



*The  
Armored  
Horse  
in Europe  
1480–1620*

THE METROPOLITAN  
MUSEUM OF ART

# *The Armored Horse in Europe*

1480–1620





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STUART W. PYHRR, DONALD J. LARocca, AND DIRK H. BREIDING

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# Introduction

STUART W. PYHRR

For almost a century one of the most memorable displays in the Metropolitan Museum has been the dramatic group of armored equestrian figures that is an essential feature of the Arms and Armor Galleries. Many visitors no doubt regard these armor-clad horsemen as symbols of a romantic age of chivalry, even though the armors date not to the Middle Ages but to the sixteenth century. It is true, nonetheless, that the medieval knight or man-at-arms was inseparable from his horse—the animal that supplied not only his transportation but also the power behind his lance—so much so that the knight came to be defined in most European languages as a rider or horseman (for example, *Ritter* in German and *chevalier* in French). The protection of a carefully bred, well-trained horse in war and the tournament was of critical concern to its rider, and since at least the twelfth century European armorers devised an evolving series of protective coverings in textile, leather, mail, and, finally, steel plate in order to render the horse, like its armored rider, as invulnerable as possible. With the development in the fifteenth century of the bard (a term denoting a complete horse armor of plate), the horse had the most comprehensive and effective defense possible without serious impingement of its movement, sight, and ventilation. Curiously, while the development of European armor for the man has been the subject of many specialized studies, that for the horse has received comparatively little attention. Indeed, the present exhibition appears to be the first devoted exclusively to the subject.

“The Armored Horse in Europe, 1480–1620” is the fifth of the Department of Arms and Armor’s rotating exhibitions held in the Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Gallery.<sup>1</sup> Like all but one of its predecessors, this exhibition aims to display and publish thematically related material selected from the department’s reserve collection. Rarely shown, often unpublished, and largely unknown even to specialists, these items from storage, while for the most part secondary to those on permanent display, nevertheless are often historically or artistically significant and therefore merit further attention and study.

The choice of horse armor as an exhibition theme is a natural one for the department, given the size of its hold-

ings of this material and the prominence of the four superbly barded horses and their riders that form the centerpiece of the majestic Emma and Georgina Bloomberg Arms and Armor Court in the Morgan Wing (frontispiece). While the bards rank as our most important examples of European equestrian equipment, the collection contains more than a hundred additional elements of horse armor, notably shaffrons, crinets, peytrals, and cruppers, as well as armored saddles and individual saddle steels. Most come from the three collections that form the foundation of our holdings of European armor: that of Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duc de Dino (1843–1917), which was purchased by the Museum en bloc in 1904; that donated by William H. Riggs (1835–1924) in 1913; and that of Bashford Dean (1867–1928), curator of Arms and Armor, which was acquired by bequest, gift, and purchase after his death. A fourth noteworthy source is the small group of armor, including five shaffrons and other detached elements of bards, generously presented to the Museum in 1927 by Prince Albrecht Radziwill of Poland.

The majority of the detached elements of horse armor remain in the reserve collection because exhibition space is unavailable or because they are fragmentary or lack the quality or condition expected of objects on permanent display. That said, each of the forty items chosen for exhibition is noteworthy for its form, decoration, or provenance. Among the earliest examples are two shaffrons (cat. nos. 4, 6) and two crupper panels (cat. nos. 24, 25) whose cusped edges and elaborately ridged surfaces evoke the waning Gothic style still fashionable in northern Europe at the end of the fifteenth century. Most of the pieces, however, date from the sixteenth century and evince the bold forms and classically inspired ornament of the Renaissance. The first half of the century saw the final flowering of the bard, whereas the second half witnessed its gradual decline and disuse on the battlefield as a result of changing military tactics and weaponry. By the early seventeenth century horse armor was decidedly old-fashioned and primarily used on ceremonial occasions.

The decoration of sixteenth-century horse armor mirrored that of the armor for the man, which it invariably

matched when the two formed part of an ensemble, or garniture. Etching (the method of “biting” a design into the metal surface by means of acid) was the most popular and widespread decorative technique employed on armor. Designs produced by this method most often consisted of bands containing foliate scrolls, strapwork, grotesques, or trophies of arms (for example, cat. nos. 13, 18, 17, and 19, respectively). In addition, several other etched objects bear figures of Landsknecht soldiers (cat. no. 9), coats of arms (cat. nos. 9, 14), dates (cat. nos. 9, 34), or inscriptions (cat. nos. 17, 36). Among the most remarkable in the exhibition are two saddle steels, one etched with figural medallions and inscriptions derived from Andrea Alciato’s famous emblem book (cat. no. 36), the other etched with scenes from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* after woodcuts by the prolific Nuremberg artist Virgil Solis (cat. no. 39). These sophisticated and rare examples of the use of figural scenes on armor reflect the pervasive influence of classical literature and learning on Renaissance culture.

Embossing (or repoussé, the art of raising designs on the surface of the plate by means of hammering from below, creating in effect a low relief) was a more time-consuming and demanding decorative technique that was used primarily for parade armor in Italy and, to a lesser extent, in Germany, Flanders, and France. Encountered much more rarely on horse armor than etching, embossing was used to great effect on several examples in the exhibition, including the delightful Mooress that forms part of a German escutcheon plate (cat. no. 12), the modest but surprisingly inventive ear guards in the shape of dolphins (cat. no. 11), and the gilt saddle plate depicting a classical warrior in a forested landscape (cat. no. 40). Perhaps the most impressive is the late-fifteenth-century shaffron embossed in the form of a fierce dragon (cat. no. 7). Not only is it an early example of armor “in the heroic style,” but it is also a powerful piece of sculpture in steel. One can imagine that it was probably appreciated as such by a later generation when, in 1539, it was redecorated for use by Henry II, while he was the dauphin of France.

Horse armor has always been rarer than armor for the man and, because of its expense, tended to be used only by the wealthier nobles and knights. Not surprisingly, a number of the exhibited elements have distinguished aristocratic provenances.

In addition to the shaffron of Henry II mentioned above, these include examples made for Emperor Charles V (cat. no. 15); Ottheinrich, Count Palatine of the Rhine and one of the seven electors of the Holy Roman Empire (cat. nos. 9, 10, and possibly 13); the Bavarian nobleman Pankraz von Freyberg (cat. no. 14); and Prince Nikolaus “the Black” Radziwill and other members of that distinguished Polish family (cat. nos. 18, 27, 32).

The catalogue entries for the exhibited items are preceded by short essays that offer an overview of the development of medieval and later horse armor in Europe, including armored saddles and saddle steels, as well as some observations on the key pieces of equestrian equipment on permanent display in the Arms and Armor Galleries. These essays are intended to provide both a general introduction to the subject of European horse armor and a more comprehensive and balanced picture of the Metropolitan Museum’s holdings of this material.

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The authors dedicate this publication to the memory of Harvey Murton (1907–2004), Armorer at the Metropolitan Museum from 1930 to 1972.

1. The earlier exhibitions were: “The Gods of War: Sacred Imagery and the Decoration of Arms and Armor” (1996–97; catalogue by Donald J. LaRocca); “The Academy of the Sword: Illustrated Fencing Books, 1500–1800” (1998–99; catalogue by Donald J. LaRocca);

“European Helmets, 1450–1650: Treasures from the Reserve Collection” (2000–2001; catalogue by Stuart W. Pyhrr); and “Arms and Armor: Notable Acquisitions, 1991–2002” (2002–3; catalogue by Stuart W. Pyhrr, Donald J. LaRocca, and Morihiro Ogawa).



# Horse Armor in Medieval and Renaissance Europe: An Overview

DIRK H. BREIDING

Horse armor has been used for more than three thousand years, but it was generally rarer than armor for man, being reserved mainly for the elite heavy cavalry and predominantly for battle.<sup>1</sup> Horses in full armor were often confined to positions in the first ranks of a battle formation or to specialized units. Such heavy cavalry did not exclusively fight its similarly equipped counterpart, but was intended to engage infantry and light cavalry as well, especially mounted archers. Exceptions are found in medieval Europe, where social conventions infused with romantic notions of chivalry often favored “mounted shock combat,” that is, a choreographed attack with couched lances, and thus repeatedly determined battlefield tactics until well into the sixteenth century. Horse armor was also prominently employed in tournaments, for princely ceremonial display, and occasionally for the hunt. The history of the development of horse armor generally paralleled that of armor for man, both employing the same materials (principally metal, leather, and textile) and decorative techniques.

Horse armor evolved during the second millennium B.C. in the Near East and Egypt from protective coverings for chariot horses that were apparently made of textile or leather and sometimes reinforced with scales of metal or horn.<sup>2</sup> By the ninth century B.C., horsemanship, and with it the development of mounted warfare and protective horse equipment—including the first shaffrons<sup>3</sup>—had spread to the West and Asia via Central Asia. Indeed, archaeological evidence suggests that the Massageto-Chorasmian peoples of Central Asia were the first to have developed a distinctive heavy cavalry by the sixth century B.C.: mounted warriors wearing mail or scale armor and presumably an iron helmet, while the head and flanks of their horses were protected by metal scales.<sup>4</sup> Similar construction, either of downward overlapping scales secured to a supporting fabric, or of small metal plates overlapping upward and held together by leather lacing (a type known as lamellar armor), became the dominant form of horse armor

throughout the ancient world, especially in the Near East. Panels of lamellar armor for the front of the horse are known from Greek and Iranian reliefs ranging in date from the second century B.C. until at least the fifth century A.D.

The Greeks, although familiar with the horse armor of their Persian enemies (who had inherited it from the Assyrians), appear to have made little use of armored horses.<sup>5</sup> Rome too largely neglected the use of cavalry in favor of foot soldiers, though protective equipment for horses appears to have been employed with increasing regularity from the first century A.D.<sup>6</sup> Specialized units of heavily armored cavalry, known as *clibanarii* and modeled on Rome’s Parthian and Sassanid enemies, appear during the third and the early fourth century A.D. Although under Roman command, these units were largely made up of Near Eastern auxiliary troops who had had firsthand experience with heavy cavalry. Three *clibanarii* horse armors dating from before 256 A.D. were excavated at Dura-Europos (Syria).<sup>7</sup> Although lacking shaffrons, two of the armors for the horse’s body are largely complete, comprising iron and copper scales, respectively, sewn onto a support of coarse linen. Similar units became regularly employed throughout other provinces during the fourth century A.D., including those in western Europe, and may have ensured that the use of horse armor survived there well into the fifth century. With the decline of Roman rule, however, the use of protective horse equipment north of the Alps appears to have ceased altogether.

It was not until the late eleventh century that horse armor was gradually reintroduced in western Europe.<sup>8</sup> Like the contemporaneous mounted warrior, who wore a long-sleeved shirt of mail and mail leggings, the horse too was clad in mail. A number of references document the existence of such mail trappers by the late twelfth century. The Saracen Baha al-Din Ibn Shaddad, for example, recorded seeing a knight among the Crusaders riding “a large horse covered in mail to its hooves” during the siege



Fig. 1. *Two Men-at-Arms Riding Horses Protected by Mail Trappers*. Spanish, late 12th–early 13th century. Church of San Lorenzo, Vallejo de Mena, near Burgos

of Acre (1189–91).<sup>9</sup> And during a battle against the French near Gisors in 1198, King Richard I of England is reported to have captured 200 enemy horses, of which 140 were “covered in iron.”<sup>10</sup>

What are believed to be the earliest representations of armored horses in medieval Europe are found in Spanish sculpture. A carved capital in the church of San Lorenzo in Vallejo de Mena, near Burgos, dating to the late twelfth or very early thirteenth century, shows two warriors mounted on horses in mail trappers that protect their bodies, necks, and presumably their heads (fig. 1), while a tympanum relief of 1203 in the church of Santa María in Yermo, near Santander, depicts a trapper that appears to extend further, enclosing each leg individually down to the knees and hocks, respectively.<sup>11</sup> (Like the mail-clad warrior who wore a gambeson beneath his hauberk, a horse in a mail trapper presumably had an additional padded and quilted trapper underneath for comfort and additional protection.) By the first quarter of the thirteenth century, mail trappers were in use throughout Europe.

