 except that he has slipped down under the exertion of his action.

SL-02  **Headless Men Fight.** There is one bearded head between them which they may both be holding in their extended hands. A more likely explanation is that one man's head is directly behind and therefore hidden by the other. Viewed from a certain perspective, the viewer has the impression that the two men share one head. The men are running toward each other, each with a hand raised as if to hit the other. One holds a club and the other a stone.

SL-03  **Monster.** It is four-legged with two toes on each foot, a large open mouth and head peering over its back.

SL-04  **Old Man Leans Forward.** One hand is to his head and the other to the ground.

SL-05  **Bird.** Its claws are three-toed and it spreads its wings.

SL-06  **Cloaked Man Holds Jug.** He wears a simple pointed hat, kneels, and holds the jug before him as his long cloak blows behind him with the wind. This may be a pun — he is filled with wind.

SL-07  **Wildman and Twig.** A bearded man leans over and holds a forked twig or metal object. He wears a jacket over what looks like a furry body. Possibly a Wildman.

SL-08  **Owl Sits on Branch.** Its beak is open and its feathers are clearly defined.

SL-09  **Kneeling Man Plays Drum.** He wears a flared jacket with a deep V-neckline. He is on one knee and rests his drum on the other. His free hand, with no stick, is poised to strike the drum.

SWU-1  **Man with Club and Shield Kneels.** He wears a square-necked jacket with reverses. He kneels in the same position as the drummer in SL-09 and holds the shield before him with the club in his poised hand.
SWU-2 **Winged Man Blows Horn.** The nude man leans forward, wings raised, and blows his horn, probably an indication of the Last Judgement.

SU-01 **Grotesque Mask.** Ass ears and moustache adorn a human face.

SU-02 **Kneeling Man with Banner.** Man with short beard and hat tied under his chin wears a V-necked jacket split at the waist. He kneels in the same position as the men in SL-09 and SWU-1. He raises one hand and holds his streamer in the other. See woman with banner at Breda.

SU-03 **Tumbler Does Split.** Man wears a short jacket and short pants. His midriff is bare and the jacket, with buttons, is open. He holds his spread legs with his hands.

SU-04 **Two Men with One head.** One holds the other's arm and the other holds a foot. This may be an example of a visual "trick" that was popular in stone as well as wood. The men are in such a position that the second head may be hidden behind the visible head to give the appearance of two men with one head. See tumblers at New College Oxford and at the Cathedral of Rouen where two figures are carved so that they also appear to be four people. Three heads can also appear to share two eyes. There are several stone carvings where three perfectly formed rabbits appear to share three ears.
SU-05  **Falling Man Holds a Bucket.** The man sits, hands by his side as if to break a fall. One foot is on the ground and the other leg is raised. He holds up a bucket as if to prevent its contents from spilling or breaking.

SU-06  **Monster.** The winged furry monster, upside down and mouth open, clutches the corbel.

SU-07  **Fool Shoots Crossbow.** Man in long robe and ass-eared hat kneels before his crossbow and holds it with two claws.

SU-08  **David Steps on Goliath.** David has already stunned the giant with his sling shot. He now puts one foot on the giant’s belly and holds a sword ready to cut off his head. The stone can still be seen on Goliath’s head. Scene I - the slingshot - may have been on a now missing stall.

SU-09  **Merman Holds Club.**

SU-10  **Mermaid Holds Mirror.**

SU-11  **Two headed Monster.**
Armrests

NLW-1 Man, possibly a monk, is sinking into the mouth of hell, which has a row of triangular teeth. The man grasps some of these teeth. He has scalloped hair, a mouth open in a round form and a cowl on his back. (corner stalls)

NL-02 Foliage.
NL-03 Bird bites its head.
NL-04 Man sits with trumpet ears and a coil around his neck. His back is humped and he holds onto the molding.
NL-05 Seated man holds instrument but does not look at it.
NL-06 Foliage.

Panel NL-B Monk with scimitar. He may be pulling it from its case. (Bas-relief)
Panel NL-C Wheat.

NL-07 Devil with horned head, chin on his hand, wears wooden shoes.
NL-08 Foliage.
NL-09 Saint Margaret rises from the dragon which tries to restrain her by grabbing her cloak.
NL-10 Devil.

Panel NL-D Bearded head with large curved nose, bump on forehead and small horn, is probably a Jew.

Panel NU Woman on a lion. (Hidden by end panel)

NWU-1 Man falls backwards, hand to head.
NWU-2 Bearded man leans over book which he holds sideways.
NWU-3 Ape-fool sits (corner stalls).

NU-04 Man sits.

NU-05 Pagan head with crooked nose and foliage from mouth which covers its hair. (See page 15.)

NU-06 Seated man with giraffe neck. Probably a race from the East. His bearded head is turned to the side. He wears short pants.
NU-07 Sciapod, a race from the East, shows a young man with one large foot held as umbrella over his head as protection from the sun.
NU-08 Winged monster with human hands.
NU-09 Ape holds foliage.
NU-10 Monk, one hand on head and one on knee. This gesture is repeated often on choir stalls.
NU-11 Dog-eared man — a race from the East as seen also on tympanum of Vezelay. The nearly nude figure with scarf down its back has short curly hair and regular features, except for ears hanging to its knees.

NU-12 Monster with head facing up.

NU-13 Bagpiper. He holds the pipe with two hands, fingers covering the holes and blows into a short chanter.

NU-14 Winged monster with Fool's bauble.

NU-15 Seated man on the pot. He wears a cape which hangs down his back and has one leg over his hand.

Panel NU-B Bearded man in belted coat drops eggs from overturned basket as he loses his balance.

SWL-01 Man leans over a bowl and mixes ingredients with a stick, possibly an apothecary.

SL-02 Bearded man with bowl, possibly begging.

SL-03 Coifed ape sits in four-legged tub or pot, paws on rim.

SL-04 Monster looks up.

SL-05 Hybrid man in mouth of hell. Some hell teeth are pointed, some are jagged.

SL-06 Man holds a closed book with one hand.

Panel SL-B Hybrid with bone.

Panel SL-C Jew's head in fool's cap. The nose is enormous with several sharp points. The hat is tight with ass ears and small scallops on top.

SL-07 Man with ass ears on all fours, banderole around his head.

SL-08 Disabled man blows a trumpet. He holds it with one hand and it rests on his Breugel-type crutch. He is bareheaded and wears a short belted tunic with short pointed sleeves.

SL-09 Seated man with cape and cowl, feet facing backwards.

Panel SL-D Dog bites its tail.

Panel SU-A Monster.

SWU-1 Monster.

SWU-2 Ape, walking on three feet, holds a weight in one paw.

SWU-3 Ass-eared man, possibly a hunchback, with club, which he aims at SU-04 (corner).

SU-04 Man crouches, awaiting a blow from the club in SWU-3.

SU-05 Hybrid with human bearded head, folded wings and two claws.

SU-06 Devil kneels and holds bone.
Elaine Block

SU-07 Seated man with strange hat holds one leg over one arm.
SU-08 Man sits and rests head on arms.
SU-09 Fool with bauble. Bent over, he wears an ass-eared cap and tunic ending in points tipped with a bell. His bauble has a fool head.
SU-10 Seated man holds a basket under his chin.
SU-11 Man blows a horn and holds it down with his foot. He wears the costume of the town watchman.
SU-12 Dog with head in kettle. It is the same kettle as in SL-03.
SU-13 Monster with open mouth.
SU-14 Ape holds an object.
SU-15 Man sits and leans his head on a tau-shaped crutch.
Panel SU-D Jonah emerges from the big fish. It has no teeth. Jonah, with curly hair and belted garment with pointed collar, holds onto its lips.

End Panels

NLW-A (Top) Ape and man in short pants face each other above what may be flames.
   (Low) Wildman in woods holds a long spear and lance.
NUW Two pairs of saints painted white - Saints Barbara and Catherine, tracery and small statues of prophets.
NL-B (Top) Fool and old bearded man back to back. The fool, with eared cap and bell at his elbow is on all fours. The old man appears to be rising.
   (Low) Saint Paul.
NL-C (Top) Monk and man tug. The monk has one hand on the man’s ankle and grasps his hand with the other as if helping him to rise. The man is well-dressed with brimmed hat tied under his chin, a jacket with cut sleeves and an underblouse.
   (Low) Saint Andrew.
NL-D (Top) Ape and Rabbit hold between them a shield with three cockle shells.
   (Low) Devil scourges a seated Christ-like figure who prays.
NU-E Madonna and child; Saint John with Chalice. 
Two men hold a model of the church.
Two small prophets.
SLW-A Two angels hold shields with cock and lion.
  (Low) Saint George, dressed in bourgeois fashion, kills a dragon at his feet.
SUW-ABishop with Mary Magdalene.
  Bishop with crowned woman.
SLW- B Man on all fours holds tail of monster around his neck as monster, open-mouthed, looks back.
  (Low) Apostle with book and hatchet
SLW-C Monster with beaked head bites man’s head as the man grasps the monster’s front claws.
  (Low) Prophet with sword.
SLW-D Two men, dressed in suits and hats, hold a shield with cock and lion.
  John with chalice blesses.

Canopy

The canopy of the choir stalls has tracery punctuated by small white statues. These are *Morris Dancers*, each in a different pose.
Cleves [Kleve]

Minoriten Church

Number: 32 stalls with 29 misericords. Three misericords were lost during a bombing. The choir stalls were then moved to a salt mine for the remainder of the war.
Date: 1474.
Comments: Acrobats and contortionists are the subjects of many of the Cleves misericords. Perhaps there was a well known contortionist in the area or maybe the carver just enjoyed showing his skill by these distortions. There is humor in carvings such as the asparagus basket used as a chamber pot. There is also a very frank portrayal of daily life with the man castrating his cat.
Misericords in the Rhineland

Misericords

NL-01 Missing.

NL-02 Man Holds Net. A man sits, leans to one side, holds the ends of an empty net and appears to be stretching it.

NL-03 Dog in the Pot. A dog stands with his head completely submerged in a pot that stands on the ground. This represents a common proverb *If the master is late for dinner the dog will lick the pot clean*. The same proverb appears in Bruegel’s *Netherlandish Proverbs*, in Windsor Chapel, Kalkar etc.

![Dog in the Pot](image)

NL-04 Nude Man with Club. A nude man with unkempt hair, possibly a Wildman without his lion’s suit, leans back on his hips, one hand on a knee and the other on a long stick at his side. He may represent the fool who denies God.

NL-05 Missing.
NL-06 **Man in Basket.** A nude man squats in a small basket, his hands folded under his chin. In some villages, this was punishment and the townspeople could humiliate the offender verbally or by throwing rotten food at him. *He falls through the basket* is also a proverb represented in Bruegel’s painting.

![Man in Basket](image)

NL-07 **Cowled Fox Reads Book.** The fox, a cowl on his back, rests his front paws on an open book; his brush tail hangs between his legs. This scene may invoke the proverb *The habit does not make the monk* and is an example of an animal replacing a human in the topsy-turvy world. The image is also a satire on friars since the friar-fox cannot possibly read the book.

NL-08 **Man with ‘Bagpipes’.** A man in a short tunic leans over, holds one foot with both hands, and puts his mouth to his knee with his cheeks puffed. He uses his leg as bagpipes and by blowing into it he makes music.
NL-07  Fox Reads Book

NL-08  Man Plays 'Bagpipes'
NU-01 **Basket in Water.** A man in a skull cap and short tunic tied with a cord bends over and holds a basket in the water. This is called *monk's work* since it is done for discipline only. To fill a basket with water is an impossible task.

![Image of Basket in Water](image)

NU-02 **Beast-Fish.** The fish has scales, a scalloped spine and a frightening face with teeth in a gaping mouth. While its form looks like a jumping dolphin, its diabolic features suggest a connection with the Leviathon.

NU-03 **Scratching Man.** A nude man sits and leans over with one leg raised to his shoulder and the other on the ground. His hands are on his rear end and his expressive face indicates discomfort. He may be searching for lice or bugs.

NU-04 **Donkey Licks Hoof.** An animal with a horse body but strange head bends down to lick a front leg.

NU-05 **Acrobat.** A man in a short tunic contorts his body with his head down and one leg over his head. His head is covered with a net or quilted fabric, possibly for protection.
Misericords in the Rhineland

NU-05 Acrobat

NU-06 Fool Shears Pig
Elaine Block

NU-06 Fool Shears Pig. A man in a short tunic and attached cap leans over with one knee holding down a pig. He holds the pig’s ear in one hand and attempts to shear the pig with a short curved instrument. This scene is repeated on an armrest at Emmerich, on a misericord at Hoogstraten, Belgium, and in Bruegel’s proverb painting.

NU-07 Acrobat. A man tucks his arms behind him and bends back so his head touches his feet.

NU-08 Lion. Animal with a curly mane and large claws raises its rump and bends a front paw.

SL-01 Horse. Animal bends its head to the ground between its front legs. This may be a sign of humility.

SL-02 Man on Knees. A man wearing a short belted outfit with long sleeves and some object, possibly a knife case hanging from his belt, bends his head down and touches something, now missing, on the ground.

SL-03 Sheep Sleeps.

SL-04 Dog Licks Anus. Dog is curled, one leg over his head, and licks his anus, a sign of sloth.

SL-05 Missing.

SL-06 Cat with Flask Hunts Mouse. A cat holds a flask in one paw and looks down at a mouse, of which only the outline remains. The flask is the symbol of a physician and the cat-physician inhabits the topsy-turvy world.

SL-07 Man Somersaults. A person, who may be the same contortionist seen on other carvings, has one knee and both hands on the ground as if he had just somersaulted and is about to rise.
SL-08  **Man and Asparagus.** A simple man sits on and defecates into a woven basket while a chamber pot filled with asparagus lies on the floor before him. This example from the topsy-turvy world shows the exchange of function of two objects: the asparagus basket and the chamber pot.
SU-01  **Man Castrates Cat.** A man sits, wearing the same outfit as the men on the other stalls, and castrates a small animal, probably a cat. Not unexpectedly the carving is mutilated.