Caparisons, large textile coverings for the entire horse, appeared during the late twelfth century. Like the knightly surcoat (a loose-fitting, usually sleeveless garment worn over armor), caparisons were probably adopted by Crusaders in imitation of the coverings worn by their Saracen enemy. Early caparisons for warhorses may also have assumed protective qualities by being thickly padded and quilted. The majority of caparisons, however, appear to have

been intended to bear either heraldic colors or the rider’s coat of arms. Widely used during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the caparison tended to hide any armor worn beneath it, accounting for the infrequency with which horse armor of the period is depicted. Although caparisons disappeared from the battlefield by the middle of the fifteenth century, they remained a decorative feature for tournaments and other ceremonial occasions for the next two hundred years.

Whereas mail and quilted fabrics were the dominant form of armor for the man-

at-arms during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, early plate defenses began to make their appearance about 1250, approximately the same time that shaffrons are first recorded in medieval Europe. Presumably made of shaped and hardened leather (*cuir bouilli*) or perhaps even metal (when represented in painting or sculpture, the two are indistinguishable), these head defenses were employed both on the battlefield and in tournaments. Frequently adorned with crests matching those on the helmets of their riders, they could be worn over or beneath the caparison or together with a mail trapper. Among the earliest documented examples are the two shaffrons listed in the inventory of the French count Eudes de Nevers, drawn up in 1266.<sup>12</sup> In 1278 thirty-eight leather shaffrons with crests were ordered for a royal tournament held under Edward I of England, which probably resembled those depicted in contemporary manuscripts.<sup>13</sup> Apparently constructed from *cuir bouilli* reinforced with strips of metal, the shaffrons extend from behind the poll downward to just above, or half way over, the muzzle. They also protect the entire side of the skull and often have a decoratively scalloped edge. From about 1275 onward, shaffrons are regularly depicted in painting and sculpture throughout Europe.<sup>14</sup>

The de Nevers inventory of 1266 suggests that the horse’s body was occasionally also protected by plate defenses, since a “breastplate” is listed immediately after the mention of shaffrons.<sup>15</sup> Assuming that this is indeed a rigid chest defense for a horse rather than for a man, this



defense (probably of leather) predates the introduction of a solid breastplate for the late medieval man-at-arms by a century. The use of plate armor for the horse's body may also be inferred from circumstantial evidence such as the heraldic devices sometimes depicted on the crupper part of the caparison, which, as freestanding crests, required a rigid base to which they could be secured.

Two French documents provide a glimpse of the diversity of horse armor at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The will of the knight Raoul de Nesle (d. 1302) lists three trappers of mail; three, perhaps four, thickly padded and quilted trappers or caparisons, as well as thirty-four shaffrons (an unusually high number); and, most interestingly, four flanchards and a number of cruppers, apparently plate defenses for the sides and rear of the horse.<sup>16</sup> An inventory of the possessions of Louis X, king of France (r. 1314–16), drawn up in 1316, also records various trappers of “jazerant” and mail,<sup>17</sup> trappers “of plates” (presumably constructed of small iron plates riveted inside a supporting fabric), a shaffron or hood of mail, two gilded shaffrons, and one of leather.<sup>18</sup> In its general construction and appearance, such equipment does not appear to change dramatically until the middle of the century. For example, the famous illustration depicting Sir Geoffrey Luttrell, dating from about 1325–35, shows the knight mounted on a charger that is fully caparisoned but otherwise only protected by a shaffron. The latter is still similar to earlier Spanish examples with a tall heraldic crest and scalloped lower edge, and either painted or covered with cloth matching the heraldic caparison (fig. 2).<sup>19</sup>

During the fourteenth century, the leather shaffron was gradually transformed into a defense made entirely of metal plate. It generally became larger and more encompassing, extending from behind the ears to the front of the muzzle, with deep sideplates, eye guards, and, by the end of the century, ear guards. The top and rear of the horse's head were now protected by a poll plate or neck lame, the back of its neck by a series of lames called a crinet. Rondels and escutcheon plates make their appearance by the 1370s.



Fig. 2. *Sir Geoffrey Luttrell Mounted*, from the Luttrell Psalter. English (East Anglia), ca. 1325–35. British Library, London (Add. Ms. 42130, fol. 202v)

These small disks or shield-shaped plates attached to the shaffron served as a reinforce, but probably also had a heraldic purpose.<sup>20</sup> They remained a regular feature for shaffrons through the early seventeenth century.

Depictions of horses wearing separate defensive panels over mail trappers are numerous throughout the century, beginning in the 1320s. The 1322 inventory of the English knight Roger Mortimer lists “five trappers of mail with side- and breast-pieces of leather.”<sup>21</sup> Other pictorial and written sources indicate that during the second half of the century the entire range of elements could be used in various combinations. A small ivory chess piece in the Metropolitan Museum (cat. no. 1), for example, illustrates the fullest protection available for horses during the period. Also noteworthy is a battle scene in an illuminated manuscript on the history of the Trojan War that shows four horses, three clad in slightly differing armor.<sup>22</sup> Their shaffrons do not cover the muzzle or have ear and eye guards, but one is fitted with an articulated crinet. The neck and chest area of all three are protected with the front part of a mail trapper; one animal has an early peytral over its chest, while another's rear flank is protected by a large rectangular panel. Throughout the fourteenth century, trappers “of plates” continue to be mentioned in contemporary documents.

The fifteenth century witnessed the final development of complete plate armor for both man and horse, although mail trappers remained in use during the first two decades (fig. 3). A 1407 inventory of the Gonzaga armory in





Fig. 3. *Saint Victor*, from the *Bréviaire à l'usage de Paris*. French (Paris), ca. 1410–15. Bibliothèque Municipale, Châteauroux (Ms. 2, fol. 237)

Mantua makes no mention of plate armor for horses but lists only “hoods of iron mail” as well as “[breast?] pieces of iron mail.”<sup>23</sup> During the following decades, however, documents increasingly refer to all elements of horse

armor as being made of metal or leather plates. The 1436 inventory of the armory of Ernst, Duke of Austria (1377–1424), in Vienna lists three bards without further information, but since leather horse armor is often specifically identified as such in inventories, it may be inferred that these bards were constructed largely of metal plates.<sup>24</sup>

Very little horse armor survives from the fifteenth century, and almost nothing from the period 1400–1450, aside from two notable exceptions, each a unique example of a particular type of shaffron. The first (fig. 4), preserved in the Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds, is known as the

Warwick Shaffron (referring to Warwick Castle, where it was found).<sup>25</sup> It appears to date from the first quarter of the century and comprises a main plate and two sideplates that completely enclose the horse’s head. The large main plate,



Fig. 4. The Warwick Shaffron. Probably English, first quarter of 15th century. Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds (VI.446)



Fig. 5. Shaffron for the tournament. German or Austrian, probably first half of 15th century. Museum Carolino Augusteum, Salzburg (W 374)

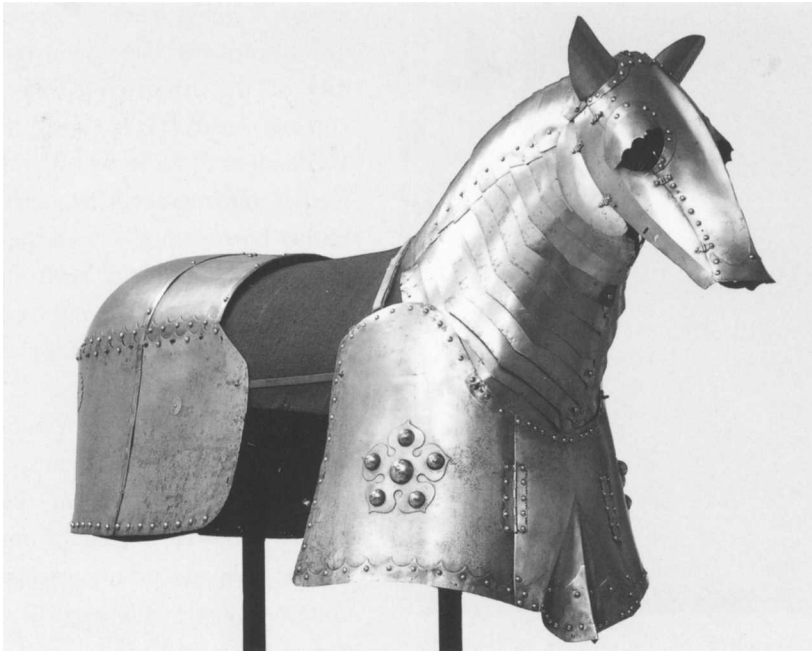


Fig. 6. Pier Innocenzo da Faerno (rec. 1452–62), Horse armor. Italian (Milan), ca. 1450. Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien (127.151–.153, 127.157–.159)



Fig. 7. Horse armor. German, ca. 1480–1500. Shown with composite armor for man, Austria (Innsbruck) and Germany, late 15th century. Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds (VI.379, II.3)

with a distinct medial ridge, extends from behind the ears to the tip of the nose and is embossed with pronounced bulges over each eye. The eye and muzzle areas are pierced with a series of holes to assist sight and ventilation; the two cutouts at the top are for missing ear guards. At the sides, the main plate is extended to the full height of the animal's skull by sideplates that gradually expand in size until they meet at the top of the neck to form a deep defense for the back of the skull and upper neck. This shaffron is very similar to that depicted on the earlier chesspiece mentioned above (cat. no. 1), suggesting that the shaffron developed very little in the fifty-year period between their creation. Undoubtedly intended for war, the sturdy Warwick Shaffron contrasts markedly with the other rare surviving example presumably dating from the same period. This leather tournament shaffron with tall comb, gessoed and silvered overall, is preserved in the Museum Carolino Augusteum, Salzburg (fig. 5).<sup>26</sup>

Defenses for the horse's body evolved along similar lines. Complete mail trappers appear to have gone out of fashion after the first or second decade of the fifteenth century, although records and depictions of partial mail defenses persist until the first half of the sixteenth century.<sup>27</sup> "Closed" crinets, completely encircling the neck, had begun to appear toward the end of the 1300s.<sup>28</sup> Examples made entirely from scales (or from leather or textiles painted to look like them) are depicted in Pisanello's tournament frescoes in the Palazzo Ducale, Mantua, executed in 1439–42,<sup>29</sup> and probably represent a decorative variant of a plainer type used for war. The trappers "of plates" encountered during the previous century appear to have developed into trappers of brigandine construction, although only few references to these have been found.<sup>30</sup> Horse armor of





Fig. 8. Lorenz Helmschmid (rec. 1467–1515/16), Peytral from a bard made for Emperor Frederick III. German (Augsburg), 1477. Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (A 69)

hardened leather, on the other hand, became more popular after 1425; it is frequently mentioned in Italian, French, and English documents, often as being painted with coats of arms, covered with rich textiles, or otherwise sumptuously decorated.<sup>31</sup>