SU-02  **Man with Club.** A man with curly hair leans over and holds a large club over his shoulder, ready to strike at an object now missing. He may be beating eggs, as we see at Kempen and Kalkar, or snails or cranes which were common enemies in etchings and playing cards in the middle ages.
SU-03 **Ram.** An animal with small curved horns, a band round its head and cloven hooves, reclines and licks its stomach.

SU-04 **Acrobat on Knife.** A man with shirt attached to tights by elastics bends back over a sword. A similar acrobat is on a misericord at the Musée national du moyen age in Paris, originally from Saint-Lucien-de-Beauvais.

SU-05 **Donkey with Rosary.** An animal with cloven hooves lowers its head and bites a rosary.

SU-06 **Hybrid on All Fours.** A hybrid with a human head and hands but rear quarters with cloven hooves bends his head between his legs. He holds an object, possibly a bone, in his mouth.

SU-07 **Man Touches Toe.** A man with a grotesque face wearing a shirt and tights, somewhat separated at the rear, leans forward and touches the bottom of his foot with one hand. He may be removing a thorn or a splinter.
SU-08  **Two Figures.** All that remains of this mutilated carving is a pestle or pot with a foot at each side. The feet belong to two figures, both of whom move in the same direction.

**Armrests**

NL-01  Owl (bas relief on inner side of end panel).
NL-02  Foot Soldier kneels.
NL-03  Monster looks up.
NL-04  Beard Puller. Unhappy man in scalloped vest pulls his beard.
NL-05  Figure bent over holds his hands (head missing).
NL-06  Kneeling man plays recorder.

![Kneeling Man Plays Recorder](image)

NL-07  Turbaned acrobat puts foot on his head.
NL-08  Male harpy.
NL-09  Animal (bas relief on inner side of end panel) - mutilated.
Misericords in the Rhineland

NU-01 Monster (bas relief).
NU-02 Man, hand pointing to his eye, holds an apple.
NU-03 Figure with Wings that replace arms.
NU-04 Cowled Monster eats rosary.

NU-05 Monster-hybrid with human head.
NU-06 Smiling Man sits facing backwards.
NU-07 Bearded nude holds two apples.
NU-08 Man on knees, hands folded, extends his tongue.
NU-09 Ape eats apple (bas relief).

SL-01 Man mounted on animal, not a lion, rends its jaws.
SL-02 Man kneels and bangs drum.
SL-03 Monster.
SL-04 Monster.
SL-05 Hybrid with human head.
SL-06 Bird wears conical hat.
Elaine Block

SL-07 Missing.
SL-08 Monster.
SL-09 Dog barks (bas relief).

SU-01 Cock (bas relief).
SU-02 Missing, paws only remain.
SU-03 Man sits, hands to his face.
SU-04 Animal (defaced).
SU-05 Hybrid with human head.
SU-06 Monster.
SU-07 Angry contortionist with thick lips.
SU-08 Ape-man with shield.
SU-09 Dog (bas relief).

End Panels

The lower stalls have a total of four end panels, one at each end of the north and south rows. The top of each panel displays a group of figures sculpted in the round (top). The lower section (mid) is carved in bas relief with additional small carvings (a, b) in the upper sections or corners. A full figure stands in a Gothic niche (low).

NLW (Top) Monk and Abbot. They face each other on their hands and knees. The abbot wears a purse at his belt and touches the monk’s face in a sign of blessing. The monk has his hand to his chest as a sign of repentance. The abbot was apparently away or at least was unaware of the sinful actions of the monk who now asks his forgiveness. Both men bow low before the other, but the abbot bows lower.

(Low) Saint Francis holds a knife and a wrapped book.
(Mid) Man carries basket of stones, probably to build or repair the monastery. In the other corner a man pumps a pair of bellows to fan a fire.

NLE (Top) Pair of Monsters.
(Low) Franciscan monk holds an open book.
(Mid) Foliage.
NUW  (Mid) Old Woman stands at left in an agitated manner. At the right her husband brandishes the jug of wine he was able to imbibe before he was caught.

(Top) Saint Clare of Assisi holds a monstrance and a wrapped book.
(Low) Standing woman has a fillet in her hair and holds a book.

NUE  (Top) Madonna holds her child in her arms.

E:SLW (Top)  Fools Fight over Food
SLW  (Top) Pair of simple men fight over a pot full of food.
(Mid) Man on each side pulls a cloth that stretches over
the arch of that niche.
(Low) Franciscan monk with walking stick and book.

SLE  (Top) Pair of fools laugh over an empty pot. One holds a
bone and bangs the pot to make music.

E:SLE  (Top) Fools Laugh at Empty Pot
(Mid) Head of a fool.
(Low) Mary Magdalene holds her ointment jar.

SUE  (Top) Franciscan monk stands.
(Mid) Tiny head in fools cap.
(Low) Saint Barbara holds her tower.
Cologne [Köln]

The Cathedral

Number: 104 stalls of which 20 are modern.
Date: Early 14th century (c1310)

Each of the cathedral choir stalls has an armrest, usually a double figure or animal; a misericord; and beneath the misericord on the lower back panel of the stall, a pair of bas reliefs framed by quatrefoil moldings. There are no high backs or canopies. However, a few back panels on the wall behind the choir stalls cover the lower sections of the choir pillars, each depicting an event from the old
testament. The lower and upper stalls have end panels carved with bas-reliefs topped by ornate carvings in the round. The tiny figures cavorting within the foliate scrolls complement the larger figures of knights, kings and ordinary daily pastimes. It takes many hours of observation to digest all the details in these carvings.

The subjects of the misericords are varied. They lack the Flemish influence found in most of the other Rhineland churches, probably because they are of earlier date. The human figures show varied life experiences with knights and noblemen, bishops and monks, courting couples, dancers, musicians, hunters, physicians, and others at work and play. The majority of the misericords are of fantastic subjects. Hybrids have human heads and upper torsos but hind quarters are hairy animal limbs with cloven hooves. Music is a dominant theme on the stalls. Women dance while men, animals and hybrids play a variety of musical instruments. A few animals and birds are realistic but most are composed of parts of various animals combined in fantastic ways. Some are winged and have serpent tails.

The quatrefoils also show human and fantastic aspects of life. Many are foliate masks which convey pagan and Bacchic themes; other masks have fantastic or human features. In one of a pair of quatrefoils an ape physician with his urine flask treats an owl, symbol of Jews. The companion image is of a physician taking the pulse of a woman with her faithful dog on her lap. Quadruped hybrids with bat wings fight or play musical instruments. The carvings are detailed and spirited.

Many of the characters and themes on the misericords, quatrefoils and armrests are also found in the margins of medieval manuscripts, especially books of hours such as the *Grands Heures* of the Due de Berry. Some are also found on the façades of Gothic cathedrals, such as Rouen, Paris and Chartres. Some characters are historical, important to the history of Germany and to the cathedral.

In the descriptions below m refers to misericord and q to quatrefoil. Back panels (B) are listed as are the innumerable scenes in the end panels (E). Only highlights of the arms (A) are listed. Most armrests
are pairs of figures which are difficult to identify in any specific way. Carvings that date from or were restored in the 19th or 20th century are so indicated.

**NL-01**  
**m:** Double Headed Eagle. (19th century)  
**q:** Prophet and Scroll.  
Young Man with Scroll.

**NL-02**  
**m:** Lion.  
**q:** Foliate Mask.

**NL-03**  
**m:** Foliage. Oak leaves.  
**q:** Prophet and Scroll.  
Young Man with Sword and Judenhut. (Partly restored)

**NL-04**  
**m:** Mask. (Partly restored)  
**q:** Mask.  
Mask.

**NL-05**  
**m:** Monster.  
**q:** Prophet with Scroll.  
Young Man with Sword. (Cracked wood. Partly new)

**NL-06**  
Armed Hybrid
NL-06  **m: Armed Hybrid.** The hybrid has the head and upper body of a human with a lizard tail, animal hind quarters and cloven hooves. The figure, probably female, is clothed and her head is covered with a wimple. She holds an upraised sword in one hand and a shield in the other as she stands in a vineyard. She may represent a composite of sins: ire, lust and gluttony.

   **q:** Foliage.

NL-07  **m: Winged Ape-Monster.** (Restored) He has huge ears, heavy eyebrows and the lower part of his body is reduced to a few bits of hairy skin.

   **q:** A Pair of Prophets. They are bearded and display scrolls.

NL-08  **m: Intertwined Monsters.** (19th century)

   **q:** Foliage.

   Foliage.

NL-09  **m: Monster with Grapes.** (19th century)

   **q:** Dragon.

   Dragon.

NL-10  **m: Bearded Hybrid.** He wears a conical hat, possibly a *Judenhut* and holds up the seat with his head as he stands on his cloven hooves.

   **q:** Foliage.

   Foliate Mask.

NL-11  **m: Foliage.**

   **q:** Monster-Dragon.

   Hybrid Holds Ram Horn and Club. He wears a flat cap on his human head, has one human foot and one animal foot. He holds up a ram’s head by its horn in one hand and a curved stick in the other. His form and attributes associate him with the devil.

NL-12  **m: Bicorporal Monster.** (Restored 20th century)

   **q:** Foliage.

   Foliate Animal Mask.
NL-13  

**m:** Foliate Mask.  
**q:** Foliate Mask.  
Man with Ball.

NL-14  

**m:** Foliage. (Restored 20th century)  
**q:** Foliage.  
Foliage.

NL-15  

**m:** Two Hybrids Dance. The male, with bishop’s miter, blows a horn. The female, with draped head, probably represents a nun. They may be the damned who entertain at the devil’s court.  
**q:** Mermaid Nurses Her Baby. While the mermaid is usually shown with comb and mirror as a model of vanity and lust, other misericord mermaids swim with their daughters (Toledo) or nurse their children or lions. The baby mermaid here has a fish tail.  
Two Monsters. They have cloven hooves and crossed tails.

NL-16  

**m:** Woman, Shield and Monsters. The woman faces the monsters, one at each side, raises one arm (now broken) and holds a shield in the other hand.  
**q:** Foliate Mask.
NL-17  **m: Bearded Hybrid Sits.** The bald man, sitting before a pair of large leaves, holds his beard with one hand and rests his other hand on one knee.

  *q: Dog with Bone.*  
  *Dog Hunts Stag.*

NL-18  **m: Bald Man with Hand on Rear End.** He bends to side side and may be smiling.

  *q: Foliage.*  
  *Foliage.*

NL-19  **m: Foliage.**

  *q: Winged Lion.*  
  *Centaur.*

NL-20  **m: Monk Rings Bell.** With head and body draped he kneels on one knee before foliage, raises one hand with a bell and holds up the seat with his other hand.

  *q: Woman’s Head in Foliage.*  
  *Woman’s Head in Foliage.*

NL-21  **m: Acrobat Handstand.** Woman in long gown gracefully performs a handstand or dance with legs bent at the knees. She is similar to Salome who dances on the north tympanum of the west façade of Rouen Cathedral. (See Title Page.)

  *q: Prophet with Crown and Scroll.*  
  *Man with Jew’s Hat and Scroll.*

NL-22  **m: Hybrid Bagpiper.** He has the same lower parts as the other Cologne hybrids and wears a hood with tail. He has ribbed bat wings and cloven hooves, signs of the devil, and holds the bagpipes before him. It looks as if he plays the instrument by squeezing the bag with one arm and covering holes in the pipe with fingers of both hands. The bagpipes have no windpipe which usually goes over the shoulder.

  *q: Head in Foliage.*  
  *Head in Foliage.*
NL-23  m: Foliage.

q: Pair of Dancers. The man steps forward as the woman points her toe and raises one hand.
Two Boxers. They wear shorts and punch each other’s faces. The sport probably symbolizes anger.
Misericords in the Rhineland

NL-24  **m: Dancer: Rear View.** She stretches her arms out to hold up fabric that falls gracefully in pleats. A similar dancer is on a misericord at Magdeburg Cathedral.

  q: Foliage.

  Foliage.

NL-25  **m: Bearded Head.** It has Negroid features.

  q: Knight Fights Lion.

  **Samson and Lion.** Samson wears a turban, sits on lion and rends its jaws.

NU-01  **m: Grotesque Mask with Tongue Extended.** The face is triangular with trumpet ears, thick curved eyebrows and a wide nose. (Restored 19th century)

  q: Hybrid Couple. The bearded male is hooded with two large hands under his small draped body. The female, draped and wimpled, has a small bat-wing tail. The webbed feet of a devil protrude under her body. (19th century)

NU-02  **m: Foliage.** (New mounting)

  q: Foliage. (19th century)

NU-03  **m: Man with Wings.** (19th century) He sits within his enfoldling wings, hands to his hooded head. Legs with cloven hooves extend below the wings.

  q: Foliage.

NU-04  **m: Bicorporal Animal.** (19th century) It has a dog’s head with foliate ears and four legs with cloven hooves.

  q: Hybrid. (19th century)

  **Lion.** (19th century)

NU-05  **m: Siamese Monsters with Ape Heads.** (19th century)

  q: Foliage.

NU-06  **m: Grotesque Head.** (19th century) It has snaky eyebrows, a straggly beard and two sharp teeth in its smiling mouth.

  q: Armed Centaur.

  **Dragon.** They face off in battle. (Restored 19th century)
NU-07  m: **Monster.** (19th century)
q: **Foliate Mask.**
Foliage.

NU-08  m: **Bearded Hybrid.** (Restored and sections added 19th century) His bearded head and upper body are draped. He stands, large wings raised, on two large hands with a long tail curved under his body.
q: **Monster.**
Dragon.

NU-09  m: **Fiddler.** (Ledge replaced 19th century) He is presented from the rear but with face tilted toward the viewer. He wears a pointed hood, loose shirt and tights. He holds the fiddle over his shoulder with one hand and a long bow with the other. His knees are bent as if jumping or dancing to the music.
q: **Foliate Mask.**
Foliage.