By the mid-fifteenth century, metal plates and leather were the dominant materials for all elements of horse armor. The earliest complete horse armor to survive from the fifteenth century—and the only one of Italian manufacture—was made about 1450 by the Milanese armorer Pier Innocenzo da Faerno (rec. 1452–62), possibly for Emperor Frederick III (fig. 6).<sup>32</sup> The bard comprises a full shaffron, closed crinet, deep peytral, and crupper, each constructed of large metal plates (the tail guard is missing). The main edges of each element are bordered by rivets, which originally secured a lining. Among the decorative features are cusped upper edges and applied strips, a distinct medial ridge changing to a double “fold” (on the central plate of the peytral), and applied brass bosses (on the peytral and crupper sideplates). Together with the missing flanchards, which would have protected the gap between peytral and crupper, this armor provided an almost complete coverage for the horse’s body. From the middle of the fifteenth century onward, these elements—shaffron, crinet,

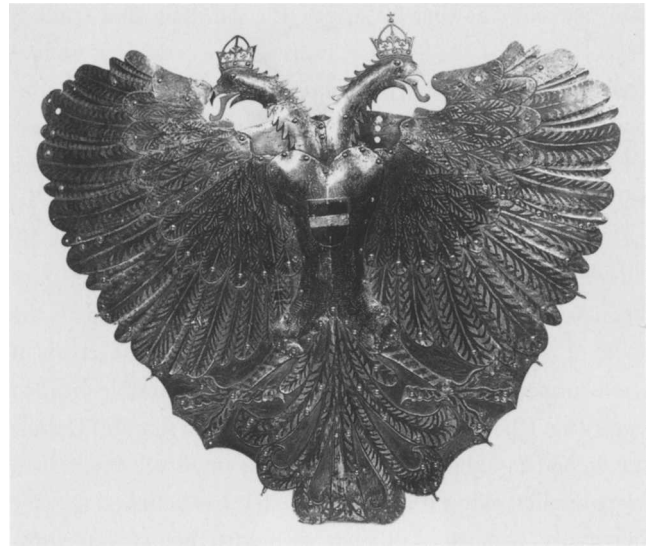


Fig. 9. Sideplate of crupper from bard described in figure 8

peytral, flanchards, and crupper—became the typical makeup of a “full bard.”

The only three other reasonably complete bards to survive from the fifteenth century are all of German manufacture.<sup>33</sup> Surviving Italian examples (other than that in figure 6), readily identifiable by maker’s marks stamped on the plates, are limited to detached elements, mostly shaffrons. Most of the shaffrons from this period are narrower and more open in form; the eyes and ears are protected either by simple flanged edges or by separately applied guards. The peytral became shorter, flaring away from the horse’s body. By the end of the century, it was usually constructed of five or seven hinged, vertically joined plates fitted at each side with a distinct boss over the upper leg joint. The crupper, whether covering the entire hindquarters or merely the sides, was invariably deep at the sides and often centrally pointed. The bard in the Royal Armouries, at Leeds, perhaps the most complete of the late fifteenth century, exemplifies the type (fig. 7).

Horse armor of plate offered a variety of possibilities for decoration, which extended beyond the previous use of textile and painted leather. Its edges might be scalloped and pierced with various patterns, its surfaces embossed with ridges and grooves. Such complex surfaces, patterns, and profiles reflected the influence of northern Gothic ornament. Similar decoration was also employed on horse armor in Italy made *alla tedesca* (in the German fashion) for export. Appliqués of copper alloy as well as bluing, gilding, and etching were in use by the last quarter of the century. In rare instances the surfaces might also be embossed with figural decoration. Such ornamentation on horse armor

was the same as that on armor for the man, and from at least the end of the century, individual workshops, such as that of the celebrated Augsburg armorer Lorenz Helmschmid (rec. 1467–1515/16), made complete matching sets of armor for horse and rider, including saddles, which were called garnitures.<sup>34</sup>

Although now incomplete, a bard made in 1477 by Helmschmid for a horse of Emperor Frederick III must have been truly spectacular.<sup>35</sup> The peytral is embossed in the form of an angel, holding a shield (fig. 8); the side panels of the crupper, in the shape of an imperial double-headed eagle (fig. 9); and the tail piece, as a winged dragon. Details are etched and blued, while numerous small bells, now lost, were applied along the edges. The bard is believed to have originally comprised further elements that all but completely enclosed the horse's body, including the underside of the girth and abdomen as well as the legs. Bards of this type, complete to the extreme, continued to be made as late as 1515, when several were commissioned or given away by Emperor Maximilian as diplomatic gifts.<sup>36</sup> One of these late examples is illustrated on a presentation coin minted for him in 1508 (cat. no. 3). Bards of such technical complexity, elaborate decoration, and considerable expense were most likely intended solely for ceremonial purposes.

From about 1450 onward, tournament horses were often protected with specially designed armor. A distinctive type of tournament shaffron, developed earlier in the late fourteenth century, has so prominent a medial ridge as to be classified as a comb (fig. 5). In a French sketchbook dating to about 1400,<sup>37</sup> a tournament horse wears a full shaffron fitted with a high central comb that reaches from just above its muzzle to the first lame of the crinet. The shaffron also shows one of the earliest depictions of a spike, which, often in combination with a rondel, became a regular feature of shaffrons in the sixteenth century.

A German manuscript from the late 1380s illustrates a highly unusual shaffron in the shape of a small dragon extending down over the horse's face, its head rising sharply upward over the muzzle.<sup>38</sup> Probably constructed of lightweight, malleable materials such as leather and papier-mâché, this early prototype for the imaginative embossed steel shaffrons used in sixteenth-century parades and tournaments clearly demonstrates that the type is as much rooted in the courtly culture of late medieval Germany as it is in the Italian Renaissance (as, for example, that illustrated in fig. 30). A surviving example of a generally similar "dragon shaffron" is included in this exhibition (cat. no. 7). Another form of tournament shaffron, the so-called

blind shaffron, was primarily employed in German lands for both the joust of peace (*Gesteck*) and joust of war (*Rennen*). It covered the entire front of the horse's head, including the eyes, so as to prevent the horses from shying during a charge. Surviving examples date from the last quarter of the fifteenth century, although the type appears to have been developed earlier (cat. no. 6).<sup>39</sup>

Whereas bards for field use were undoubtedly employed for tournaments, particularly in the tourney or *melee* (a mock combat fought by groups of contestants), horse armor was frequently replaced in the joust (as well as sometimes in the tourney) by a form of large, crescent-shaped cushion called a buffer, or *hourt*, worn across the breast of the horse like a peytral, so as to prevent injury in the event of a collision. Buffers appeared in the late fourteenth or the early fifteenth century and were used in conjunction with metal shaffrons and full caparisons, mainly in German-speaking regions and only for certain types of joust or tourney. These cushioned defenses remained a standard element of the German joust (see fig. 28), until the gradual adoption in the early sixteenth century of the separating barrier, or "tilt," of Italian origin rendered them increasingly unnecessary.

A large number of complete bards and a much greater number of detached elements of horse armor are preserved from the sixteenth century. Full bards were most common during the first half of the century, when the heavy cavalry was still armed with the traditional lance. After 1550, though full bards were still being made (presumably more for display and occasional tournament use than for use in the field), lighter defenses such as steel-reinforced leather strapwork were more commonplace. In many instances, both field and tournament armors comprised no more than matching shaffrons and saddle steels, as is demonstrated by various contemporaneous designs for armors, for example, those made by the etcher Jörg Sorg the Younger (rec. 1522–1603) of Augsburg from 1548 to 1563<sup>40</sup> and those from the Greenwich workshop in England dating from 1555 to 1585 (fig. 27).<sup>41</sup>

While the construction of the sixteenth-century bard changed little from that of the previous century, some developments are noteworthy. Whereas the full, more encompassing shaffron was preferred during the first third of the century, particularly in Germany, lighter versions became increasingly more prevalent. The main plate was often constructed of two plates joined at or below eye level (cat. nos. 16, 21), or of a single plate covering only the forehead (so-called half-shaffrons; cat. nos. 17, 19). Closed crinets became rarer, although they remained common on parade bards throughout the century (see figs. 23, 25). Peytrals and



Fig. 10. "Roman Armor" of Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol. Italian (Milan), ca. 1547–50. Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (A 783, 784)

cruppers tended to be constructed of fewer, larger plates; their profiles were vertical, and the bottom edges more elegantly curved or deliberately cusped, not unlike those of the late fifteenth century.

The engravings executed by Hans Burgkmair the Younger and contemporary German artists for the woodcut series known as the *Triumph of Maximilian*, completed by the emperor's death in 1519, demonstrate the wide variety of horse armor worn in the early sixteenth century. Full, light, and blind shaffrons, full crinets constructed from a mix of plate and mail, and even crinets solely of mail exist side by side, while cruppers in at least one instance are still embellished with a dragon-shaped tail guard. Several bards include plates covering the front of

the horse's forelegs, an unusual variation on the fully articulated leg defenses created for Frederick III in 1477 and still used by Maximilian in 1508 (cat. no. 3). The *Triumph* also demonstrates the prevalence of leather bards, readily identifiable by the laces connecting the panels. Comparatively inexpensive, light in weight, and offering endless possibilities for painting and other embellishment, leather bards were undoubtedly far more commonplace than their survival state would suggest. Three elements belonging to a comparatively humble leather bard are included in the exhibition (cat. no. 26).

The decoration of sixteenth-century horse armor not only reflects that of the man's armor, but for the first time can be said to match it in quality. With the advent of the garniture, an ensemble of armor for the man-at-arms, horse armor was invariably included, sometimes as a complete bard, other times merely as a shaffron and saddle steels. The increasing use of etched decoration makes it possible to securely identify parts of the same garniture, even though they have frequently become separated over the centuries.

One of the most distinctive and readily identifiable fashions found in sixteenth-century armor decoration was fluting, which was popular mainly

in Germany from about 1505 to 1530. The embellishment of armor surfaces with groups of embossed ridges and grooves was carried over from the 1400s, but was now more symmetrical, evolving from sprays of ridges to bolder, denser vertical arrangements (cat. nos. 8, 31). The turned edges of the plates were also usually decoratively roped. In the second quarter of the century, both in Germany and Italy, embossed decoration began to be employed on parade armor. In Germany this arose as a continuation of a late medieval tradition of mummery and fanciful court pageantry; in Italy, it was a more conscious revival of antique Roman imagery, particularly in the hands of the famous Negroli armorers of Milan and their contemporaries. Of the few pieces of horse armor of this



Fig. 11. Armor for man and horse assembled for Louis XIII of France. French, ca. 1630–40 (armor for man, shaffron, and crinet); Franco-Italian, ca. 1500–1510 (peytral and crupper), reused and decorated to match, ca. 1630–40. Musée de l'Armée, Paris (G.124, G.564)

type (*alla antica*, or *alla Romana*), the so-called Roman Armor of Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol (1529–1595) is noteworthy for its mail trapper and a shaffron embossed with a grotesque mask and leaves (fig. 10). After midcentury, the Italian style of embossing, which was to inspire armorers in France and the Low Countries, became more detailed, as surfaces were covered with dense ornaments of masks, figures, and landscapes, as well as foliate and strap-work ornament (cat. no. 40).

Another vogue that appeared about the same time—doubtlessly inspired by the continuous contact, belligerent or otherwise, between Europe and the Ottoman Empire—was a taste for everything deemed “Oriental.” The fashion

influenced court life, and elaborate “Turkish tournaments” were held at the Habsburg court, in which the participants were dressed in the Ottoman style, wearing turbans or pointed helmets, long kaftans, and carrying sabers and shields. Some of the arms and armor were undoubtedly originally acquired as booty, gifts, or trade items from the Turks, but copies were soon being made in Europe that closely mirrored Ottoman style in construction, shape, and decoration. While horse armor was rarely affected by this fashion, at least one complete bard from the Farnese armory preserved at Naples, an Italian (probably Brescian) work of about 1560, imitates in its plate-and-mail construction the horse armors used in Mamluk Egypt and Syria, Ottoman Turkey, and Persia during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>42</sup> Two plate-and-mail shaffrons, presumably also of Brescian manufacture and perhaps once belonging to bards such as that in Naples, are also known; one is included in the exhibition (cat. no. 20).

Military tactics and weaponry changed dramatically during the sixteenth century, as infantry grew in importance and handheld firearms (even for the mounted man-at-arms) became the weapons of choice. The fully armored warrior on a barded horse became an increasingly rare sight on the battlefield. During the last quarter of the century, the man's armor was gradually reduced to three-quarter length (omitting defenses for the lower legs and feet), but was sometimes supplemented with shot-proof reinforcing plates. Similarly, the full bard was abandoned in favor of a shaffron and saddle steels, if indeed any horse armor was worn at all. Two unique reinforcing plates intended to bulletproof a full shaffron and a half-shaffron, respectively, were made in Germany probably during the second half of



the century and are now preserved in Dresden.<sup>43</sup> The value of a heavily armored cavalry was nevertheless still appreciated at the middle of the century. In a commission of 1554, Queen Mary of Hungary (1503–1558), Governor of the Netherlands, states that those cuirassiers providing their own appropriate armor “with complete leg-harness” and “strong warhorses, protected at the front and rear with good, complete, and well-covering bards suitable for the breaking and dispersing of the enemy’s ranks” should receive 24 guilders per month.<sup>44</sup> Another passage in the same document stipulates that those who provide only “a steel forehead [half-shaffron], a steel-and-mail crinet, and pertaining armor such as a broad peytral and steel crupper” would be paid only 18 guilders.<sup>45</sup>

By the end of the sixteenth century, full bards were an anachronism for all but ceremonial occasions. Few were being made, and the small number of surviving examples were clearly intended to impress, including the Milanese armor for man and horse made in 1599 for Archduke

Albrecht VII of Austria (1559–1621) for his ceremonial entry into Brussels as the newly appointed regent of the Netherlands.<sup>46</sup> In 1622 the Duchess of Saxony commissioned another elaborately decorated garniture from the Nuremberg armorer Hans Ringler as a Christmas present for her husband, the Elector Johann Georg I (r. 1611–56).<sup>47</sup> Possibly the latest such garniture is the one constructed for Louis XIII of France about 1630–40, which includes a full bard with shaffron and crinet of contemporary French manufacture, while the peytral and crupper are constructed of much older elements dating to about 1500–1510, decorated to match (fig. 11).<sup>48</sup> These earlier elements, bearing the mark attributed to Romain des Ursins, a Milanese armorer active in Lyons (see cat. nos. 4 and 7), were no doubt commandeered from an arsenal, saving the armorer valuable time. Contemporaries who saw the sovereign dressed in armor astride a fully barded horse must have regarded the sight as a nostalgic evocation of a romantic, bygone age.

1. Schuckelt 1994–95, p. 15.

2. For equipment of Egyptian and Assyrian chariots and cavalry horses, see Gamber 1978, pp. 418–19, esp. figs. 68, 102, 187, 198, 199; and Yadin 1963, vol. 1, pp. 88, 104 (ill.), 133 (ill.), 193 (ill.), 233–34 (ill.), 239–41, 241 (ill.), vol. 2, pp. 299 (ill.), 338 (ill.), 382–85 (ill.), 444–45 (ill.), 450–53 (ill.).

3. New York 1995, p. 166.

4. See Rubin 1955.

5. For Greek horse armor, see Snodgrass 1964, pp. 163–66, 255–58 (with further literature); Snodgrass 1967, pp. 108–11, 140 (with further literature); Karageorghis 1969, pp. 85–89, figs. 21–26; Gamber 1978, pp. 298–99, fig. 312, pp. 321–24, figs. 332–34.

6. For Roman horse armor, see Gamber 1978, p. 347, fig. 362, p. 361, fig. 373, pp. 370–71, 374, fig. 389, p. 378; Junkelmann 1992, pp. 79–85; Bishop and Coulston 1993, pp. 157–59, figs. 113, 114; Junkelmann 1996, pp. 202–16.

7. See James 2004, pp. 129–34.

8. Since the articles by Dillon (1902), as well as relevant chapters in general histories of European armor (Laking 1920–22 and Blair 1958), only one concise survey of horse armor, including the ancient world as well, has been published (Schuckelt 1994–95). The European warhorse and equestrian tactics, on the other hand, have attracted recent attention, notably the publications by Davis (1989), Gillmor (1992), and Hyland (1994, 1998).

9. Yusuf Ibn Rafi, *Al-Nawadir al-Sultaniyah* (Cairo, 1897), p. 135. I am grateful to David Nicolle for this reference.

10. Stubbs 1868–71, vol. 4, p. 58.

11. Both were first noted by Alvaro Soler del Campo (1993, pp. 228–29, figs 33, 34).

12. Chazaud 1871, p. 192.

13. See, for example, Soler del Campo 1993, p. 256, figs. 81, 82, p. 262, fig. 92, p. 265, fig. 98.

14. For further references, see Eaves and Richardson 1987, p. 227, n. 17.

15. Chazaud 1871, p. 192; Blair 1958, p. 158.

16. Kelly 1905, pp. 463, 468, 469.

17. Derived from the Persian word *kazhāgand*, the French term *jazerant* or *jazeran* at this period denotes a type of body armor for use in war, comprising a mail defense sewn inside another garment. See Melikian-Chirvani 1983.

18. Dillon 1902, p. 74; Kelly 1905, p. 463.

19. The Luttrell Psalter, Add. Ms. 42130, fol. 202v, The British Library, London.

20. One of the earliest examples is depicted in a series of frescoes executed about 1379 by Altichiero for the chapel of San Felice in Padua Cathedral; illustrated in Hale 1990, pp. 150–51, figs. 196, 197 (detail).

21. Dillon 1902, p. 74.

22. Presumably by an Italian illuminator, this dates from the third quarter of the fourteenth century. Guidonis de Columnis, Messanensis, *Liber de casu et ruina Trojæ*, Add. Mss. 15477, The British Library, London; illustrated in Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, p. 149, fig. 953; and Nickel 1969, pp. 177–78, fig. 14.

23. Mann 1938, pp. 276 (transcript), 277 (translation).

24. Zimerman 1883, p. 1X.

25. Eaves and Richardson 1987, pp. 217–22.

26. See Gamber 1960, pp. 63–65.

27. Compare, for example, “a collar and a peytral of mail for a horse,” mentioned as late as 1542 (but most likely of earlier date) in another inventory of the Gonzaga armory. See Mann 1938, pp. 310 (transcript), 311 (translation).

28. Blair 1958, pp. 185f.

29. Illustrated in Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, p. 56, fig. 40 (left); for the latest research on the date of the fresco, see London 2001, pp. 46–47, 51, figs. 2.4, 2.10.

30. Blair 1958, p. 185, for a brigandine trapper made in 1445 for Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy (r. 1419–67), and a possible illustration in a German manuscript of about 1437 (Ms. 3062, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna).
31. For several documentary references, see Dillon 1902, pp. 80–81.
32. Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 122–23, 140–41, figs. 90, 91; Gamber 1977, pp. 40, 79–80; Boccia, Rossi, and Morin 1980, pp. 72–73, fig. 56; Dürriegl in Vienna 1986, pp. 12–14.
33. The most important of these, the bard in the Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (A 69), is discussed below. The other two bards, also dating to about 1480, are in the Wallace Collection, London (A 21), and the Royal Armouries, Leeds (fig. 7). For the former, see Mann 1962, vol. 1, pp. 11–15, pls. 4, 5; Norman 1986, pp. 2–3; and Edge and Williams 2001, pp. 233–56. For the latter, see Mann 1959, pp. 22–27.
34. Gamber 1957, figs. 39, 54, 69, 82, illustrating pages from the so-called Thun Sketchbook, a manuscript volume containing armor designs from the workshop of Lorenz Helmschmid and his family, lost since 1945. The pages cited here illustrate designs for elements of tournament armors that include matching pieces for the horse.
35. Only the armored reins, peytral, side panels of the crupper, and tail piece survive. See Buttin 1929, pp. 41ff.; Thomas and Lhotsky 1938–43, pp. 191–203, esp. pp. 193–95, 197–203; Thomas and Gamber 1976, pp. 104–5; for a different opinion, see Anzelewsky 1963, pp. 77–88.
36. Dillon 1902, p. 78; Thomas and Gamber 1976, p. 105.
37. A sketchbook formed of six panels of prepared boxwood, the drawings were executed in France, probably in Paris, by an artist from the circle of Jacquemart de Hesdin. The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, Ms. M 346, fol. 5r.
38. The illumination is illustrated in Schultz 1892, pl. xiv, who cites as the source a manuscript of Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Wilhelm [Willehalm] von Oranse* in Vienna "Ambraser Sammlung No. 7."
39. Caparisons entirely covering and thus blinding the horse (although with no apparent horse armor being worn) are depicted as early as about 1403 in the famous *Bellifortis* manuscript by Conrad Kyeser (Cod. Ms. philos. 64, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Göttingen, fols. 6r, 12r); see Kyeser 1967.
40. Becher, Gamber, and Irtenknauf 1980, pp. 26–27, for garnitures including a shaffron, or a half-shaffron and saddle steels, see for example p. 53 (fols. 5v, 6v, respectively), for complete bards see pp. 63 (fols. 16v, 17), 77 (fols. 29v, 30).
41. A remarkable survival is the so-called Almain Armourer's Album, which contains designs of armor garnitures made in the English court workshop at Greenwich, some probably by one of the German master workmen, Jakob Halder (rec. 1557–1607); the majority of garnitures depicted include matching shaffrons and saddle steels (but no other horse armor); see Dillon 1905 and Blair 1958, p. 115.
42. Farnese Collection 1996, pp. 311–12, no. 9.7.
43. Rüstammer, Dresden (L 576, L 577), see Schuckelt 1994–95, p. 24, fig. 28.
44. Fuchs 1935–36, p. 49. Similar provisions, distinguishing between horses armored to a varying extent, are also known from Germany; see Beck 1910, p. 93.
45. Fuchs 1935–36, p. 49; the latter German terms "*stählernen Gezeug als breiten Fürbug und stählernen Geliestern*" are somewhat ambiguous and may in fact denote front and rear parts of an armored harness.
46. Louvain 1998, pp. 67–68, ills.
47. Haenel 1923, p. 38, pl. 19.
48. Reverseau 1982, pp. 98–101 (ill.).