NU-10  m: **Dancer.** She stands, hands raised, holding up the veils of her long simple gown. A similar dancer is on a misericord at Magdeburg Cathedral.
q: **Two Soldiers with Shields.**
**Hybrid Musician.** The winged quadruped, with human
head and hands, squeezes the pouch of his bagpipes and holds one windpipe over his shoulder. The bagpipe pouch ends in a snake’s head.

**NU-11 m: Female Hybrid.** Her body is draped over a lion’s rear paws. With smiling face, wavy hair with a bun at each side, and no apparent arms, she walks with her body horizontal.

**q: Mask.** The male head is realistic, framed by hair and beard.

**Foliage.**

**NU-12 m: Hybrid with Shield.** He stands on his animal rear legs and tail and reaches up to hold the edges of the seat. His head and body are draped and he holds a shield before him.

**q: Monk and Fox.** The cowled fox and hooded bearded monk stand facing each other and hold hands. The proverb *The habit does not make the monk* applies here.

**Monk and Fox with Goose.** The monk, now holding a scroll, looks surprised as he sees the fox, without his cowl but with a goose in his mouth. Such scenes were the subjects of *exempla* which were used as moralized stories in sermons.
NU-13  **m: Woman Bends Over.** Her body is draped and her head is hooded. One hand is on her knee and the other at her head. Her feet are in position to walk rather fast but the position of her body would make this difficult. She may to be hiding under the seat. Similar figures are on several misericords in central France and in Magdeburg Cathedral.

**q: Bearded Head with Turban.**

**Bearded Head.** Hair and beard frame the heads as in NU-11q.

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NU-14  **m: Seated Man with Tau Crutch.** He sits before foliage, clad in long gown and turban. He leans on his crutch, eyes closed and head tilted down.
NU-14  
Man with Crutch

NU-14q  
Musician and Dancer
**Wrestlers.** Clad in skirts they grab the cord around their opponent’s neck. The object is to down the opponent by pulling this cord. Wrestling according to these rules is seen mainly on misericords in England.

**Musician and Dancer.** The man plays a fiddle with a bow, the woman dances while a dog looks on.

**Two Dancing Men.** They are back to back, both clad in long loose garments with hoods. Their arms and knees are bent. One, with African features, has his head thrown back, hand to his open mouth, and the upper part of his body twisted in the opposite direction to the lower part. The other man has one hand on his hip and leans his head sleepily on the other arm. There is a similar couple on an English misericord now at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

**Foliate Mask.**

Foliage.
NU-16  **m:** Foliage.

**q:** Vegetable-Woman. Her upper body seems to emerge from a plant and she holds up two branches with sprouting tips as if they are her legs. The figure might represent fertile land or be a variant of a double-tailed mermaid. A tile at the Schnütgen museum has the same image.

**Centaur Musician with Ape.** The centaur plays a short pipe as the ape, perched on his rump, scratches his rear end. Apes were frequent medieval entertainers.

NU-17  **m:** Foliage.

**q:** Foliage.

**Lion Mask.** The lion head is framed with his mane and with foliage.

NU-18  **m:** Physician and Patient. The man at left, in loose partly open robe and soft coif covering his head, leans his head on one hand and lifts up his robe with the other. The bearded man behind, in loose robe and cowl, which possibly has ass ears, places one hand on the patient’s chest and the other on his bare rear end. He may be diagnosing an ailment. Note physician and patient on a Rouen misericord.
Ape Treats Owl

Toledo, Spain

Ape Physician

Beverly Minster, England
q: Ape and Owl. This scene is probably an anti-Judaic statement. The ape holds the physician’s urine flask and taps the owl’s chest as if to diagnose an ailment. The owl is usually a symbol of the Jew who allegedly did not see the light. The ape who treats him represents the baser instincts of man and therefore is an appropriate physician for the Jew.

![Ape Treats Owl](image)

Physician and Patient. The human physician, on the other hand, treats an elegant lady who holds her faithful dog.

NU-19  m: Hybrid. The body is similar to NU-12 but with an animal head.
  q: Foliage.
  Foliage with Berries.

NU-20  m: Atlas. The draped young man kneels on one knee and holds up the seat with one hand.
  q: Winged Hybrid.
  Winged Monster.
NU-18q  Physician and Patient

NU-21  m: Zither Player. A woman, head tilted, with hair curled over her ears, plucks a zither.

\textit{q:} Mask.

Mask.

NU-22  m: Man's Head in Hood. His eyes are closed and fabric is draped over his head. It is similar to a head on the Saint-Claude (Jura) stalls and to one at Magdeburg Cathedral.

\textit{q:} Monster.

Monster.

NU-23: m: Bearded Hybrid Fighters. Two hybrids stand one behind the other. The man in front holds a knife and shield but seems oblivious to the imminent attack by the other.

\textit{q:} Foliage.

Foliage.
NU-24 **m: Armed Man in Woods: Rear View.** He holds a shield in one hand and a sword in the other as he peers among the oak trees replete with acorns. We know it is the month of November since several acorns have fallen to the ground. There is no indication of the nature of his enemy, an armed soldier or merely a snail.

* q: Lion Head with Four Bodies.
  Hybrid Holds Bell and Bone.

![Man in Woods](image)

NU-25 **m: Dancer.** (Damaged) The woman raises one hand and circles her waist with the other. She is one of five dancers on Cologne misericords.

* q: Mask.
  Mask.

NU-26 **m: Courting Couple.** They are probably monk and nun, clad in long gowns and head coverings. She has one hand on his chest and he has one hand on her knee, which she covers.

* q: Ape with Bird.
  Ape with Pot. The two scenes are in sequence. The ape carries the dead bird home and then cooks it in the pot.
NU-26 Courting Couple

NU-27  **m: Grotesque King’s Head.** (19th century) He has a deformed body.

  **q: Mask in Foliage.**
  **Mask in Foliage.** The heads peer through foliage.

SL-01 — SL-09 (19th century)

SL-10  **m: Two Owls.** They stand back to back, each with one foot raised, heads pointed down. A foliate ornament is between them.

  **q: Hybrid Dragon.**
  **Hybrid.** It has two human hands instead of feet, and bird wings.

SL-11  **m: Seated Lion.** In profile with head turned toward viewer, the right forefoot is raised; it is flanked by foliage.

  **q: Foliate and Floral Ornament.**
  **Fruit.**

SL-12  **m: Missing.**

  **q: Dragon Combat.**
  **Phoenix Rising.** Symbol of the Resurrection. A similar phoenix is on a misericord at Champeaux (Seine et Marne) France.
misericords in the rhineland

SL-13  m: Crouching Monkey. It wears a hooded garment.
        q: Foliate Ornament.
        Foliate Ornament.

SL-14  m: Two Horses in Woods. (20th century)
        q: Lion Breathes Life into Young. The bestiary describes
        the birth of dead pups and on the third day the father breathes life
        into them, an analogue with the resurrection.

        Pelican Feeds Young. The bestiary describes the pelican
        who kills her new-born fledglings and then resurrects them by
        feeding them blood plucked from her breast, again an analogy with
        the resurrection. There are other pelicans on the Cathedral stalls,
        several others in the Rhineland and many in other countries.

SL-15  m: Man between Monster-Lions. A bearded man sits
        calmly, hands crossed on his lap, head inclined as if sleeping. The
        heads of two monster-lions peer over his shoulders. A common
        interpretation is the Flight of Alexander but this is not likely since
        the king’s legend describes griffins as his guides through the skies.
        If it were Daniel in the Den of Lions he would not be asleep. One
        suggestion is that the beasts are “Tyrus” and that medicine from
        them will cure the sick man. The spiritual significance is that Christ’s
        love cures disease.

        q: Mask in Foliage.
        Mask in Foliage.

SL-16  m: Two Fabulous Animals Back to Back. They have
        curly hair, long ears which appear to join at the top of their heads,
        long stringy tails and one pair each of claws.

        q: Fabulous Animal. It has humanoid features, droopy
        ears, and a small thick-necked body.

        Dragon. Huge wings cover most of his bumpy spine and
        crouching body.

SL-17  m: Bearded Atlas. He wears a belted robe with hooded
        cape. On his knees, he raises his right elbow and with his tilted
        head holds up the seat. He touches his foot with the left hand.

        q: Foliate Ornament.
        Foliate Ornament.
SL-18  **m: Hybrid Plays Fiddle.** The instrument has two sound holes and four strings. The bow, along with the hybrid's arms, has disappeared.

  **q: Grotesque.** He sits on a pair of animal haunches and stretches his mouth with a pair of human hands. He wears a loose shirt. A wavy beard hangs below his mouth and two tufts of hair lie between a pair of large pointed ears.

  **Fabulous Animal.** It looks very much like SL-16q with humanoid features and large wings over a small thick-necked body.

SL-19  **m: Half Figure of a Man.** He wears a hooded garment and extends his arms.

  **q: Foliate Ornament.**

  **Foliate Ornament.**

SL-20  **m: Mask with Extended Tongue.** It has slanted eyes, a flat nose and large ears. Its forehead seems to be stretched as it falls under three large oak leaves.

  **q: Fabulous Animal.** It has a humanoid head with droopy ears, bird wings and a narrow hairy body over two large claws.

  **Fabulous Animal.** It has an animal head with bird beak, raised bat wings, a narrow hairy body over a pair of cloven hooves.

SL-21  **m: Hybrid Musician.** An ape's head tops a body with cloven hooves with the bottom part reversed. He extends his arm and holds in one hand the broken jawbone of an ass. He undoubtedly once held a bow or pic to play this instrument. His only clothing is a scarf over his shoulders.

  **q: Foliate Mask.** A grim head with frowning mouth is framed with four large leaves.

  **Foliate Mask.** A realistic head with four leaves covering forehead and cheeks.

SL-22  **m: Woman Dancer.** Like all the dancing ladies, she holds up the edges of a shawl which is over her long belted gown and may refer to the biblical Salome.

  **q: Fabulous Animal.** It hides its head under its bat wings.
Ape Bites Dog. The bodies of the two animals are crossed. The ape leans over and bites the back of the dog.

SL-23  **m: Large Bird.** The bird, wings closed, curls back its long neck to bite its wing. It has a pair of claws, therefore is not an ostrich but probably an ibis; they used their beaks as clysters.

**q: Foliate Mask.** Humanoid face is framed with four large leaves.

Foliate Mask. Animal head peers through large leaves.

SL-24  **m: Foliage around Head.** The head is realistic and the foliage is like a fur collar.

**q: Two Monsters.** The bat-winged monster at left runs toward the right. The dog-monster, attired in a cape, turns and aims an arrow at the monster in the left panel.

SL-25  **m: Monk Atlas.** His face now missing, clad in hooded cloak, he holds up the seat with his left elbow.

**q: Foliage.**

Foliage.

SU-01 to SU-09  **Modern Misericords and some modern Quatrefoils.** These are not listed.

SU-02q  **Composite Animal.** Upper part is a bearded man in a coat and below is a snail.

**Fabulous Animal.** He has hooves and human hands, a draped upper torso and holds a ram’s foot, attribute of the devil.

SU-03q  **Foliage.**

Human Foliate Mask.

SU-04q  **Hybrid** (partly restored).

**Hybrid.** The upper body is a knight and the hind quarters are a lion with hooves.

SU-08q  **Dragon.**

**Hybrid.** He has a pig head, fins, lion’s body and human hands.
SU-10  **m**: Foliage.

**q**: Hybrid Musician. The turbaned human head and torso ends in a four clawed, bat-winged monster. It holds a strange instrument played with what appears to be a saw, now broken.

**Hybrid Musician**. His human head and chest are draped over a four-footed animal with tail. He holds one bell in each of his raised hands.

SU-11  **m**: Seated Person. The smiling figure wears a hooded garment and a loose robe, places hands on knees and crosses bare feet.

**q**: Foliate Ornament.
Foliate Mask.

SU-12  **m**: Pair of Parrots. They stand back to back, each with a nut in its claw. The bestiary tale describes how the parrot falls on its beak when thrown from a height.

**q**: Man on Goat. A bearded man wears a pointed cap and holds a raised sword. The goat is considered to be an animal of the devil and the pointed cap often signifies a Jew. A nude woman riding a goat appears on several misericords (Stendal Cathedral) and sculptures (Auxerre) signifying lust. The bearded figure here, considered in context with the female toward whom he rides, might also signify lust.

**Female Hybrid**. The human head and chest end in a winged creature with thick tail and human hands instead of feet. She wears a wimple and holds a sword upright as she faces the bearded man riding toward her.

SU-13  **Grotesque Crouches**. His face is an animal mask, his shoulders are draped and his lower body is nude. He holds a urine phial in his right hand and probably a cover to transport this phial in his left hand. He may have just placed a sample of his urine in the phial to take to a physician for diagnosis. Or this may parody the physician who uses urine to make his diagnoses.

**q**: Foliage.
Foliate Mask.
SU-14 **m: Two Apes on Lions.** Shoulders draped, they are seated back to back. The lions face away and the apes face each other, arms around the other’s neck and face.

**q: Man Kills Lion.** The man, in toga, kneels before a lion, holds its mane and raises a scimitar to strike. This may be Hercules.

**Hybrid Musician.** A human head and torso ends in a clawed winged quadruped. He blows into a bellows and strums it with a bow, now broken.

SU-15 **m: Two Dogs Eat Wings.** One with head down gnaws the tip of a wing. The other sits, head up, with bird’s head and wing in his mouth. This may represent the proverb *Two dogs on one bone means a quarrel.* The dogs seem to have found a solution to the problem of sharing, not a bone but a chicken. Note the dogs with one bone at Emmerich.

**q: Foliate Mask.**

**Foliage.**

SU-16 **m: Hybrid.** The human head is almost as large as the two-clawed tailed body. It is bearded, winged and wears a flat hat.

**q: Two Soldiers with Shields and Swords.** They step toward each other. One raises his sword to attack and the other defends with his shield.

**Dragon.** He has an ape-face, bumpy spine, curled tail and bat wing.

SU-16q Two Soldiers Fight; Dragon
SU-17 **Mask of Bearded Grotesque.** He has human features, beard, fiery hair and trumpet ears.

* q: Lion Foliate Mask.
  * Pagan Foliate Mask.