# Armored Saddles and Saddle Steels

DONALD J. LAROCCA

The term *saddle steels* refers to the set of shaped metal plates covering the pommel and cantle of a saddle, which transformed what was merely the rider's seat into an integral part of his defensive equipment. With the addition of steels, the saddle became the center of the armor, which, in its most developed form, protected a heavy cavalryman and his mount from the top of the man's head down to the upper legs of his horse. The use of armored saddles as an element of heavy cavalry equipment appears to have been a uniquely European phenomenon, beginning perhaps as early as the fourteenth century and continuing until the early seventeenth century.

The practice of decorating the saddle of an important person by sheathing it with metal plates did not, however, originate in Europe but was known in the nomadic kingdoms on the northern and western borders of China by the fourth century A.D. Notable examples of saddle plates of this type, ornately decorated and made of gilt bronze, gilt silver, and embossed gold sheet, have been found in Xianbei (fourth century), Liao (tenth–eleventh century), and Mongol (tenth–fourteenth century) tombs, as well as at other sites in Asia.<sup>1</sup> Judging from their materials, these early Asian saddle plates appear to have been purely ornamental or ceremonial. Iron saddle plates, typically decorated with a pierced scrollwork ground and chiseled dragons, existed in Tibet or China by the fifteenth century if not earlier (fig. 12) and remained in use in Tibet until the twentieth century. The delicate nature



Fig. 12. Pommel plates from a set of ceremonial saddle steels. Tibetan or Chinese, ca. 1400. Iron, gold, lapis lazuli, and turquoise. Purchase, Gift of William H. Riggs, by exchange, and Kenneth and Vivian Lam Gift, 1999 (1999.118)

of the pierced ironwork implies that these, too, were intended to be ornamental rather than defensive.

By contrast, saddle plates in Europe were nearly always made of steel (hence the term *saddle steels*) and, except in the instance of very ornate saddles, clearly served a defensive purpose. The early years of the fifteenth century saw the development of complete plate armor, which defended the wearer from head to toe, and the advent of similarly complete plate bards for horses (shaffrons were in use at least a century earlier). The addition of steel plates to the pommel and cantle of the saddle was a natural extension of this process. What appears to be one of the earliest depictions of an armored saddle in Europe is found in the Ghent Altarpiece, completed by Jan van Eyck in 1432. In a lower panel on its left side there are three warrior saints on





Fig. 13. Andrea Casalini (d. 1597), *Design for the Pommel Plate of a Saddle from a Garniture of Alessandro Farnese*. Italian (Parma), ca. 1575–80. Pen and colored washes on paper. Purchase, Fletcher Fund and Gift of William H. Riggs, by exchange, 1993 (1993.234)

horseback. The figure in the center, Saint George, wears a complete harness of very up-to-date armor, carefully rendered in great detail. The pommel of his saddle, which is partly visible, matches his armor in color and texture, suggesting that the plates of an armored saddle are being portrayed. Other than artistic representations of this type and a few isolated examples, there is little evidence regarding the specific forms of fifteenth-century saddle steels, but by about 1500 the standard configuration of the steels seems to

have been established. This generally consisted of a pommel plate in three sections, one in the center over the pommel itself and one extending down each side, and a cantle plate usually made in two symmetrical halves but sometimes consisting of a single plate. The complete saddle discussed in catalogue number 29 is a representative example. A set of saddle steels offered prime surfaces for decoration and was usually adorned by employing the same techniques and motifs found on the armor for man and horse to which it belonged. These ranged from simple roped borders and fluted channels to bands of etched motifs or surfaces that were etched with designs overall, as well as embossing in low or high relief. The effects of the decoration could be further enhanced by the addition of color through techniques such as fire-gilding, damascening in gold and silver, and bluing. The combination of all these techniques would be found only on saddle steels from the richest of armor garnitures, such as that made for Alessandro Farnese (1545–1592), Duke of Parma and Piacenza, about 1575–80 (Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, A1132, A1153). The full-size, finished drawing for the design of the pommel plates from the Farnese garniture (fig. 13), executed in pen and colored washes by Andrea Casalini (d. 1597), a goldsmith working for the Farnese court at Parma, exemplifies the care taken in creating the decoration of every element of this armor—and more broadly speaking, of arms and armor in general, which at their finest rank among the greatest achievements of Renaissance and Mannerist decorative arts.

1. See, for instance, *L'Asie des steppes d'Alexandre le Grand à Gengis Khan* (Paris, 2000), nos. 152, 166; Adam T. Kessler, *Empires Beyond the Great Wall: The Heritage of Genghis Khan*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles, 1994), fig. 101; David Alexander, *The Arts of War: Arms*

*and Armour of the 7th to 19th Centuries* (London, 1992), no. 14; and *Caoyuan guibao: Neimenggu wenwu kaogu jingpin / Treasures on Grassland: Archaeological Finds from the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region*, exh. cat. (Shanghai, 2000), pp. 236–45.



# Horse Armor in the Permanent Display

STUART W. PYHRR

When the Metropolitan Museum opened its first permanent galleries of arms and armor in 1915, visitors were greeted by an impressive phalanx of eight armored horsemen (fig. 14). This display reflected the time-honored tradition of exhibiting armors for man and horse on lifelike manikins, a practice that originated in the sixteenth century, when wooden horses for this purpose are recorded in the inventories of civic arsenals and princely armories throughout Europe. The obvious utility of horse manikins for both storing and displaying bards of plate explains their

presence in armories during the sixteenth century, including those of Henry VIII at the royal palace at Greenwich and Philip II in Madrid, the Armory of Heroes assembled by Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol in his castle at Ambras, near Innsbruck, and the Medici armory, installed in the galleries of the Uffizi in Florence at the end of the century.<sup>1</sup> In the nineteenth century the presentation of public collections of arms and armor invariably centered around fully armored equestrian figures, which were numerous in national or dynastic armories such as those in Madrid, Vienna,

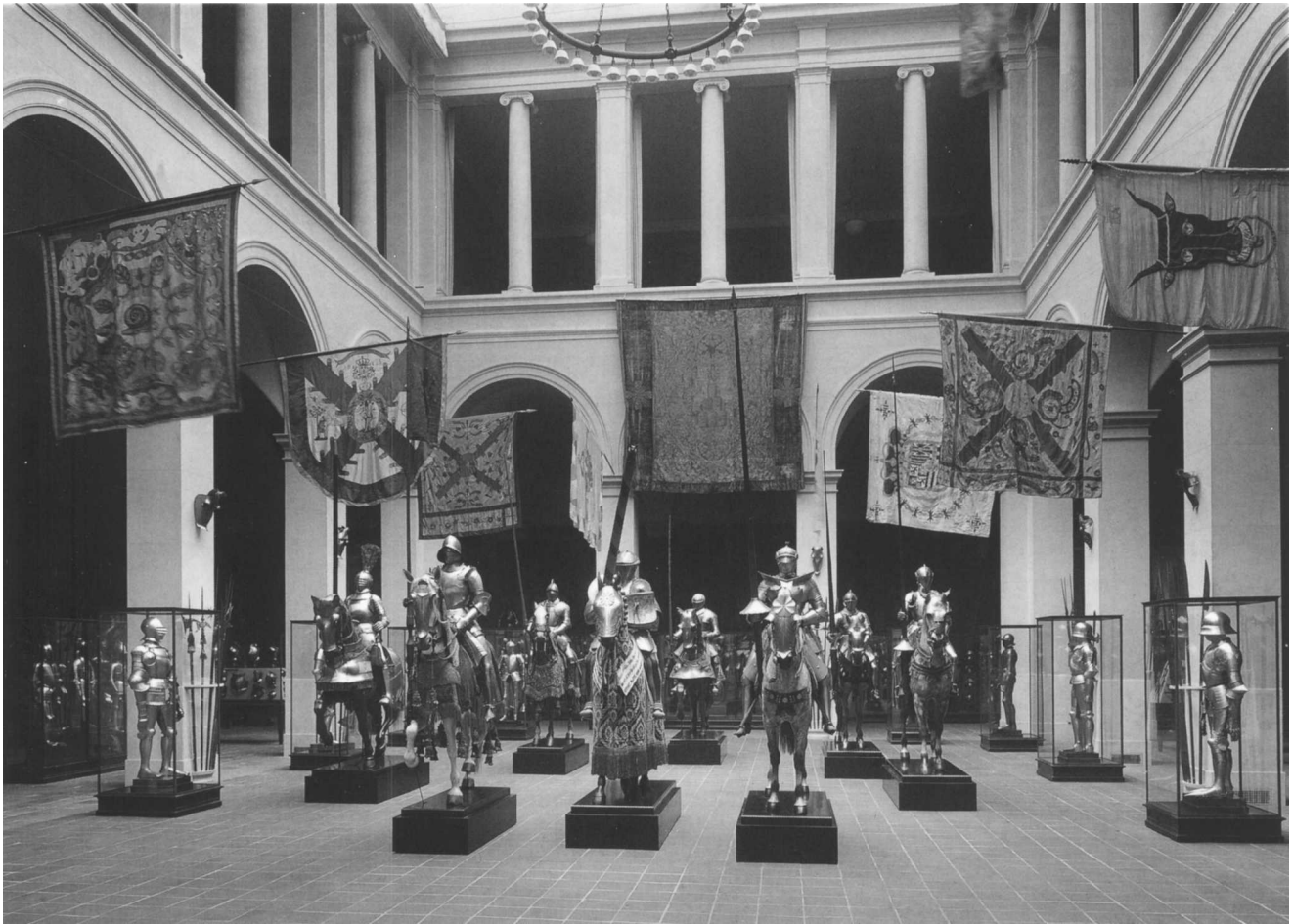


Fig. 14. The Arms and Armor Galleries, January 1915



Left: Fig. 15. Shaffron. Italy, ca. 1470. Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Bequest of Bashford Dean, 1928 (29.150.9aa)

Above: Fig. 16. Armorer's marks, possibly those of Ambrogio de Osma (rec. 1446–75) of Brescia, on shaffron illustrated in figure 15

Dresden, Paris, London, and Stockholm. The Metropolitan's first curator of Arms and Armor, Bashford Dean, understandably desired to emulate these examples and at first glance he did so with remarkable success.

On closer look, however, those early equestrian figures fell far short of modern museum standards. The horses in particular were clad with a heterogeneous assemblage of elements of different designs and dates, mostly shaffrons and saddle steels from the collection of the Duc de Dino or William W. Riggs, as well as modern textile trappers. The group did include two complete bards, but these were later recognized as nineteenth-century fakes and were withdrawn from display. And as for the manikins themselves, Dean lamented that they were the poorest of any museum in the world, explaining that, in order to display the Museum's armor without delay, "we were obliged to make

use of wooden horses which were gathered *ad hoc*—mainly from harness shops, which are hardly the home of animal sculpture."<sup>2</sup>

In the years that followed, the number and composition of the equestrian figures changed, and new attempts were made, with varying degrees of success, to assemble more accurate Gothic and Renaissance bards from individual elements of approximately contemporary date but from diverse sources. Improvements were also made to the horse manikins, which were newly modeled on the majestic steed of Andrea Verrocchio's Colleoni equestrian monument in Venice.<sup>3</sup> Complete bards were still lacking, not surprisingly, since even in the sixteenth century they were rare, and by the early twentieth century most of the surviving examples were in museums. Dean therefore could not have anticipated in 1915 that, within a few short years, the Museum would be presented with the opportunity to acquire not just one, but four, homogeneous bards of high quality, sophisticated decoration, and distinguished provenance. These have since replaced the composite examples of earlier displays.