SU-18 **m: Woman Dancer.** With hands raised, one touching the seat, she leans to the side and dances before foliage.

* q: Seated Apes. Draped, legs extended, they grasp each others’ chin and head. They each wear a hood fallen to the back.

**Man with Bear.** Bare-headed and barefoot, he grasps a hammer in his raised hand and clutches the face of a seated bear in the other. He may be training the bear.
SU-19  **m: Hybrid.** With ape-head and cock-body it is armed with
a shield carved as a grotesque mask and holds a goat’s head, symbol
of the devil, in one hand.

  q: Foliate Mask.
  Foliage.

SU-20  **m: Foliate Ornament.**

  q: Grotesque Head. The face has African features and a
pair of small hands clutch the corners of the mouth. Small wings
form a halo over the hair.

  Male Head. Features are realistic, with curly hair and
beard.

SU-21  **m: Woman Dancer.** Her back is turned toward the viewer
and she moves, one arm raised and one down, before foliage.

  q: Foliate.
  Foliage.

SU-22  **m: Mask in Foliage.**

  q: Capture of Unicorn. The unicorn leans its front paws
on the lap of a woman who holds a scroll.

  Hunter Aims at Unicorn. He is bearded, wears a hat and
a belted draped garment to his knees. He steps forward toward the
unicorn, large bow in hand. The arrow is missing. The bestiary tale
explains that a unicorn can only be captured on the lap of a virgin.
Here both images tell the story. The unicorn is a symbol of Christ.

SU-23  **m: Harpy and Fabulous Animal.** They wear hooded
garments.

  q: Foliate.
  Foliage.

SU-24  **m: Missing.**

  q: Eagle Bites Rabbit.
  Eagle Bites Boar.

SU-25  **m: Shield (Restored).**

  q: Foliate.
Elaine Block

SU-26  m: Foliate Lion Mask.
q: Combat of Fabulous Animals.
Combat of Fabulous Animals.

SU-27  m: Pride. (Original seat reinforced) Soldier, his breast pierced with an arrow, broken sword in hand, cross on shoulder, falls backwards from his horse with decorated saddle. The fall from a horse, as on a Lincoln Cathedral misericord, and in the north transept window at Chartres is often the symbol of pride.
q: Foliage.
Foliage.

Armrests

Armrests at Cologne are usually double figures, often interacting, which look quite different as viewed from each of the two seats they join. A couple of men box, a couple embraces, Phyllis mounts Aristotle (lust), Pero breast feeds her imprisoned father (charity), Samson kills his lion, apes play music, a lion downs a dragon. A number of musicians and dancers on these armrests follow the musical emphasis on the misericords. There are occasional foliate armrests. In some cases the armrests follow the meaning of the adjoining seats but usually they stand alone. The grotesque armrests are similar to figures in manuscript marginalia. The most interesting of the armrests are listed below. They follow the numbering of the misericords and quatrefoils indicating the numbers of the seat on each side of the arm.

A:NL-[01-02]  Mother Ape. She carries two young on her back.
A:NL-[07-08]  Lion and Dragon. These animals generally represent the fight between good and evil.
A:NL-[11-12]  Couple Embrace. This scene generally symbolizes lust.
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A:NL-[15-16] Ape Musicians. The ape on the east side plays the violin and the other plays bells.


A:NL-[21-22] Bird. The small feathered bird has large claws.


A:NU-[01-02] Marital Battle. The battling couple is common on medieval misericords.


A:NU-[05-06] Knight Battles Lion. Knight with helmet attacks lion from behind.

A:NU-[07-08] Predator Cats. (Restored in the 19th century).

A:NU-[09-10] Angel Writes on Scroll. (Restored)

A:NU-[10-11] Devil Writes on Scroll. This is probably Tutivillus who jots down the sins of women who chatter in church so they may more easily be admitted to hell. He balances the angel on the other side of the seat, who is undoubtedly recording good deeds. Tutivillus and the angel appear on end panels at Kalkar.

A:NU-[11-12] Couple Embrace.

A:NU-[12-13] Pero and Cimon. (Roman Charity) The story, from Valerius Maximus tells of a young mother who visited her imprisoned father daily and, since he was condemned to death by starvation, fed him from her breast. His survival was considered a miracle and he was freed from prison. The same scene is on a
misericord at Magdeburg Cathedral and in a number of paintings including one by Rubens. The story symbolizes charity.


A:SL-[01-02] Ape (?) In Foliage.

A:SL-[05-06] Aristotle and Phyllis. The story of the harlot, mistress of Alexander the Great, who seduced Aristotle was very popular in the Middle Ages. Phyllis, in revenge for the breakup of her romance, forced Aristotle to carry her on his back before Alexander’s window. Aristotle and Phyllis appear on misericords in Rouen (Seine Maritime), Isle Adam (Val d’Oise) and Toledo (Spain), on an end panel in Montbenoit (Doubs), and on a number of capitals, aquamaniles and other household objects. On this armrest Phyllis sits on the bearded philosopher, her head resting on his hat and her hand on his shoulder. The moral: If woman can seduce the great philosopher, just think what she will do to an ordinary man!

A:SL-[06-07] Fox with Geese. The fox has one goose in his mouth and another behind. The same theme appears on a misericord and a quatrefoil in the cathedral as well as on many misericords in Europe. The fox represents slyness and thievery and also refers to the tale of Renard the Fox.
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A:SL-[07-08]  Man with Book. Man in belted robe and hooded cape sits with an open book on his lap but looks straight ahead. He may be meditating but he is not reading.

A:SL-[08-09]  Animal Bites Snake. This may be a bear or a dog.

A:SL-[10-11]  Woman with Man in Keg. On one side, a woman appears to be dumping the nude man out of the keg. On the other side a man appears to be dumping a woman out of the keg. The men are tonsured. There are several misericords with men in kegs. At Stendal (Germany) two misericords show a man with his head immersed in a keg, possibly drinking the dregs of the wine. At Hoogstraten in Belgium, a woman scolds her husband whose punishment for some infraction of the law is to stay trapped in a keg with only his head visible. On a north end panel of Cologne Cathedral, pigs fall from a keg held by a Jew.


A:SL-[16-17]  Two Men. They are both in loose hooded robes. One has his hands to his chin and head. The other carries a ram’s foot and an owl. These objects are attributes of the devil and the Jews.

A:SL-[20-21]  Obscene Apes. One ape bends over and exposes his anus. A second ape, his head near the anus, holds his sex organs in one hand. Such images, obviously obscene, may exist to protect others from sins of lust. The sheela-na-gig is one such icon found on facades of a number of churches in England and Ireland.


A:SL-[24-25]  Musicians. The woman holds bagpipes and the man holds a bell. It might be noted that these two instruments would not sound well together.

A:SU-[06-07]  Hybrid and Ape.
Elaine Block


A:SU-[11-12] Four Entwined Apes. One has an open mouth and another exposes his rear end while he eats. The scene probably represents lust and gluttony.

A:SU-[15-16] Pelican Feeds Young. She pecks her breast to feed her two fledglings. The bestiary tells of the pelican who revives her dead young by feeding them with blood from her breast, an analogy with the charity of Christ. The red spot on the pelican’s beak probably gave rise to this story.


A:SU-[20-21] Man Undresses. One man pulls his robe over his head showing his underpants. On the other side a robed figure, tongue extended, kneels with one hand on her head and the other on the leg of the disrobing person.

A:SU-[21-22] Two Pigs. They sit among the foliage.


A:SU-[26-27] Fish venders. Two people sit by a table. One holds a fish.

End Panels

The following descriptions offer only a brief introduction to the wealth of detail on the end panels of the Cologne choir stalls. Each panel seems to have a central theme and the top scenes and quatrefoil scenes tell stories and use symbols that stress the morals of the story. One panel focuses on courtly love, another on music. One
concerns the Judgement of Solomon, others a bit of church history, and another the anti-Judaic judensau.

There are five end panels on the north and south stalls, each carved on the outer and inner surfaces, on central sections and often in corners as well. Some also have top sections carved in the round. There are four end panels on north and south upper stalls. The panels are designated by EN (north) and ES (south) and then alphabetically beginning at the west side of the stalls. The top carvings are indicated by (a), mid-section by (b) and lower section by (c). Carvings on the inner sides of these panels are indicated by double letter (aa), (bb) and (cc).

**End Panels: Lower North**

![End Panels: Lower North](image)

**E:NL-A(b)**  Crowned Woman and Soldiers
E:NL-A (a) Top: Two knights with swords and shields stand among the leafy scrolls, sword in hand. One is young and one is bearded and elderly. Two dogs bark at their feet.

E:NL-A (b) Quatrefoil: A woman stands between two kneeling men, holding a book and a scroll. 
Quatrefoil: A man kneels before a standing woman who wears a long gown and wimple. They both touch a round object between them. These scenes perhaps relate to events in the life of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary or to a celebration.

E:NL-A (c) Four quatrefoils: A noble figure, a bishop, a running man and a dragon.
E:NL-A (bb): Prophet holds scroll over his shoulder. Small figure crouches at his feet.

E:NL-B (a) Top: Two knights in armor, one with drawn sword and one about to draw his sword, stand on foliate scrolls.

E:NL-B (b) Quatrefoil: Two women, sharing one baby, approach a seated man who may have held a mace or scepter in one hand. Behind is a small man, perhaps a monk, who is bound with rope around his legs and chest.
Quatrefoil (b): The seated man now holds a mace. A soldier with drawn sword stands before him and behind are two women. One kneels in prayer and the other holds a swaddled baby. The scene is evidently the Judgment of Solomon.
E:NL-B(b)

Judgment of Solomon

E:NL-B (bb) Inner panel: A woman dances, holding the corners of veils over her head, evidently Salome.
E:NL-B (bb): Woman stands over small ape who bends over and displays his anus.
E:NL-B (cc) Four small quatrefoils: Hybrid with hooded ape-head holds whip and shield, dragon, musical hybrid with two bells, hybrid with veiled woman’s head and lion body.

E:NL-C(a)

Centaur, Eagle, Ape

E:NL-C (a) Top: In the foliate scrolls: a centaur with the upper body of a knight turns toward an eagle, an ape holding a ram-bone climbs a branch above a man in a hooded cloak who sits astride a recumbent lion, a woman has an animal on her knees,
a man beheads a hybrid and there are many other animals among the foliage. The fox and the stork invite each other to dinner, which illustrates one of Aesop’s fables. The story is in Bruegel’s painting of Nederlandish Proverbs and appears on a number of choir stalls: Aarschot (Belgium), Coimbra (Portugal), Ciudad Rodrigo and Oviedo (Spain), Kempen (Germany), and Venlo (Netherlands).

E:NL-C (b) Quatrefoil: Judensau. One Jew who wears the pointed judenhut holds a pig upright; a second Jew feeds the pig while a third kneels to suck from the pig’s teats.

Quatrefoil: One Jew overturns a keg from which drop a pig and three piglets. Another Jew, approaching the scene, leads a child, who has a halo and carries what may be a clapper.
E:NL-C (c) Small Quatrefoils: Hybrid with ape-head plays bagpipes, ape rides a dog, centaur with shield and sword, bearded hybrid.

E:NL-C (bb) Inner corner: A pig on hind legs reaches up to get acorns from a tree while her piglet sucks from her teats. A bearded shepherd with pointed hat, perhaps a Jew, walks before the scene. Pigs symbolize lust and gluttony.

E:NL-D (a) Top: Two knights in helmets and intricate chain mail fight with swords and shields. Two others fight on the other side. Two pigs in the foliage symbolize gluttony.

E:NL-D (b) Quatrefoil (east): A young and an elderly bearded man sit beneath a string of three bells. The young man holds a bell in each hand and is ringing them. The elderly man points to a line in an open book on his knee, probably instructing the young man.

Quatrefoil (east): The same two figures sit but the bells are gone. The elderly man has a scroll on his lap and the young man reads the book.
E:NL-D (c): Small quatrefoils (east): Two hybrid musicians: one strums a scalloped zither, the second plays a pair of bells. The last pair of quatrefoils shows hybrids. The first with human head and body wears a fools cap, is enfolded in his wings and puts his hands to his head. The second, with large ears on its human head has a winged biped body.
E:NL-D (bb) Corner (west): A seated woman plays a viol. A small tonsured monk sits at her side and reads a book. A small dog curls up at her feet.
E:NL-E (a) Top (west and east): Among the foliate scrolls, Samson slays a lion, a woman slays a pig, Delilah cuts Samson’s hair and a monk hears a woman’s confession.

E:NL-E (b) Quatrefoil (west): Man and wife sit at a table as a barefooted servant approaches with a three pronged stick. A small servant kneels before the table whose top faces the viewer so the feast is clearly visible: fish, meat, bread and drink. A devil-monster descends from the top between husband and wife. This is the rich Dives who denies food to the poor Lazarus.

Quatrefoil (west): A man lies in bed and a woman approaches to touch his chest and wrist, feeling for signs of life. A devil grabs the man’s soul (a miniature human) from his mouth. He will be going to hell where the rich will reside after death. At the foot of the bed his wife leans over and clasps her hands in a sign of grief.

E:NL-E (b)

Death of Lazarus

E:NL-E (c) Small Quatrefoils (west): Hybrid with cock’s tail, draped ape looks behind him, an owl rides a ram, a cock rides a dog.
End Panels: Upper North

E:NU-A (b) Quatrefoil (south side): A bearded man is roped to a wheel while a guard sits and turns the wheel to torture the prisoner. An ape-devil below the wheel and a dragon above the head of the guard assist in the torture.

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E:NU-A (b) (north side): A man with a staff sits in an arch with a devil. Below is an owl and a dragon.

E:NU-B (a) Top (east): Two bishops hold scrolls in a grape arbor. A lion sits at one side and a devil extends his talons over the scene below.
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E:NU-B (b) Quatrefoil (east): A crowned king, Kaiser Friederich, with raised sword kneels before bishop Englebert who touches the sword with one hand and extends the other hand toward the shoulder of the king.

E:NU-B (c) Two quatrefoils (east): A soldier kneels, sword raised, and shield carved as a lion head in his hand; an elderly king, sword raised and shield with lion at his side, faces the soldier.

E:NU-B (b) Quatrefoil (west): Bishop faces nobleman.

E:NU-B (c) Small quatrefoils (west): Devil; dragon.

E:NU-C (b) (east): Gothic arches with no figures.

E:NU-C (b) (west): An eagle clutches a fledgling as two others watch from their nest. A sun is in the upper corner, below which a small Samson slays a lion by rending its jaws.

E:NU-D (b) (west): Gothic arches with no figures.

E:NU-D (b) (east): Gothic arches with rose motif.

Back Panels - North Pillars (Upper stalls only)

The pillar carvings have a large upper scene (a) over a smaller register with one or two smaller scenes (b, c).

B:NU-01 (a): Isaac Blesses Jacob. The elderly man lies in bed as Jacob approaches with an animal head in his hand. He thus fools Isaac to think he is his elder twin brother, the hunter Esau. The iconography of this scene with crossed hands strongly suggests the cross of Christ.

B:NU-01 (b): Hybrid. It has a human head with tall pointed hat, human chest and a lion body and limbs. It holds a shield and weapon and faces the scene at the right.

B:NU-01(c): Man with Stick. A man in turban and simple dress points a long stick in the direction of the hybrid. He bends over with his rear end pointing, perhaps derogatorily, at his opponent.
B:NU-02 (a): The Sacrifice of Abraham. This elaborate scene shows the bearded Abraham in long robe, draped shawl and triple papal crown holding a sword ready to strike his kneeling son. He turns toward an angel but holds Isaac down by clutching his hair. An angel stays the sword while a second angel holds a ram above the kneeling Isaac. This scene foretells the crucifixion of Christ. It is used as parallel imagery in the Biblia Pauperum, the Humanis Salvationis and other popular manuscripts and woodblock books.

B:NU-02 (b): Two Hybrids Prance. They are draped so that it is difficult to tell if they are male or female. One holds one hand to its head. The other, arms raised, rings a bell with each hand.
E:SL-A (a) Top: Flowered scroll with two figures.
E:SL-A (b) Quatrefoil: bas relief (restored 19th century).
Luftildis of Cologne with her geese. Veiled, right hand raised, she holds two geese by a rope and moves toward a hooded man in a doorway.
E:SL-A (b) Quatrefoil: Three men stand behind a man who lies in bed. One hammers the head of the sleeping man, possibly a statue, and another holds an object.
E:SL-A (c): Small quatrefoils below frame masks.

E:SL-B (a) Top: Annunciation to Mary: Gabriel, wings partly destroyed, holds a scroll and raises his right hand. Mary holds a book and the dove descends toward her.
E:SL-B (b): Scenes of courtly love.
Quatrefoil (a) Courtship: Man approaches woman, hands in prayer. Woman holds a wreath he has offered.
E:SL-B (b) Quatrefoil (b) Marriage: Woman tosses wreath at man, in long garb and hood, who turns away and grimaces.
E:SL-B (c) Small quatrefoils: three fantastic animals and man riding a goat.
E:SL-B (c) Corner carving: Eagle sits on his prey, a dragon.
E:SL-B (b) Inside of panel: Joseph flees from Potipher's wife, Cain and Abel bring offerings, a sheaf of wheat and a ram.

E:SL-C (a) Top: Two men in hooded garments play viol and bagpipes.
E:SL-C (b) Quatrefoil exterior: Scenes of sports and games. Hunting shows a dog on its hind legs, forepaws extended to a woman who holds a falcon on one hand and a lure in the other. A second scene shows a veiled woman dancing and a man playing a lute by a tree which a cat climbs while a dog watches below.
E:SL-C (c) Small quatrefoils: Grotesques, including one who rings a bell.
E:SL-D (a) Top: Foliate vines enclose four men, two armed with shields and swords. The men are active, and slide their swords over their shields as if practicing for battle. Two bare headed men visible from the west side bend their bodies and arms as if dancing.

E:SL-D (b) Quatrefoil right side: A couple sit on a bench, curtain suspended over their heads, and converse. A table is between them and each has a hand extended toward the other's face. Probably signifies lust.

E:SL-D (c) Quatrefoils below: a) figure seated on dog, b) ape seated on pig, facing its tail.

E:SL-D (bb) Quatrefoil left side: Couple sits on bench with flask and cup on a table between them. The woman's cloak falls off her shoulders to reveal her dress. The man, in long loose gown and hood with tail down the back, points toward her. Probably signifies gluttony.

E:SL-D (cc) Quatrefoils below: Fantastic animals.

E:SL-E (a) Top: Various Scenes. A queen is seated on a stool. A girl with purse at belt sits by her. A man blows a trumpet amid grotesques and animals. Bath scene: Among the leafy scrolls a young man pours a jug of water into a keg which is under a canopy. A woman, possibly Bathsheba, is seated in the keg. A couple embrace and a woman stands by a skeleton.

E:SL-E (b) Quatrefoil: Tree of Jesse. Jesse lies in bed, pillow under his head and hands on shoulder and thigh. Crowned Mary, hands folded in prayer, sits above. At the sides, each on top of a short stem, are the heads, some with Jew's hats, of 14 of the ancestors of Christ from the tribe of Judah.

E:SL-E (c) Quatrefoils below: Hybrid musicians. One plays a drum and the other plays bagpipes.

E:SL-E (bb) Quatrefoil: Abraham holds a napkin extended between his outstretched hands. This is the usual representation of heaven, such as we see on the tympana of Notre Dame de Paris, Chartres and many other cathedrals. Souls who enter heaven, such as the couple kneeling below, will sit in this napkin. Two angels sit above Abraham.

E:SL-E (c) Quatrefoils below: Winged fantastic animals.
End Panels: South Upper Stalls

E:SU-A (a) Top: Among the scrolled vines, an eagle rides a dog and an ape rides a wild animal.
E:SU-A (b) Quatrefoil: Two bearded men, each with one arm raised, face each other. One man has his other hand on the hilt of his sword; the other extends a book toward him. These men are Charlemagne, attired as a hunter, and the bishop Hildebold during a mass in the cathedral.

E:SU-B (a) Top: Two figures, one with bishop’s miter, stand in the leafy scrolls. They are a bishop and probably Albertus Magnus.
E:SU-B (b) Quatrefoil: A tonsured monk, legs crossed, sits before a table with one hand on his thigh while his chin leans on the other hand. A plan of the Cathedral lies on the table. A crowned woman carrying a mace and four men with elaborate hats stand behind him; each carries an object, one of which is an architect’s square. The monk is probably Albertus Magnus. Mary and the master builders stand behind. (See page 177.)
E:SU-B (c) Two quatrefoils: Each shows an artisan at work: a mason and a sculptor.

E:SU-C (c) Corner: Dragon and dog.

E:SU-D (b) Outside: Arabesque scrolls.
(b) Eagle holds one young and two others are in nest.
Fleur de lys.

Back Panels - South Pillars (Upper only)

B:SU-01 (a) Drunken Noah. Quatrefoil shows Noah lying drunk in a vineyard below a ram that nibbles grapes from a vine. Ham, wearing a hooded garment, covers his eyes with one hand and with the other hand covers his father’s body by closing his robe. The two other sons of Noah stand behind.
B:SU-01 (b) Winged Animal.
B:SU-01 (c) Armed Centaur. It is in position for combat with the winged animal.

B:SU-02 (a) Expulsion from Paradise. An angel raises a sword in one hand and places the other hand on Adam’s shoulder. Adam grasps his throat (his Adam’s apple undoubtedly) and hides his shame. Eve, apple in her right hand, hides her shame as a human-headed serpent peers from its perch in a tree.
B:SU-02 (b) Ape Mounted Backwards on Pig. He holds a mirror in one hand and a ram’s foot in the other, symbols of vanity and the devil.

B:SU-02 (c) Ape Mounted Backwards on Cat. He raises his rear end obscenely.

Kempen: SL-01 Fox Hunts Birds
Cologne [Köln]: Saint-Andreas

Number: 54 choir stalls, but no historiated misericords, in two rows on each side of the choir. Misericords are all foliate, each a different pattern.

Date: 15th century (?)

Armrests: Animals or foliage (not listed)

Armrests

NL-01 Dog sits (bas relief on inner panel).
NL-03 Double headed eagle.
NL-05 Lion sits.
NL-06 Winged dog.
NL-08 Seated winged monster, possibly on bellows.
NL-10 Bear sits with folded hands.
NL-12 Two animals hold each other.
NL-13 Winged animal (bas relief).

NU-01 Eagle sits.
NU-03 Dog.
NU-05 Two animals hug.
NU-07 Winged animal sits.
NU-09 Animal sits.
NU-11 Jew sits and holds his beard. He has a large nose and a long beard. At times Jews were not permitted to cut their beards.
NU-15 Bear sits.
NU-16 Winged animal.

SL-01 Owl.
SL-02 Lion.
SL-04 Probably a Jew. He has a hat with flap, a large nose and a long beard.
SL-06 Bear eats.
SL-07 Head in foliage.
Misericords in the Rhineland

SL-08 Monster.
SL-10 Bear with folded hands.
SL-12 Two animals hug.
SL-14 Bird.

SU-02 Lion.
SU-04 Double headed eagle.
SU-07 Winged animal.
SU-09 Feathered animal.
SU-11 Monk.
SU-14 Lion.
SU-16 Foliage.

End Panels

NL-01 Top: Two bearded prophets with scrolls. They are seated on a dragon and an animal visible only from the inner surface.
Elaine Block

NL-01 Low Panel: Saint Ursula, a crowned woman, holds a book and arrows. A harpy sits at her feet. Ursula is a popular saint in Germany since she is the heroine of the legend of *Ursula and the Thousand Virgins*, killed by the huns as they embarked as prospective brides, at the city of Cologne. Her attribute is the arrow by which she was killed.

NL-02 Top: Two prophets seated on dogs with twined heads, one of which bites the other.
Below: Bishop blesses.

E:NL-02 Prophets Seated on Dogs

NL-03 Top: Two prophets sit on male harpies.
Below: Bishop holds a crozier and a book.

NL-04 Top: Prophets sit on scaly monsters with tongues twined.
Below: Woman saint wears a conical hat.

NU-01 Prophet holds scroll.
Saint Jacques holds shell and book.
Harpy (inside panel).

NU-02 Prophet with tiered hat faces stalls.
Saint Andrew with cross and book.

SL-01 Prophets sit on monsters.
Saint Catherine.

SL-02 Saint Barbara.
Misericords in the Rhineland

SL-03  Saint Maurice with shield and spears.
SL-04  Saint George and dragon.
       Owl with eyeglasses.

SU-01  Man with scroll.
       Saint Paul.
SU-02  Prophets.
       Saint Peter with Keys.

Kempen: Armrest NL-03  Pilgrim
Cologne [Köln]: Schnütgen Museum

The Schnütgen Museum, housed in a former church, contains medieval art from Cologne and the Rhineland. It has one partial set and one full set of misericords. Five misericords, each with a single carved object, are in the reserves: a woman’s head with a horned hein, a female head with a simple coif, a bear licking its hand and two foliate compositions. They were purchased in 1937 and are of unknown provenance. Several sculptures in glass cases, especially a seated Wildman, came from choir stalls or rood screens.

Three Choir Stalls (Provenance: the Kreutzbruderkirche)

U-01 Ram and Hybrid Stand by a Tree. They eat leaves from the top of a tree.

U-02 Two Lions Kiss. One faces up, the other sideways, lips touching.

U-03 Nude Man Feeds Cat. He holds a spoon and a bowl.

Armrests

01 Ape holds young between its paws.
02 Pig Musician; He sits on hind legs and plays a lute.
03 Broken.
04 Lion holds shield.

End Panel (one only)

Top: Adoration of the Magi (carved in the round).
Low: Drunken Noah (bas relief). Noah lies under a vine with two large bunches of grapes. He leans on one hand. One of his sons raises his coat and puts his hand to his head in disbelief.
Sheep eats grapes (bas relief).
Wassenberge Choir Stalls

Number: 16 in two rows, but only two historiated.
Date: C1300.
Provenance: Wassenberg (Niederrhein).

Misericords

Each stall has a misericord; except for the following carvings, they are foliate.

N-04 Animal Mask.

S-07 Animal Mask. It has large ears and extended tongue.

Armrests (Small carvings)

N-01 Owl.

S-01 Head.
S-02 Harpy with hat.
S-03 Dog head.
S-04 Woman’s head.

End Panels

NW Knight on Horseback. He holds the reins of his horse in one hand and a shield in the other.

SUW Knight with sword at belt prays before Madonna and Child.

SLW Two men; one holds a shield.

SUE Monk and Abbot with fish on grill and jug.
Saint Gereon: The Lost Stalls

The church of Saint Gereon lost its choir stalls during a bombardment in World War II. Fortunately there are records of the choir stalls in the Marburger Index. While the stalls had no storied misericords they did have a statue of Saint Helena standing in a niche on the backs of the upper stalls and a Statue of Saint-Gereon on the end panel of the south stall.
Northrhine-Westphalia

Dortmund

Marienkirche

**Number:** 10 stalls, only the 5 on the south wall have misericords  
**Date:** 1523  
**Arms:** North and South are carved with interesting figures.

**Misericords**

S-01 **Merman.** He is muscular and bearded. He holds his tail in one hand and a long object, possibly a fish, in the other.

S-02 **Mermaid in Water.** She faces right, holds a mirror and combs her long hair. She symbolizes lust and vanity.

S-03 **Drunk with Barrel.** Man leans back and holds a barrel on his belly.

S-04 **Man Drags Log.** He holds the log by a cord over his back. This might be a thief, as the church guide says, but more likely it is a proverb, as seen in Bruegel’s painting meaning to be unlucky in love. There is a similar misericord at Cappenburg.

S-05 **The Adulterer.** A man holds a long stick over each shoulder, as if he is in a yoke. This apparently was a sign of infidelity, similar to the blue cloak and to a pair of horns. Here the man is an adulterer rather than a cuckold.
**Armrests**

N-01: Monster, head gone.
N-02 Monk with head in beehive.
N-03 Stead figure with taloned feet, head gone.
N-04 Acrobat.