While the present exhibition serves the useful purpose of highlighting some of the most important and interesting examples of European horse armor from the reserve collection, the finest examples among our holdings, like the four bards, are on regular display in the Arms and Armor Galleries. These fall outside the nature and scope of the exhibition, of course, but it seems desirable to discuss them briefly here in order to present a more complete picture of the range and quality of the Museum's holdings of equestrian armor and to provide a context for the objects from storage that are catalogued in the following pages.



Fig. 17. Crupper plate. German or Austrian, ca. 1490–1500. Gift of Stephen V. Grancsay, 1942 (42.50.34)

A complete and homogeneous bard dating before 1500 is exceptionally rare and, like a complete harness for a man of the period, exists today in only a handful of examples. None of these are in the Metropolitan Museum. We are fortunate, however, to possess several fine detached elements of horse armor of late-fifteenth-century date. In addition to the early items included in the exhibition (cat. nos. 4–7), two further examples are on view in the Bashford Dean Gallery. One is an Italian shaffron dating to about 1470 that is made *alla tedesca*, in the German fashion (fig. 15).<sup>4</sup> The slender main plate is shaped around the ears and eyes, the latter protected by turned-out flanges, and terminates in a point over the nose. There is a pronounced medial ridge, and the sides are sharply boxed and decorated with low curving ridges. Mounted in the center, above the eyes, are an escutcheon plate and a plume-holder (both restored); at the top there is a hinged poll plate. Though evoking the northern Gothic style with its slender proportions and ridged surfaces, the shaffron nevertheless is struck with three armorer's marks of Brescian type, tentatively identified as those of Ambrogio de Osma (rec. 1446–75) (fig. 16).<sup>5</sup>

early sixteenth centuries). The decoration consists of a sun, whose face is raised in low relief on the boss, from which its rays, alternating straight and wavy, radiate over the surface. The recessed and scalloped edges of the boss and the outer edges of the concentric plates are decorated with undulating cloud bands.

The only bard with comparable decoration is an incomplete one made for Emperor Frederick III in 1477 by Lorenz Helmschmid of Augsburg (rec. 1467–1515/16), now in Vienna, which also utilizes embossing and *Goldschmelz* (figs. 8, 9).<sup>7</sup> The crupper panel of the Vienna bard has a similarly pointed shape, as do most of the surviving cruppers of the period (see figs. 7, 9 and cat. nos. 24, 25). While the Vienna crupper is fashioned as a crowned, double-headed imperial eagle, leaving no doubt as to the bard's owner, the identity of the knight to whom the Museum's crupper panel belonged cannot be deciphered from the iconography of its decoration. Its provenance, unfortunately, is not recorded before the early twentieth century, when it belonged to Archduke Eugen of Austria, whose collection of arms and armor, kept at Hohenwerfen Fortress, near Salzburg, was dispersed at auction in 1927.<sup>8</sup>

The second, truly outstanding example is the right side panel of a crupper, which appears to be the only surviving element from an important German or Austrian bard dating to about 1490–1500 (fig. 17).<sup>6</sup> It is remarkable in both construction and decoration. The central plate is circular, with a hemispherical boss in the center and a recessed and scalloped edge, from which radiate seven overlapping plates that form an acute point at the bottom; an eighth, lateral plate at the front has a series of horizontally aligned holes that allow its width to be adjusted to fit behind the saddle. The steel surfaces, originally blued, are now russeted to a dark blue–brown color and are decorated with gold set into shallow etched patterns (a technique known as *Goldschmelz*, which was utilized on German armor in the late fifteenth and



Fig. 18. Attributed to Kunz Lochner (1510–1567), Bard made for Johann Ernst, Duke of Saxony-Coburg. German (Nuremberg), dated 1548. Rogers Fund, 1932 (32.69)

The earliest of the Museum's complete bards, and without doubt its most important example, dates from 1548 and was made for Johann Ernst (1521–1563), Duke of Saxony-Coburg after 1541 (fig. 18).<sup>9</sup> The plates of the bard, which comprises a shaffron, closed crinet of plate and mail, peytral (fig. 19), flanchards, and crupper (fig. 20), are embossed in low relief with diagonal bands of overlapping

scales and are etched overall with dense foliate scrollwork inhabited by grotesque creatures. The shaffron bears an escutcheon plate etched with the arms of Saxony and has applied, spiral-twisted ear guards, now cut down, that originally took the form of curled ram's horns. The central panel of the peytral is embossed with the date 15K48, the K presumably referring to Koburg, and the letters ITGVG/HE (in monogram) HZ Sachsen, which can be interpreted to read *Ich trau Gottes unendlichen Gnaden/Iohannes Ernst Herzog zu Sachsen* (I trust in God's unending grace/Johann Ernst, Duke of Saxony). Three plates are struck on the outside with the Nuremberg city mark, and on the inside with an N within a pearled circle, presumably a quality control mark. Though a maker's mark is absent, the form of the bard, its embossed and etched decoration, and the ram's-horn ear guards justify

an attribution to the leading Nuremberg armorer of the period, Kunz Lochner (1510–1567). Similar bards bearing Lochner's mark, which were also made for members of the Ernestine branch of the ruling Wettin family of Saxony, are now in the collections in the Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg and in the Wartburg Castle armory in Eisenach.<sup>10</sup>



Fig. 19. Detail of peytral of bard illustrated in figure 18



Fig. 20. Crupper of bard illustrated in figure 18



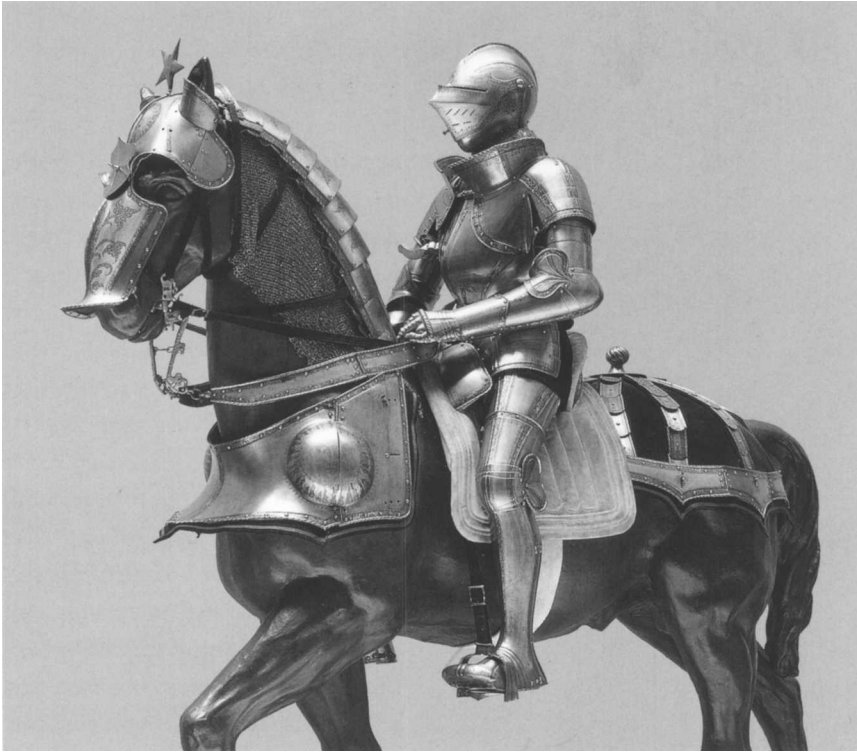
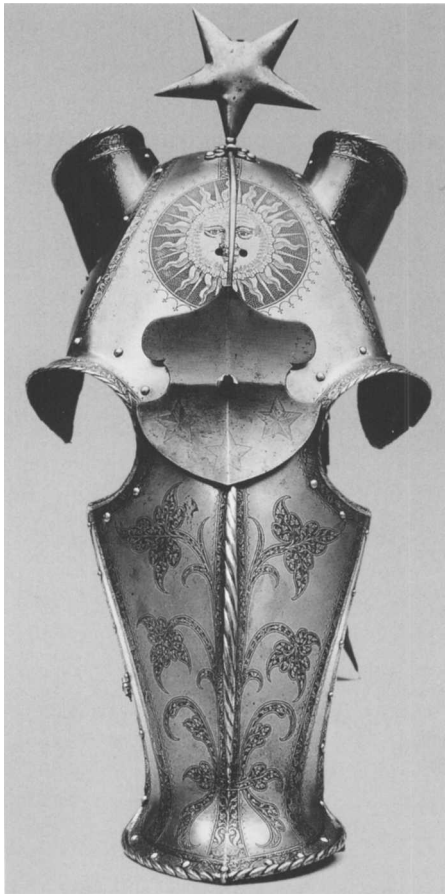


Fig. 21. Attributed to Wolfgang Grosschedel (rec. 1515–62), Bard, presumably made for Baron Pankraz von Freyberg. German (Landshut), dated 1554. Fletcher Fund, 1923 (23.261aa–ss)



formed in Germany, in his castle at Erbach in Hessen.<sup>11</sup> The bard, the finest in the Erbach armory, was acquired directly by the Museum in 1932.

The Museum's second bard is attributed to Wolfgang Grosschedel (rec. 1515–62), the leading armorer in the Bavarian town of Landshut, and is dated 1554 (fig. 21).<sup>12</sup> A lighter harness than Lochner's, this bard consists of a shaffron, crinet, peytral, and openwork crupper composed of armored straps over the hindquarters. The ensemble is completed by the original armored reins, each in two hinged sections, as well as by modern saddle steels etched to match. Narrow bands around the edges and down the center of the main plates are etched with foliate scrolls, trophies of arms, birds, animals, and insects on a dotted and blackened ground; the bands are bordered by an etched zigzag line. Large branches of etched foliage spring from the center bands of the shaffron and crinet. The bosses at each side of the peytral are etched with a sun in splendor, a motif repeated at the top of the shaffron (fig. 22). The latter is also mounted with an escutcheon plate bearing the arms of the Freyberg family (*per fess argent and azure*, in

Left: Fig. 22. Shaffron of bard illustrated in figure 21



Fig. 23. Bard made for a member of the Collalto family. Attributed to Milan, ca. 1560. Fletcher Fund, 1921 (21.139.2, .9, .10)

base three stars *or*) and at the apex with a three-dimensional five-pointed copper star from the Freyberg arms. The date 1554 is found four times within the etched decoration. Although without marks, the bard is confidently attributed to Grosschedel on the strength of its etched decoration, which is very similar to that on armors bearing his mark.

The bard was presumably made for Baron Pankraz von Freyberg (1508–1565), whose seat at Hohenaschau Castle, in Bavaria, contained a large armory that remained together until its dispersal by auction in 1861. Recorded in a drawing of that period, the bard was displayed then, as it is today, with a man’s armor of slightly earlier date (ca. 1535–40), which bears the marks of Landshut and Grosschedel. Both armors were discovered by Bashford Dean at Schloss Petersburg, in Bohemia, whose owner, Prince Eugen Czernin, sold them to the Museum in 1923.