S-01 Winged monster.
S-02 Beaked monster pecks wood.
S-03 Winged monster holds bowl.
S-04 Beaked monster with paw in its mouth.

**End Panels**

ED-01 Missing.
ED-02 Madonna and Child with St. Catherine and small female saint.
ED-01 Visitation and small David holding what may be the torah.
ED-02 Annunciation and a small St. John with chalice.

**Partitions**

PN-01 Grotesque mouth, possibly representing Hell.
PN-02 Caricature Head.
PN-03 Design.
Misericords in the Rhineland

Emmerich

WL-06 Two Dogs on One Bone
Number: 18 stalls with 13 storied misericords.
Date: 1486.
Carver: The Master of Gestuhls of Kappenberg.

Two rows of choir stalls stand before the west wall of the church, 10 in the upper and 8 in the lower row behind the altar. A commemorative plaque on one side of the stalls honors Carl von Gimbon and his workers for rescuing the stalls following the bombing of the church in World War II. Each stall has a misericord, although the original positions have been lost. The other half of the ensemble, 18 stalls with misericords and armrests, was unfortunately lost during a bombardment in World War II. The themes of the missing misericords, as listed in an inventory of 1892, are very similar to those at Kempen: the mice try to bell the cat, a man tries to outgape the oven, the fox invites the stork to dinner, the fox-monk hides a goose in his cowl, Renard the Fox swims in the sea to catch his prey, the cat catches a mouse, the farmer casts roses before swine, and there was a lion, an eagle and a lamb of God.

The arms and ends, as well as the misericords, are carved. One arm shows a Flemish proverb: To shear a pig, which is a very foolish thing to do. One end carving at Emmerich shows two dogs disputing a bone, a repeat of a theme on one of the misericords. The stalls are obviously pieced together and are part of a larger set. They were restored when they were replaced in the church in the 1980s.

Misericords

WL-01 Animal Bites Paw. Perhaps a bear, it bites its front paw, with each claw clearly defined.

WL-02 Dog Looks Back.

WL-03 Dog Rests Head on Paw.
WL-04 Allegorical Figure. She wears a tall hennin and a long loose gown and stands authoritatively with left hand on hip. She holds a fan or wand on what may be air, one of the four elements. A similar figure at Kalkar and one at Nettersheim point to other objects in similar scenes. The interpretation of Mother Nature creating or controlling the elements of nature is likely.

WL-05 Lamb with Oriflamme. The symbol of St. John the Baptist.

WL-06 Two Dogs Dispute One Bone. One dog has a curly tail and the other has a straggly one. Their bared teeth show they are growling and prove there is a quarrel. This Flemish proverb, indicating envy, was common on continental misericords and also in popular literature.
WL-07 Lion in Profile. It stands with its tail curved over its back.

WL-08 Foliage.

WU-01 Dog or Cat Licks Anus. The curled up animal usually indicates laziness or lust.
WU-02 Man Kneels between Two Chairs. He wears a buttoned jacket with an attached hood, and smiles. The Flemish proverb - *If you cannot decide which chair to sit on you will fall into the ashes between* - cautions against indecision. It appears on misericords from the Netherlands to Spain and Portugal. It does not, however, cross the English channel.

WU-03 Foliage.

WU-04 Fox with Lamb in Mouth, or a wolf stealing a sheep from the flock. The theological analogy is the devil preying on the flock of Christ.

WU-05 Foliage.

WU-06 Animal Runs.
Elaine Block

WU-07 **Man Whips Eggs.** A man with a flail whips eggs, some of which are broken. He wears a hat with brim and a cape over his jacket. There are similar scenes at Cleves and Kalkar. It is obviously an extreme waste of energy. There is also a proverb *When you break eggs you end up with a lot of shells.* The number of “eggs” on Rhineland choir stalls may be due to the fact that there was a tax, gathered by the clergy, on eggs during Lent.

![Man Whips Eggs](image)

**WU-07** Man Whips Eggs

**WU-08** Foliage.

**WU-09** Eagle Preens Wing.

**WU-10** Foliage.

**Armrests**

**WL-01** (inside panel) Pig sits.
WL-02 Animal sits, head down.

WL-03 Foliage.

WL-04 Merman.

WL-05 (inside panel) Monster dolphin jumps.

WL-06 (inside panel) Monkey holds apple.

WL-07 Monk sits in basket to hatch eggs.

WL-08 Man overturns pot of money and gestures to his chest. He is probably saying he has spent his money well.
A:WL-07  Monk Hatches Eggs

A:WU-11  Donkey Plays Zither
Elaine Block

WU-01 (corner) Dog sits; Foliage.

WU-02 Bear eats honey from hive.

WU-03 Foliage.

WU-04 Nude bearded man holds an animal bone. This is probably the fool who denied God. He appears on several other Rhineland arm rests.

WU-06 Man holds hen, symbol for a womanizer since it is soft.

WU-07 Owl sits.

WU-08 Animal with paw around neck.

WU-11 (inside panel) Donkey plays zither.

End Panels

W-A Two dogs hold shields.
W-B Griffin with prey.
W-C Two eagles hold one shield.
W-D Two dogs dispute one bone.

E:W-D Two Dogs Dispute One Bone
Kalkar

NU-06 Wildman with Club and Shield
Elaine Block

Saint Nicholas

*Number:* 38 choir stalls with 19 storied misericords in two rows north and south of choir.

*Date:* c1505-1508.

*Carver:* Heinrich Bernts of Wesel.

*Armrests:* These are all foliate except for bas reliefs on the inner side of three end panels.

*End Panels:* The end panels on the lower and upper stalls are intricately carved. The upper figures are carved in the round and the lower panels, full figures in niches, are bas reliefs. While these scenes are from the new testament or represent saints, there is one scene of a fool.

**Misericords**

NL-01 Foliage.

NL-02 Foliage.

NL-03 **Bearded Head.** It wears a tight hat with a twist of hair on the front, like a jewel.

NL-04 Foliage.

NL-05 **Bird Holds Shield.**

NL-06 **Pelican Bites Breast.** The story, from the Bestiary, symbolizes the Charity of Christ. The Pelican, which actually has a red spot on its beak, supposedly killed its young and then resurrected them by feeding its own blood to them. Most choir stall pelicans show the young in the nest feeding on the drops of blood which fall from the breast of their mother.

NL-07 Foliage.
NL-08 Mermaid. With long hair and tail flipped behind her she holds a comb and mirror. Most of the misericord carvings of mermaids show this image. A few mermaids have devil feet or nurse young mermaids or young lions. One mermaid at Saint-Botolph in Boston, England, sings to seduce sailors, the story in *The Odyssey*. The mermaid signifies lust and the dangerous character of women.

NL-09 Bearded Centaur Holds Club. The nude bearded centaur with disheveled hair turns his head and holds a club with both hands. He probably represents the lower instincts of man.
NU-01 Foliage.

NU-02 Dog in the Pot. The dog puts one paw in a three legged pot with handle. The scene must have been common in the kitchen for this is a frequent scene on misericords. The underlying Flemish proverb is When the master comes home late for dinner the dog will lick the pot clean. Dogs on misericords in England, Sweden and many towns on the continent have their paws and their heads in dinner pots.
NU-02 Dog in the Pot

NU-03 Foliage.

NU-04 Eagle with Shield. He holds it by a cord in his beak.

NU-05 Foliage.

NU-06 Wildman with Shield and Club. He wears a curly lion skin which leaves his feet and knees bare. The shield lies on his shoulder and he holds a club in both hands. He kneels on one knee and looks at the viewer.

NU-07 Foliage.

NU-08 Swan with Shield on Chest.

NU-09 Foliage.
NU-10 *Ape Spins Excrement*. He sits on a bowl filled with excrement and spins it (now broken off) onto the distaff before him. Excrement appears on a number of misericords. At Walcourt a stork eats excrement as it is expelled into a bowl. At Leon in Spain an animal places his excrement on a bone disputed by two dogs. At Amsterdam a woman cards her husband’s excrement. At Bourg Achard in France a missing misericord showed a woman consuming her husband’s excrement. The spinning ape is undoubtedly a derogatory image of women, the spinners in human society.

SL-01 *Foliage*.

SL-02 *To Outgape the Oven*. A woman, open mouthed, stands by a brick oven with one hand on the top of the oven and the other on the bottom. She wears a long dress with fabric folded up around her waist, a fitted blouse and a pleated scarf on her head. The costume
Misericords in the Rhineland

is typical of an older woman. The scene depicts a Flemish proverb which shows someone trying to perform an impossible task. This iconography marks the travels of the Flemish carvers from the Netherlands through Flanders and France to Spain.

Outgape the Oven

SL-03 Foliage.

SL-04 Caryatid. An atlas, chin on seat with his head thrust backward, squats and holds up the seat with his chin and hands. His short coat ends in a point at the rear.

SL-05 Foliage.

SL-06 Foliage.
SL-07 **Monster and Lion Intertwined.** They are positioned with head toward rear quarters. The lion probably is missing his front legs. This battle generally represents the struggle between good and evil.

SL-08 **Foliage.**

![Topsy-Turvy Musician](image)

SL-09 **Topsy-Turvy Musician.** A man in a flared pleated skirt, scissors at his belt and hat with turned-up brim, holds a stick delicately in each hand at the level of his ear. His knees are bent as if he is dancing; his mouth is open as if he is singing. His coat is open and very likely his genitals were originally visible. One possible explanation for this enigmatic scene is that the man is a musician since the sticks he holds have holes which identify them as recorders. However, he plays them with his ears instead of his mouth. The open mouth may be the organ through which he listens.
His knees are bent whereas they should be straight and he wears the wrong costume. In other words, he is a “topsy-turvy” musician since he is doing everything the wrong way. A pair of scissors in Breugel’s *Netherlandish Proverbs* indicates a “clip joint” where the proprietor cheats his clients. This man has large scissors at his waist and certainly is giving his audience poor value for their time and money. Another possible interpretation is that the man is singing, but so badly that he stops up his own ears.

**SU-01 Owl on Branch.** Owls did not *see the light*. While they often symbolize the Jew who also supposedly *did not see the light* they are sometimes depicted as animals who keep away evil or who catch mice.

**SU-02 Foliage.**

**SU-03 Caryatid.** An aged caryatid rests on one knee, looks up and holds the seat with palms of his hands and the side of the head. Tunic is open to the waist.

**SU-04 Foliage.**
SU-05 **Bunny Bagpiper.** Seated, with one paw on the bagpipes, the relaxed bunny plays the instrument by blowing on the chanter. Since the sound holes are at the wrong end of the chanter, the bunny makes no music, another example of the topsy-turvy world. Bagpipes are the most common instrument on misericords. The folk instrument was played by farm people and the lower classes. Humans or animals may be the musicians.

SU-06 **Foliage.**

SU-07 **Meditating Monk.** Half figure of a smiling tonsured monk holds a book which he is obviously not reading. His cowl has slipped to the back of his neck and his eyes appear almost closed, either in meditation or a happy dream. (See cover.)

SU-08 **Foliage.**
SU-09 Man Whips Eggs. Man with pleated skirt, tight jacket and loose sleeves raises a flail over egg shells on the ground. A knife is tucked into his belt. The scene is similar to the egg whippers at Kempen and Cleves and shows a waste of energy. There is a proverb stating that if you break eggs you end up with a lot of shells. The action may also refer to anger at the egg tax during Lent.

SU-10 Foliage.

**Armrests**

All armrests are foliate except bas reliefs on the inner surface of three end panels.

NUE Pig Bagpiper. The pig sits on a curved molding, his bristles high on his back, holding the bagpipes in his front paws and the chanter in his mouth. He is a character in the world-upside-down since he replaces a human musician.
SUW Donkey with Rosary. The animal sits on his rear end on the curved molding. His rosary is hung over one front paw and his head leans against the panel as if he is asleep. He certainly is not invoking the spirit of prayer.

SUE Jew with Rosary. A bearded mustached man sits on the curved molding, his back hunched over, rosary in one hand. He wears a hat with a turned-up brim that curves outward in front. A pair of large eyeglasses hides his eyes. His sharp nose, beard and large hat mark him as a Jew. His spectacles indicate that he cannot see the light.
End panels are carved on the lower and the upper rows. There are two or three levels (top, mid and low) of sculptures on each panel. The upper carvings are in the round and the lower panels are bas reliefs. The saints on the north panels are the fathers of the church: Augustine, Gregory, Jerome, Ambrosius. The saints on the south panels are the marshalls of the Rhineland: Cornelius with his horn, Hubertus with his deer, Antonius and Quirinus.

NLW (Top) Two Bishops Talk. Seated on a long bench, they wear long tasseled capes closed with a brooch at the throat and decorated miters. They hold ceremonial staffs. One has his hand to the other’s head while the younger man puts some coins into a cup held by a tiny bearded beggar.

E:NLW-Top

Two Bishops

NLW (Low) Soldier with Shield. He is dressed in armor and helmet and holds a banner.

NL (Mid) Fallen Christ with Cross. He lies on the ground, his head raised.
NL (Mid) Reclining Angel Writes. He writes down the good done by people in contrast to the devil on the south central panel.

NLE (Top) Holy Family. Mary, in long gown and cape, with wavy hair and crown, and Anne in loose gown and wimple headdress, sit on a bench and hold the nude baby Jesus between them. Anne takes the baby from Mary’s hands.

NLE (Low) Bishop Holds Pomegranate. This fruit symbolizes the dissemination of the word since it has so many seeds.

NUW (Top) Bishop with Crozier Blesses.

NUW (Low) Bishop Stands in Niche. He wears a decorated miter and carries a double cross and a horn.

NUE (Top) Peter Holds Huge Key and Book.

NUE (Mid) Monk and Fool Eat and Drink. The two figures sit behind a panel. The monk, his cowl slipped back, holds a cup to his lips and extends an empty hand. The fool facing him wears a fool’s hat with a button or bell on top and puts one hand to his lips. He holds a bone in the other hand. They all signal gluttony.
NUE (Low) Bishop Stands in Niche. He wears an elaborate miter and carries book and crozier.

SWL (Top) Two Bishops. They hold crozier and book. Deer is below. The deer signifies Saint Hubertus, the patron saint of hunting.

SL (Mid) Fallen Christ with Cross.

SL (Mid) Reclining Devil with Seven Faces. The faces are on the stomach, shoulders, knees and legs. This devil is a variant of Tutivillus, Satan's assistant who records the names of women who chatter in church. In England he appears, generally between a pair of conversing women, as a single-headed monster jotting names on a long scroll. Here he writes with pen and ink. Across the aisle an angel records good deeds.
SLE (Top) Coronation of Mary.

SLE (Low) Saint Jerome with Lion. The saint stands, one hand patting the lion and the other holding an open book.

SUW (Top) Saint Agnes on her Lamb.

SUW (Low) Prophet Stands in Niche. He holds a tau crutch and an open book. A devil head is at his feet.

SUE (Top) Mary Holds her Baby.

SUE (Low) Pope Holds Cross and Book.
Kempen

Church of the Birth of Saint Mary

*Number:* 22 stalls with 22 misericords.

*Date:* 1493.

*Carver:* Johann Gruter.

*Arms:* Occupations, proverbs and grotesques.

*Ends:* The north panels portray the fathers of the church: Augustine, Ambrosius, Gregory and Aquinas. The south panels portray the marshalls of the Rhineland: Cornelius, Hubertus, Antonius and Quirinus.
Misericords

Five of the misericords portray foxes: hunting, deceiving, preaching. Several themes are similar to those at Emmerich.

NL-01 Cat Licks Anus. The cat has pointed ears and a small nose. Its long tail curls down as it obviously prepares to lick its genitals; generally a symbol of sloth.

NL-02 Ape Scratches Rear End. A seated ape, legs crossed, touches his tongue with one hand while the other scratches his rump. His genitals are visible.

NL-03 Grimacer. A bearded man with curly hair extends his tongue and stretches his mouth with both hands. This image, common in England, could be a party game where the grimacer tries to make others laugh by making a funny face, or it could also be a symbol of gluttony.
Misericords in the Rhineland

NL-04 **Fox Invites Stork.** The fox serves dinner on a flat plate. Although the stork tries to eat by placing its claws on the table and trying to bite the food, it goes hungry. The Flemish proverb, *The deceiver deceived* is depicted in Bruegel’s proverb painting and on other misericords such as those at Coimbra, Portugal; Venlo, Netherlands, etc.

![Fox Invites Stork](image)

NL-05 **Cowled Fox Reads.** Fox, a cowl on his back, his brush tail curled around him, sits before an open book with his front paws on the pages. However, the fox definitely does not read and his behavior is hypocritical and deceptive.

NU-01 **Outgape the Oven.** A woman kneels, scarf on her head and neck, wearing a long belted gown and wooden sandals. Her mouth is open as she faces a brick oven with architectural details and a small opening. The proverb *To outgape the oven* means to try to do the impossible. See Bruegel’s painting and misericords at Kalkar; Marienheide; Hoogstraten, Belgium; Amsterdam, Netherlands; Isle Adam and Rouen in France; and Zamora and Toledo in Spain.
NU-02  **Man Whips Eggs.** A man in hat, short flared jacket, and pointed shoes, holds a flail over his shoulder and is about to strike a number of eggs on the ground before him. Several eggs behind him are already broken. His strenuous effort is senseless since egg shells crack easily. See Kalkar.
NU-03 **Stork Invites Fox.** The stork now eats hungrily, its neck bent far down into the vase in which it has served dinner. The fox can only sniff at the odors in the vase. This scene is the second half of the proverb, *The deceiver deceived.* See NL-04.

 NU-03 Stork Invites Fox

 NU-04 **To Bell the Cat.** A cat sits, its long tail curled around its hips while four mice scurry around. An open collar with a buckle and a bell stretches below the cat. The four mice would like to bell the cat, but they would not survive that act. The Flemish proverb signifies that someone is about to undertake a dangerous task. The proverb, which persists in several languages today, appeared on a misericord, now destroyed, at Emmerich. See Bruegel’s proverb painting and description in Langland’s *Piers Plowman.*

 NU-04 To Bell the Cat

 NU-05 **The Fox Preacher.** The fox stands in the pulpit, one paw extended toward three chickens and a cock who are gathered at the foot of the pulpit. The *preacher* has already caught two chickens in the cowl which hangs down his back. A second cowled fox sneaks around the pulpit ready to pounce on another chicken. Several proverbs may be involved such as *Habit does not make the monk,*
or *When the fox preaches look to your geese.* The scene is from the second generation of *Renard the Fox.*
NU-06 **Eagle Holds Shield.**

SL-01 **Fox Hunts Birds.** The fox swims in the sea but the birds, since they can fly, escape. The analogy may be to souls who escape the devil's wiles. A similar carving existed at Emmerich before World War II. A mutilated version still exists at St. John's church in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

SL-02 **Woman Spins.** A woman in a long belted gown sits on a bench, her distaff before her. She fingers the thread with one hand and holds her spindle with the other. Spinning was a woman's typical pastime.

SL-03 **Mermaid.** The temptress, with her tail to the side, looks in her concave mirror and she combs her hair: a symbol of lust.

SL-04 **Cast Roses to Swine.** A bareheaded man in short jacket with purse at his belt clutches a bag in one hand and throws a large rose with the other. A pig on each side of him is about to eat the roses. The Flemish proverb traveled down the coast to Spain. Note Bruegel's painting and misericords in Hoogstraten, Belgium; Rouen, France; and Toledo, Spain, among others.
SL-05 **Donkey Eats Rosary.** The saddled donkey bends its front paws and holds a large rosary in its mouth. This scene is undoubtedly a warning to think about prayer rather than to recite the rosary by rote.

![SL-05 Donkey Eats Rosary](image)

SU-01 **Man Fishes.** A man in short jacket and hip length boots pulls a net out of the water behind him as he catches fish in the net.

SU-02 **Water in Basket.** A man in hat with flap over one ear and short blousy outfit with rolled up sleeves holds a basket before him and dips it in water. He is trying to fill the basket with water, an impossible task done for discipline only, called *monk's work*.

SU-03 **Two Dogs Dispute One Bone.** The identical dogs have their heads down and tails curled up and each holds a piece of the bone in its mouth. The Flemish proverb, *Two dogs on one bone means a quarrel* signifies envy. See, among others, Bruegel and Bosch paintings and misericords at Behuard, Venlo and Emmerich, and end panel at Emmerich. This proverb, so common on the continent, appears rarely on choir stalls in England.
SU-04 Griffin Holds Shield.

SU-05 Allegorical Figure. Woman in a long gown and veiled hein sits outdoors and lowers to water a wand she holds in one hand. To the side rain falls from clouds. The woman is similar to WL-04 at Emmerich and to E-02 at Nettersheim. She is probably creating or protecting water, one of the four elements.

SU-07 Pelican Feeds Young. The pelican stands by a nest built of twigs and feeds three chicks with blood from its breast. Drops of blood can be seen in the pelican’s mouth and dripping from its breast. This scene is from Bestiary tales and signifies the charity of Christ. There is another pelican at Kalkar NL-06 and at Boppard-on-Rhine.
Armrests

NLW (inside panel) Ape holds his jaw. He has bumps on his head and spine, wears a belt and has a long tail.
NL-01 Sow holds a spindle with her front paws.
NL-02 Cat holds basket with fish.
NL-03 Man, a pilgrim with hat on back, holds a shoe. Only he knows where it pinches.
NL-04 Monk sits. He wears a long robe with rope belt and has one hand on a closed book and the other to his head.
NLE (inside panel) Ape holds young. He has no bumps on his body and no tail. He feeds his baby from a tube.

A:SL-03 "Eulenspiegel"
NUW (inside panel) Fool sits in basket and hatches eggs.

NU-01 Man with purse holds a bird; he is a womanizer.
NU-02 Man gets undressed. He lifts his shirt and doffs his boots.
NU-03 Cat sits with mouse between paws.
NU-04 Cowled fox holds book on the back of a goose who is whispering in his ear: the goose confesses to the fox. (See Back Cover.)
NU-05 Man sits with long robe and short cape. His head and hands are gone.

NUE (inside panel) Wildman sits, with stones held in his fists.

SLW (inside panel) Dog sits with front paws on bundle of twine.

SL-01 Pig bagpiper.
SL-02 Bearded nude holds two stones. He is probably a Wildman who represents fools who reject God.
SL-03 Owl holds mirror under his wing. This is a rebus for the popular character “Til Eulenspiegel”. (See page 139.)
SL-04 Man holds sack on his back. He has buttons on his sleeves and his shoes are open at the front.

SLE (inside panel) Donkey plays lute with four strings.

SUW (inside panel) Ape with hand on his jaw. He has dragon-like bumps on his head and spine and no tail.

SU-01 Man spills basket of eggs, cries and puts one hand to his eye.
SU-02 Pig removes pants.
SU-03 Man sits on a pig and shears it.
SU-04 Bear takes honey from a hive. Bees are on his back.
SU-05 Ape carries a lamb in basket on its back. When the ape’s head is looked at upside down it becomes a human head.

SUE (inside panel) Collared dog has bumps on head, snout and spine and a snake around his neck.
End Panels

NLW  Angel with shield.
     Saint Anthony with pig.
NUW  Angel with shield.
     Bishop Hubert.
NUE  Angel with shield.
     Cornelius - a marshall of the Rhineland.
     Quirinus - a marshall of the Rhineland.
Marienheide

Wallfahrtskirche

Number: 16 choir stalls, 8 each on north and south walls of the choir. The shape of the seat is similar to the double scallop at Cleves, Kalkar, Kempen and Steinfeld.

Date: c1504.

Arms: Sculpted mainly with half formed figures and grotesque combinations of animal parts which signify evil spirits.

End Panels: Figures of knight, bishops and saints painted white with blue trim.
N-01 **Monster-Man.** Nude man faces toward one side. One arm is broader and ends in a horned head.

N-02 **Bearded Winged Monster-Man.** He places one human hand to his human head. Wings are attached to a vague body. Some pieces are missing, others have been replaced.

N-03 **Angel Plays Lute.** Wings spread, it wears a cape with collar and has bare legs.

N-04 **Winged Nude.**

N-05 **Bearded Mask.** It has a moustache and spiral ears.

N-06 **Nude Couple and Jug in Pot.** The figures are nude and bald. One raises his arm. They may be bathing or boiling.
N-07 **Abraham and Isaac.** The older man precedes the youth and carries a torch. Isaac carries wood over one shoulder.

N-08 **Devil Mask with Horns.** Its tongue is extended.

S-01 **Nude Warrior.** The surface of this carving is badly worn. The man appears to be holding a large shield with one hand and foot and raises the other arm to throw a weapon.

S-02 **Fool Outgapes Oven.** Dressed simply, he kneels on one knee, opens his mouth and holds the oven with both hands. Note other gapers at Kempen and Kalkar.
S-03 **Man Kneels before Idol.** This carving is badly mutilated. The man may be wearing a bishop’s miter and may be holding a goat’s head. Thus he may be praying to the devil.

S-04 **Winged Monster.** (Modern)

S-05 **Demi-Monster with Banderole.** The head is beaked and horned.

S-06 **Mask with Ass Ears.** There appears to be an oval hole in the middle of the forehead. However, when the image is turned upside down this hole becomes the mouth in an inverted image.

S-07 **Adam, Eve and the Apple.** The two figures, lightly carved, extend their arms as Eve hands the apple to Adam.

S-08 **Two Grotesque Heads.** They are back to back. One has an enormous nose and the other has a trumpet ear.
Armrests

NW Inner surface of partition: Grotesque head with huge nose and ears.
N-01 Dog sits in pot. Its paws are on the rim.
N-02 Contorted hybrid with human face and second face at the end of a tail. When the head is inverted a second face appears.

A:N-02 Hybrid with Inverted Head

N-03 Acrobat without arms does backbend.
N-04 Figure with banderole.
N-05 Human with dog-head sits before a pot. The dog-headed race, reported by John Mandeville and other explorers to the east, appears on a tympanum at Vezelay.
A:N-05 Human with Dog's Head

N-06 Mutilated figure. Only a leg and bits of a body remain.  
N-07 Monster pulls the beard of his humanized head.  
NE Inner surface of partition: Merman with club and shield.

SW Inner surface of partition: Mermaid with comb and mirror.  
S-01 Bearded hybrid eats bone.  
S-02 Winged monster with human hand.  
S-03 Animal without forelimbs sits.  
S-04 Beaked monster with genitals.  
S-05 Ram in a hell mouth.  
S-06 Human with trumpet ears sits and holds cup.  
S-07 Fool holds bone.  
SE Inner surface of partition: Man holds bone.
**End Panels**

**North Side - West**
- Top  Saint Erasmus.
- Mid  Two holy bishops.
  - Augustus with a cross.
  - Bishop with arrow and heart.
- Desk end: Saint Quirinus.
- Low  A mask.

**North Side - East**
- Top  Saint Stephen and Saint Vincent.
- Mid  Kneeling monk.
  - Resurrected Christ.
  - Two bishops.
- Low  Saint Peter.

**South Side - West**
- Top  Bishop with staff blessing.
  - Saint Dominick.
  - Saint Agnes.
  - A Prophet.
- Mid  Saint Margaret with staff and small devil.
  - Mary Magdalene with ointment pot.
- Desk  Saint Nicasius.

**South Side - East**
- Top  Prophet with banderole.
- Mid  Mary and Saint Martin.
  - Saint Dorothy and Saint Cecelia.
- Low  Saint Andreas and a demon.
- Desk  Saint Sebastian.
Number: 8 choir stalls with 5 misericords. These are evidently the return stalls from the cloister at Steinfeld, given to Saint Martin when the cloister was secularized. The rood screen was probably removed at that time and there was no place for the return stalls which backed the screen. Four of these stalls are on the north wall of the choir and four are on the east wall of the nave to the south of the choir.

Date: 15th century.