The remaining examples, both Italian, come from the armory of the counts Collalto in the castle of San Salvatore, near Treviso, in the Veneto. The heavy bombing of the castle in 1918, during the final days of World War I,

led to the evacuation of its contents to Vienna, where the bard was acquired by the Museum in 1921.<sup>13</sup>

The earlier of the two (fig. 23) comprises a shaffron, closed crinet, peytral, flanchards, crupper, and matching stirrups of unusual “cage” type, with convex bars forming a grill at the front.<sup>14</sup> The main surfaces are decorated with wide, recessed vertical bands etched with trophies of arms and musical instruments on a recessed blackened background, while the main edges bear narrower bands etched with scrolling foliage. The etching is clear and precise, the trophies are delineated in considerable detail, and faint traces of gilding indicate that the bard was once considerably richer and more colorful (fig. 24). The cusped edges of the peytral and crupper add a light, decorative character to the massive plates. The style of etching suggests that the bard

was made in Milan about 1560, when armors decorated with wide bands of trophy ornament were in fashion.<sup>15</sup>

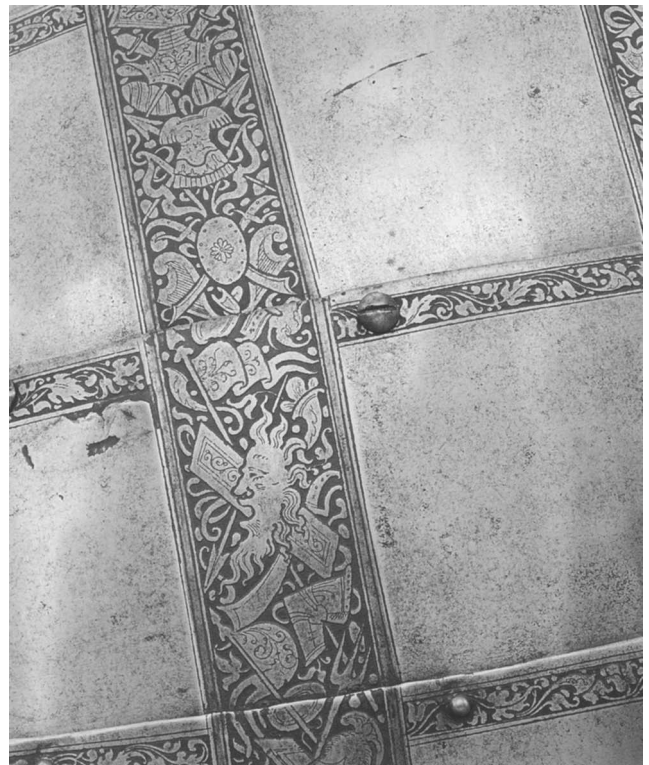


Fig. 24. Detail of etched decoration on crupper of bard illustrated in figure 23

The second Collalto bard (fig. 25) is slightly later than the first, dating to about 1580–90 and, judging from the style and typology of its etched decoration, was probably made in Brescia rather than Milan.<sup>16</sup> Despite the differences in date and center of manufacture, the two bards are very similar in form and construction. The later example consists of a shaffron, closed crinet, peytral, crupper, and the rear cantle of the saddle. Minor plates of the shaffron, both flanchards, the front saddle steels, and the reins are modern restorations. The surfaces are etched overall with wide vertical panels of foliate scrolls inhabited by putti, dragons, and other fantastic creatures set against a blackened pebbled ground; these alternate with narrower panels etched with vertically aligned “candelabra” ornament consisting of symmetrical foliage, vases, trophies, and warriors, as well as



Fig. 25. Bard, probably made for Count Antonio IV Collalto. Attributed to Brescia, possibly 1589. Fletcher Fund, 1921 (21.139.1, .12)



other classical figures standing on pedestals set against a similar pebbled ground (fig. 26). The edges of the peytral and crupper are cusped, and the free edges of all the plates are followed by recessed bands of scrolling foliage. The tail piece, extending down the center of the crupper, is worked in low relief with overlapping scales and is etched to match.

The lively and varied figural ornament, the sketchy style of the etching, and the complete coverage of the surface with ornament recall other armors now considered to be of Brescian manufacture because of their association either with members of the aristocratic Martinengo family of Brescia or with other noblemen in Venetian service.<sup>17</sup> Ruled by Venice since 1426, Brescia was the principal supplier of armor for the condottieri and troops employed by the city. The bard was probably made for Count Antonio IV Collalto (1548–1620), who was appointed commander of Venetian land forces in 1589.<sup>18</sup> That occasion would have warranted the order of an elaborate new armor for man and horse, and therefore this bard most likely dates to the

Fig. 26. Detail of etched decoration on bard illustrated in figure 25

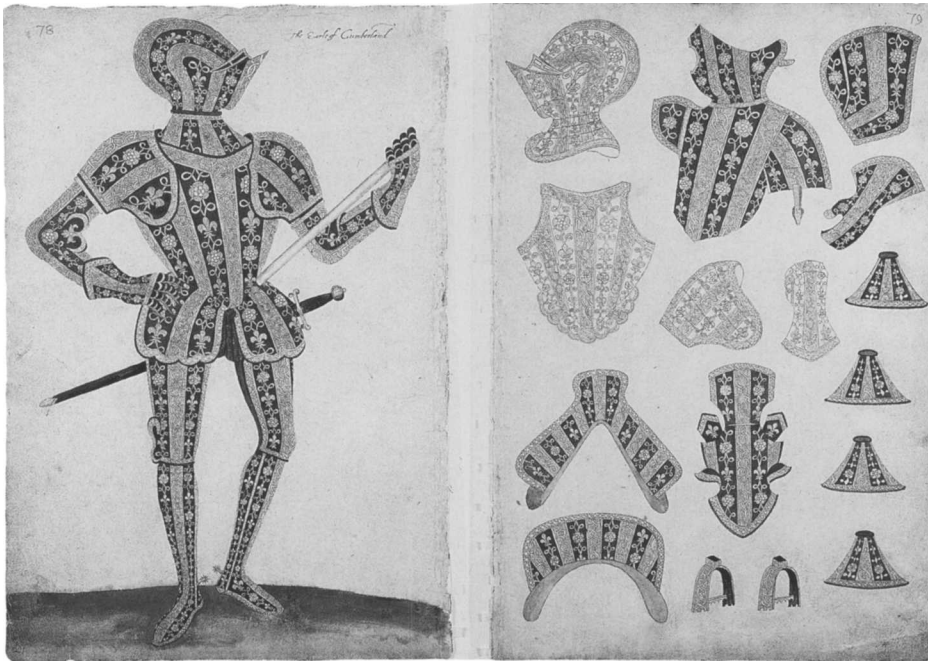


Fig. 27. The Cumberland garniture, from the *Almain Armourer's Album*. English, ca. 1585. Watercolor drawings. Victoria and Albert Museum, London (D599–94)

same year. That a matching armor for the man was also made at that time is demonstrated by the survival of the right arm (vambrace), also acquired by the Museum with the bard.<sup>19</sup> The rest of the armor appears to have perished in 1918.

1585. These pieces are included in the illustration of the complete Cumberland garniture in the so-called *Almain Armourer's Album*, a series of watercolored drawings that record the armors completed in the Greenwich workshops between about 1555 and 1585 (fig. 27).<sup>20</sup>

Visitors to the Arms and Armor Galleries will also notice several armors displayed with a shaffron or saddle, or both, of matching decoration. These reflect the fact that armorers would commonly provide their clients with minimal defenses for the horse—a shaffron and saddle steels, in the absence of a complete bard—as part of a basic order for armor for field or tournament service. Among the Museum's examples, the most readily recognized are the shaffron and saddle steels belonging to the brilliantly blued and gilt armor made for George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland, in the Royal Workshops at Greenwich about

1. The armory of Henry VIII (r. 1509–47), located in his palace at Greenwich, included eight wooden horses that are described in the 1547 post mortem inventory of the king's possessions (see Starkey 1998, pp. 161–62, nos. 8386–93). In 1567 Philip II (r. 1556–98) completed the installation of a new armory constructed in Madrid to house his personal armors and those of his father, Emperor Charles V, the display of which included six armors mounted on horse manikins; for the history of this armory, see Soler del Campo 1998, especially pp. 32–33 for a reconstruction of the principal room. The famous collections assembled by Archduke Ferdinand II (1529–1595) at Ambras included a series of rooms filled with armors that included his personal harnesses as well as those of the Armory of Heroes (a collection of armors belonging to notable warriors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), among them more than two dozen mounted on horses; see the reconstruction by Luchner 1958, pl. 9. The mounted armors from the Medici armory displayed in the Uffizi are mentioned in an account of the visit of the Swedish tourist Nils Rubenius on September 17, 1666, as published by Meyerson 1937–39, pp. 200–202.

2. Dean 1923, p. 188.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 188–90; LaRocca 1996, pp. 151–53.

4. MMA 29.150.9aa; see Hagerstown 1955, no. 39, where the restorations are noted.

5. Boccia 1982, p. 286, mark nos. 63, 64.

6. MMA 42.50.34; see Archduke Eugen sale 1927, lot 1071, ill. (acquired by Clarence H. Mackay); New York 1931, no. 116, ill. (lent by Mackay).

7. Thomas and Gamber 1976, pp. 104–5.

8. See Archduke Eugen sale 1927.

9. MMA 32.69; see Grancsay 1932, pp. 176–78 (reprinted in Grancsay 1986, pp. 104–7), and Nickel in New York 1986, pp. 464–66. Mounted with the bard is an armor for man which, though associated, is coincidentally dated 1548 and bears the mark of Kunz Lochner. For the man's armor, see especially Kienbusch and Grancsay 1933, pp. 89–91, no. 12, pl. 23, and Nickel in New York 1986, pp. 464–66.

10. For the bard at Coburg, see Geibig 1996, pp. 20–21, no. 3; for those in the Wartburg, missing since 1946, see Diener-Schönberg 1912, pp. 39–43, nos. 61, 63, 64, and pls. 21–25, and Gamber 1984, pp. 51–52, 57–58.

11. For an introduction to the history of the collection at Erbach, see Schaeffer 1891, pp. 66–74, and Reitzenstein 1969, p. 74.

12. MMA 23.261; see Dean 1923, pp. 38–42, and Reitzenstein 1962, pp. 37 and 46, n. 7.

13. Dean 1922, pp. 190–93. In his discussion of the bards, Dean reverses the chronological order presented here and attributes both to Venetian manufacture. Subsequent scholarship has demonstrated that the majority of sixteenth-century Italian armor was made either



- in Milan or in Brescia and that armor worn in Venetian service was almost invariably Brescian.
14. MMA 21.139.2 (bard) and 21.139.9, .10 (stirrups). The bard is currently mounted with an associated armor for man of Italian origin, probably Milanese, and dating to about 1575, which comes from the Riggs collection (14.25.701). A matching half-shaffron for the man's armor (14.25.1666) is included in this exhibition (cat. no. 19).
  15. Gamber 1958, p. 94; Boccia and Coelho 1967, pp. 357–60, 465.
  16. MMA 21.139.1 (bard) and 21.139.12 (rear saddle steel). Associated with the bard in the current display is an armor for man, probably Milanese from about 1575, which comes from the Riggs collection (14.25.709).
  17. For a brief discussion of the characteristics of Brescian armor, see New York 1996, pp. 322–23.
  18. Passolunghi 1987, pp. 237–38.
  19. MMA 21.139.11; illustrated in Passolunghi 1991, p. 42. Portions of a second armor, but matching neither bard, were also acquired by the Museum in 1921: a pair of pauldrons (21.139.3, .4), illustrated in *ibid.*, p. 43, and a pair of tasset extensions (21.139.5, .6), which were deaccessioned and sold at Christie's, London, November 22–23, 1960, lot 338. Etched with wide bands of trophies, these elements are remnants of an Italian field armor made about 1560.
  20. For the Cumberland armor (MMA. 32.120.6), one of the best-known and most extensively published armors in the Metropolitan Museum, see for example Nickel 1991, pp. 22–23.