Arms: Carved with animals and active figures.
**Misericords**

N-01 **Foliage.**

N-02 **Baker by Oven.** A man kneels before the oven and is probably closing the door. If he were inserting or removing bread he would be using a long spade. Since the iconography is similar to “outgape the oven” where the man is trying to do the impossible, the carver possibly is trying to show the opposite. Here is a sensible man, his mouth firmly shut, who is closing the oven door.

![Baker by Oven](image)

N-03 **Dog and the Keg.** The carver shows us a variant on the scene of the dog licking the pot clean. Here the animal sits firmly outside an open keg and either helps himself more delicately with one paw or is helping to mix the contents of the keg.
N-04 Foliage.

E-01 Dragon.

E-02 Nature with the Element of Fire. The allegorical figure of nature appears on misericords at Kalkar and Kempen. A fourth one has yet to appear. This theme on three different sets of Rhineland stalls indicates either the involvement of the same workshop or the existence of a pattern book. Here Nature, attired as an older woman, waves her wand at what appears to be fire coming from the sun.

E-03 Foliage.

E-04 Duck.
Armrests

Bas relief on inner surface of north-west panel: Monster with bat wing ears and cloven hooves.

N-01 Man sits with hands to head and knee. His gestures indicate sadness or regret.
N-02 Foliage.
N-03 Squirrel eats nut.
N-04 Mermaid. Her hair is long, her arms are gone. She leans back on a thick scaly tail.

A:N-04 Mermaid

E-01 Man bends over with rear end to viewer. He wears shirt and pants, somewhat separated at the rear.
E-02 Foliage.
E-03 Woman Holds Child. She is poorly clothed and may be begging.
E-04 Pelican feeds young on nest.
Bas relief on inner surface of south-east panel: Foliage
End Panels

NW-01 Two dogs, each with its own small bone. This may be the carver’s response to the common scene of two dogs disputing one bone as at Emmerich.

E:NW-01 Two Dogs with Bones

SE-01 Two large birds with monster heads twine their necks.

Provenance: The Rhineland

Birmingham, England: St. Chad’s
Bird with its Head in Water
**Rödingen**

Parish Church

**Number:** 8 choir stalls, 4 on each side of the altar.
**Date:** End 15th century.
**Arms:** Figures and animals.
**End Panels:** Ecclesiastical figures, old testament scenes and zodiac symbols.

**Comments:** Only half the choir stalls remain in the church. The other half was sold and may still be in Belgium. The remaining stalls were cut in half with 4 seats placed on the north and 4 on the south side of the altar. There is therefore only one end panel on each side.
N-01  **Nude Man with Sack.** The sack is strapped onto his shoulder and he walks with one hand on the strap and the other handling the contents of the sack.

N-02  **Man Pours from Jug to Cup.** His legs are crossed. Gluttony.

N-03  **Man's Head and Snake.**
Misericords in the Rhineland

N-04 Pigs Eat Acorns.

S-01 Two Dogs with Stick in Mouths. They stand at the sides of a support on which rests their stick as if it were a barbeque spit.

S-02 Mermaid with Comb and Mirror. She wears a hat.

S-03 Griffin Stands with Pole.

S-04 Unicorn Stands with Pole.

Armrests

N-01 Seated man drinks.

N-02 Pelican with young in nest (broken).
N-03  Apothecary with bowl. His mouth is open.

A:N-03  Apothecary with Bowl

N-04  Bear and hive.

S-01  Figure.
S-02  Bear eats its tail.
S-03  Animal (damaged).
S-04  (damaged).
A:N-04 Bear and Hive

End Panels

NLW  (Top) Three Men before Cave. Possibly the entombment. Pieces are missing.
(Low) Manna Falls from Heaven. Three men with Jew’s hats are collecting the manna dispersed by a pair of angels.
NNUW  (Top) Bishop holds heart and crozier. He stands on a flower.
(Mid) Bishop stands with crozier.
(Low) Man warms by fire, symbol for February.
E:NUW (Low)  Man Warms by Fire

SLW  (Top) Entry to Jerusalem. Christ walks on a man, a Jew looks back and a man kneels with his hand on a pot of money. Another man carries a sheep on his shoulders.
   (Mid) Ascension.
   (Low) Three men.

SUW  (Top) Annunciation.
   (Mid) Man with Banner.
   (Low) Man at well with water, zodiac symbol for January.
The Cloister

*Number:* 14 choir stalls with 7 storied misericords.

*Date:* 15th century.

*Arms:* Intricate carvings, including some proverbs already seen on Kempen and Kalkar choir stalls: shearing the pig, hatching eggs.

*Backs:* Baroque with angelic decorations.

*Misericords:* The shape of the seats, with double scallop, is similar to those at Cleves, Kalkar, and Kempen. Some of the themes are also the same. Eight additional stalls from this set, evidently the former return stalls, are now in the nearby parish church at Nettersheim.
N-01  Man with Basket of Food. He shows it to the viewer.

A:N-01  Man with Food

N-02  Foliage.
N-03  Biped Monster.
N-04  Foliage.
N-05  Bird monster. It has a cock's head and hooved feet.
N-06  Foliage.
N-07  **Fox Preacher.** He preaches to three geese and has another in his hood.

S-01  **Ire and Charity.** The couple, identified in an old survey, walk hand in hand.
S-02  **Foliage.**
S-03  **Duck.**
S-04  **Foliage.**
S-05  **Foliage.**
S-06  **Fox and Stork.** Here the stork has invited the fox since she eats from a tall vase while the fox goes hungry. The first half of the fable, as seen at Kempen, is probably lost and replaced by one of the foliate carvings.
Armrests

Bas relief on north-west panel: Dragon.

N-01  Foliage.
N-02  Fool hatches eggs.
N-03  Hybrid with human rear quarters.
N-04  Foliage.
N-05  Man holds the edge of his robe.
N-06  Monster looks up.
N-07  Man shears pig. Although no scissors are visible, a strip of skin has already been shorn.
Bas relief on south-west panel: Dragon.

S-01 Foliage.
S-02 Woman unfolds hen from apron. That marks her as a gossip and libeler.
S-03 Animal.
S-04 Foliage.
S-05 Wildman with hand at hair and knee. He is probably the fool who denies God.
S-06 Ape smiles. His missing hand probably held an apple.
S-07 Seated Wildman holds club. His lionskin has holes at the knees.
Northrhine-Westphalia

Straelen

N-01 Witch Rides to Sabbat
Number: 12 stalls, each with a misericord and arm rests, 6 on the north side of the nave and 6 on the south side.

Date: North stalls are 15th century; south stalls are 19th century copies of choir stalls at nearby Kempen. (Fox Preacher, Donkey Chews Rosary, Cowled Fox Reads, Cat Licks Genitals, Grimacer, and Wyvern)

Arms: Carved with active animals. Those on the north side are originals and those on the south are copies of Kempen (Two dogs, donkey, bear eats honey, pig undresses).

Only the original carvings are listed.

Misericords

N-01 **Nude Woman Mounted on Nude Man.** She wears a scarf around her head that seems to be blowing in the wind. One arm is missing; it probably held the bowl or ladle which is by her head. Her other hand grasps a collar around the man's neck. The man, with elongated body, has short hair. His arms may be animal legs but the rest of his body looks human. The most likely interpretation is a witch being carried to her *Sabbat.* See Stratford (Warwickshire, England) and Boos (Seine Maritime, France) and engravings by Durer and Grun.

N-02 **Man Holds Up Two Objects.** The man, dressed in a form fitting garment has a large purse at his front waist. He wears a turban with flap on one side. In one hand he holds what may be a knife and in the other what may be part of an animal skin.

N-03 **Man Leans over Animal.** The man, who may be the same we saw in N-02, leans over an animal and grasps its rear end with both hands. The animal turns its head to look at him. The animal may be a fake since it looks as if it has buttons on its belly. The animal head looks like one of the objects the man in N-02 is holding. Perhaps this is a competition to see who can catch and slaughter an animal the fastest. See Saint-Claude (Jura, France) and Barcelona, Spain.
N-04  **Seated Couple.** A man and woman, dressed in everyday garments and hats, sit in facing chairs and look at the viewer. Their legs are crossed so that the man’s foot is under the woman’s body and the woman’s foot is under the man’s body. Each has one arm raised, bent at the elbow and touching the other’s hand. The man’s free hand rests on a stick and the woman’s free hand opens the man’s purse. The scene certainly has sexual connotations. The scene may be a variant of the proverb *to measure up* where the couple are deciding if they are sexually compatible. See Fairford (Gloucestershire, England) and Rouen (Seine Maritime, France)
N-05  **Two Apes in Fools' Caps Hold Book.** The apes each stand in a basket, or it may be the hives of bees. They hold between them an open book with a devil head peering over it. The devil, a human with large ears, has its cloven hooves on the pages of the book, probably a satire on the preaching friars.

N-06  **Fox Preacher.** The cowled fox stands in a pulpit before three enormous birds. Satire on the preaching orders.

**Armrests**

N-01  Animal scratches its neck.
N-02  Cowled pig sits.
N-03  Man with animal head eats something he holds in his hands.
Armrest: Nude Woman and Spindle
Date: Late 13th century, the oldest set of choir stalls in the Rhineland.

Number: Twelve stalls in the lower row and 24 in the upper row on the north and south sides of the choir. A later partial set of six stalls are on the north and south walls near the apse.

Armrests: Two small sculptures adorn the sides of each seat marking the level of the shoulder and the hand. They are basically heads of humans or animals. The newer set of stalls has single carvings on the arms, each with a stylized leaf over the head.

Misericords: The older set of choir stalls has simple carvings of a single leaf as a misericord. Some of these are missing. The misericords of the six newer stalls are described below. The carvings are of women’s heads or owls. The association may be a derogatory statement concerning women since owls did not see the light.

N-01 Woman’s Head with Fillet around her Wavy Hair.

N-02 Owl stands on Branch.

N-03 Woman’s head with Turban.

S-01 Woman’s Head with Wimple.

S-02 Eagle Stands on Branch.
S-02  Eagle Stands on Branch

S-03  Woman’s Head with Turban.

Provenance: The Rhineland

Birmingham, England: St. Chad’s
Walking on Water
Iconographic Glossary

Attributes of Saints
Arrow - Saint Ursula
Cardinal Hat - Saint Jerome
Cock Crowing - Saint Peter
Deer - Saint Hubertus
Goose - Saint Ludivitus
Heart - Saint Ambrosius
Horn: Saint Cornelius
Kneeling Donkey - Saint Anthony of Padua
Key - Saint Peter
Knotted cord and belt - Saint Francis
Lamb - Saint Agnes
Lamb with Banner - Saint John the Baptist
Lion - Saint Jerome
Monstrance - Saint Claire of Assisi
Pot of Ointment - Saint Mary Madeleine
Stigmata - Saint Francis
Tower - Saint Barbara
Wheel - Saint Catherine of Alexandria

Bestiary Tales
The Capture of the Unicorn
The Lion Resurrects its Newborn Young
The Pelican Feeds its Young
Parrots Fall on their Beaks

Proverbs
To bell the cat:
    To start on a dangerous mission
Broken eggs leave many shells.
When the master is late for dinner the dog will lick the pot clean.
To outgape the Oven:
    To attempt the impossible
The Fox and the Stork:
    The deceiver deceived
To shear a pig (Little wool; many squeals):
    To do something stupid
Two dogs on one bone:
    To be envious
To cry over spilt milk:
    Waste your energy on something that cannot be corrected
If you cannot decide which chair to sit on you will fall into the ashes between.
Habit does not make the monk.
Cast roses before swine.
When the fox preaches, look to your geese.
When you break eggs you end up with a lot of shells.

Symbols
Ape - Base instincts of man
Cord belt - Franciscan monk
Foliate Mask - Pagan and Bacchic image
Judensau - Anti-Judaic motif showing Jews sucking from a pig
Dog - Faithfulness
Man falls off horse - Pride
Man with Hen - Womanizer
Mermaid - Lust
Merman, armed - Ire
Owl - Jew who did not see the light.
Pointed Hat or round hat with stick on top - Jew
Pig - Gluttony; Lust
Ram - Devil's handmaid
Ram-Bone - Devil
Scissors - Clip joint

Old Testament Stories
David and Goliath - David was an ancestor of Christ.
Death of Absalom
Drunken Noah
Isaac Blesses Joseph - Symbol of the cross since Isaac's hands were crossed.
Jonah and the Whale - Prefigures death and resurrection of Christ.
Joseph and Portifer's wife - Joseph is a pre-Christ figure.
Noah and the Ark - Ark is a symbol of the church.
Sacrifice of Cain and Abel
Samson and Delilah - Deception of Women.
Samson Slays the Lion - Prefigured the Harrowing of Hell.

Fabulous Creatures

Dragon - Four footed winged creature with snake tail, symbol of evil.
Griffin - Composite animal with eagle’s head and lions body; 20 times the power of these most powerful animals.
Harpy - Composite animal with human head and body of a bird, symbol of lust.
Hybrid - Composite animal, usually with a human head.
Mermaid - Head and chest of a woman with body and tail of a fish. Sometimes she also has webbed feet. She usually carries a mirror and comb and symbolizes lust.
Merman - Mate of the mermaid. He is usually armed and represents anger.
Tutivillus - Devil whose job is to identify women who chatter in church and report to Satan.
Unicorn - Animal with goat’s head, horse body and single spiral horn.
Wildman - Man or woman who lives in the woods and wears lion skin as sign of adulthood. The lion is his mount. In the 16th century he is sometimes depicted nude with fur around his waist. He is a frequent image on misericords, especially in England.
Wyvern - A two footed dragon.
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---------. *Weert: de koorbanken van de St. Martinuskerk Nederweert: de koorbanken van de St. Lambertuskerk.*
Cologne

Master Builders of the Cathedral
Photos

Cover:
Kalkar: Saint-Nicolas SU-07 Meditating Monk
(For description see page 120)

Title Page:
Cologne Cathedral NL-21 Salome
(For description see page 50)

Back Cover:
Kempen A:NU-04 Goose Confesses to Fox
(For description see page 137)