Cat. no. 1

## 1. Chess Piece (Knight)

*Western European (perhaps English),  
ca. 1370–1400*

*Ivory*

*2<sup>13</sup>/<sub>32</sub> x 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. (6.1 x 5.6 cm)*

*Pfeiffer Fund, 1968 (68.95)*

This remarkably detailed ivory chessman—the solitary survivor of an otherwise vanished set—provides a rare representation of a complete late-fourteenth-century armor for both man and horse. Moreover, it appears to be one of the earliest of such depictions sculptured fully in the round to survive from before the sixteenth century.

The armor of both man and horse can be dated to the second half of the fourteenth century. That of the man-at-arms consists of a visored bascinet with a mail neck protection (aventail), a mail shirt with long sleeves, and further plate armor for the hands (gauntlets of so-called hour-glass shape), knees (poleyns), and the lower leg (greaves). The figure is further protected by an early form of horseman's shield called a targe. A large sword, known as a “great sword” or “war sword,” is suspended at his left side, while his right hand formerly held a lance resting in front of the saddle bow; only the lower part of the lance survives.

The most notable element of the bard is the large shaffron, which encompasses the entire head of the animal and is shaped with a distinct medial ridge. The shaffron extends from behind the skull to the point of the muzzle, where it is embossed over the nostrils and pierced for ventilation.

The area of the ears is too worn to reveal any defense, but the eyes are protected by cuplike guards. A stepped line at either side of the head suggests that the large main plate is connected by hinges to further plates protecting the underside of the horse's lower jaw. The shaffron is extended at the back by two crinet lames that appear to encircle the neck completely. A full mail bard, or trapper, protects the lower neck, chest, and hindquarters and originally extended to the animal's knee and hock, respectively (the legs are now missing). On top of this mail trapper, the horse wears four panels. The first, shaped like a peytral, is suspended from the base of the neck across the chest; a square panel at either side of the hindquarters and a shield-shaped one across the rear, completely concealing the tail, are suspended from a system of straps across the croup. These panels, the front and side ones with a dagged lower edge, presumably are made

from textile, hardened leather, or textile covering such leather. Serving as both additional protection and adornment, they were probably painted or embroidered with the rider's coat of arms.

The lack of plate armor for the man's torso and arms, or of a textile covering for his body, is unusual for the late fourteenth century, but representations of the particular type of shaffron shown here can be found from the last half of the fourteenth century until at least the second decade of the fifteenth. The shaffron's cuplike eye guards, however, together with the lack of plate armor for the rider and the fact that mail trappers went out of use rapidly after the beginning of the fifteenth century, argue for dating this chessman to the last quarter of the fourteenth century.

DHB

EX COLL.: Rev. John Eagles, Bristol; Victor Gay, Paris; John Hunt, Dublin

REFERENCES: Way 1846, pp. 239–45, figs. 5, 6; Hewitt 1855–60, vol. 2, pp. 314–15, pl. XLVIII; Boenheim 1890, p. 215, fig. 238; Demmin, n.d. suppl., p. 77 (ill.); Ffoulkes 1909, p. 88, fig. 39; Dean 1915, pl. XIII; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, p. 150, fig. 956; Ffoulkes and Fortescue 1928, p. 2931; Nickel 1969, pp. 174–82, figs. 4, 10; Nickel 1975, p. 42; Schuckelt 1994, p. 15, fig. 17

## 2. Chess Piece (Knight)

*Western European (perhaps German or English),  
ca. 1510–30*

*Ivory*

*1<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. (4.6 x 5.2 cm)*

*Pfeiffer Fund, 1968 (68.183)*

This ivory chessman—like catalogue number 1 the only survivor of an otherwise vanished set—nevertheless gives a good impression of a complete armor for both man and horse as worn throughout Europe during the early sixteenth century.

Despite the somewhat stylized representation of the armor, several elements of the figure are noteworthy. As part of a complete armor, the man-at-arms wears a helmet of armet type, shoulder defenses (pauldrons) with large, upright flanges for

additional protection of the neck (*haute-pieces*), and a textile skirt. Of the lance, which formerly rested on the side of the saddle, only the part below the rider's right hand survives.

The bard comprises a light, open shaffron fitted with a rondel or escutcheon plate but without ear or eye guards; a crinet of several plates, probably fitted with an additional mail defense for the throat; a peytral; and a crupper. The latter two elements show little detail, except for a prominent boss on either side of the peytral and a band running along the main edges, but their general appearance may indicate that both are made from leather rather than metal plate. Leather armor of very similar form is described elsewhere in this catalogue (see cat. no. 26).

While the armor for the horse's body is of a type worn throughout Europe during the early sixteenth century, until at least about 1540, its combination with several elements of the man's armor allows for a somewhat more definite dating. The combination of the armet with a globose breastplate, large pauldrons with tall upstanding guards (*hautepieces*), and a skirt points to the early sixteenth century. Such skirts, often made from elaborately woven or embroidered textiles, had been worn with armor in Italy since at least the mid-fifteenth century, but became popular throughout the rest of Europe shortly



Cat. no. 2

after 1500. In very rare instances skirts were even imitated in steel plates (so-called *tonlets*) and worn as an integral part of the armor. Considering the exceedingly tall *hautepieces* on the pauldrons, rarely found before 1510, and the fact that bards of this type became less popular not long after the third decade of the century, the most probable date for this chess piece is between about 1510 and 1530.

DHB

EX COLL.: John Hunt, Dublin

REFERENCE: Nickel 1969, pp. 181–82, figs. 20, 21

ULRICH URSENTALER  
AUSTRIA (HALL), REC. 1508–35,  
MASTER OF THE MINT (*MÜNZ-  
WEISTER*) AT HALL IN 1535

### 3. Presentation Coin (*Doppelguldiner*)

*Dutch (Antwerp), 1517 (dies cut in Hall,  
Austria, and dated 1509)*

Silver

$2\frac{3}{32}$  in. (53 mm), wt.  $1\frac{13}{16}$  oz. (52 g)

*Inscribed: Obverse, on border, MAXIMILIANVS · DEI ·  
GRA · ROM · IMP · SEMP · AVG · ARCHIDVX · AVSTRIE;*  
*on lower border of horse armor, HALT MAS;*  
*below horse, 1509; Reverse, on border, PLVRIVMQ ·  
EVROPE · PROVINCIAR · REX · ET · PRINCEPS ·  
POTENTISIM*

*Gift of George D. Pratt, 1926 (26.261.14)*

This coin, a so-called *Doppelguldiner* (a heavy silver coin equal in value to two gold coins), was first struck in 1508 to commemorate the coronation of Maximilian I (1459–1519; elected German king 1486) as Holy Roman Emperor on February 4 of that year in Trent. Produced in relatively small numbers from dies cut by the court engraver Ulrich Ursentaler, such valuable coins were not intended as currency but were distributed as gifts, instruments of propaganda, and diplomatic presents.



Cat. no. 3

The obverse shows the emperor in full armor, holding in his right hand a lance with the imperial banner and riding a completely barded horse; encircling the image is a Latin inscription identifying him as “Maximilian, by God’s Grace Sublime Roman Emperor and Archduke of Austria.” Placed at the center of the reverse is the imperial coat of arms, surrounded by the collar of the chivalric Order of the Golden Fleece as well as by twenty-six other coats of arms arranged in two concentric circles, some referring to domains not actually under Maximilian’s rule but to which he believed he had a rightful claim. The surrounding inscription reinforces these ambitions by glorifying the emperor as “King and Most Powerful Ruler of Most European Provinces.”

Apart from its value as propaganda, the coin is an important document for the study of horse armor. The bard displays the following noteworthy elements. There is a full shaffron with sideplates extending deeply at the side to behind the throat latch, guards for the ears and eyes, an escutcheon plate with a long spike, and a beaklike termination over the muzzle. The neck is covered by what appears to be a closed crinet constructed entirely of articulated plates, while the body is protected by a peytral, flanchards, and a crupper. All of these elements are extensively decorated. The shaffron, surmounted with a crest of feathers, seems to be fluted on the main plate and sideplates. The crinet likewise shows some form of adornment on every



other plate, and its back is studded with small trefoils or crockets. Elaborately embossed decoration is found on the elements for the body.

The central plate of the peytral depicts the imperial double-headed eagle, and the sideplate bears a boss in the shape of a grotesque head, either of a human or a lion. The crupper, in addition to a central knob at the top, shows devices that Maximilian had adopted after his marriage to Mary of Burgundy (1457–1482) in 1477: the Burgundian (Saint Andrew's) cross surrounded by four fire steels. Along the lower edge of the crupper, and presumably continuing along the flanchards and peytral, runs a repeated inscription, giving the motto of the chivalric Order of Temperance: *Halt Mas* (Restrain Yourself).

The most interesting detail of this bard, however, is the fact that it includes encompassing armor for the legs, protecting each down to the fetlock with a system of articulated plates. Such extensive horse armor appears to have been an invention and specialty of Maximilian's court armorer, Lorenz Helmschmid (rec. 1467–1515/16), and was apparently produced by him for more than three decades, from as early as 1477 until the year of his death (Dillon 1902, p. 78). The majority of written and

pictorial evidence, including this coin, suggests that such bards, complete to the extreme, were intended and used largely for ceremonial purposes. One of the emperor's horses appears thus armed and ridden by the imperial keeper of armor (*Harnischmeister*) Albrecht May during Maximilian's triumphal entry into the city of Namur in 1480, while other examples were exported either as commissions or were given as diplomatic gifts during visits by foreign rulers.

Mention should also be made of Maximilian's armor, which is of a kind fashionable in German-speaking regions during the period 1505–30. Among other characteristic features are the globose breastplate decorated with a spray of fluting and the helmet surmounted by an imperial crown. The type of helmet, known as an *armet*, is discernible by the shape of its visor and the small protective rondel projecting from the base of the bowl at the rear. The side of the bowl shows the same embossed decoration as the crupper and peytral, the Burgundian cross and fire steels.

The depiction of the armor is detailed enough to warrant the assumption that it was modeled after one of the emperor's actual armors for man and horse, which, unfortunately, does not survive. However,

a similar bard, without leg armor and prominently embossed with decoration including Burgundian crosses and fire steels, is preserved in Leeds (Royal Armouries Museum, VI.6–12). Probably made in Flanders about 1510, approximately the time the first presentation coins were struck, it was one of several presents of armor given by Maximilian to King Henry VIII of England. Surviving pieces of armor made specifically for the horse's legs are extremely rare. The most notable example is an element for the upper part of a leg (forearm or gaskin), decorated with fluting and etched bands in the manner of Daniel Hopfer of Augsburg (ca. 1470–1536), now in Brussels (Musée Royal de l'Armée et d'Histoire Militaire, 10212). Dating probably to about 1515, it most likely also comes from the Helmschmid workshop (Buttin 1929, pp. 66–67).

In 1517 the dies for this coin were taken from Hall to Antwerp, where another series was struck. Since this is distinguishable from the earlier issue by a small rosette added in front of the horse, the Museum's example evidently belongs to the 1517 edition. DHB

EX COLL.: [Dr. Franz Ferdinand Kraus, Brunswick]

Unpublished

## SHAFFRONS AND CRINET S

### 4. Shaffron and Crinet

*Franco-Italian, ca. 1480–95*

*Steel*

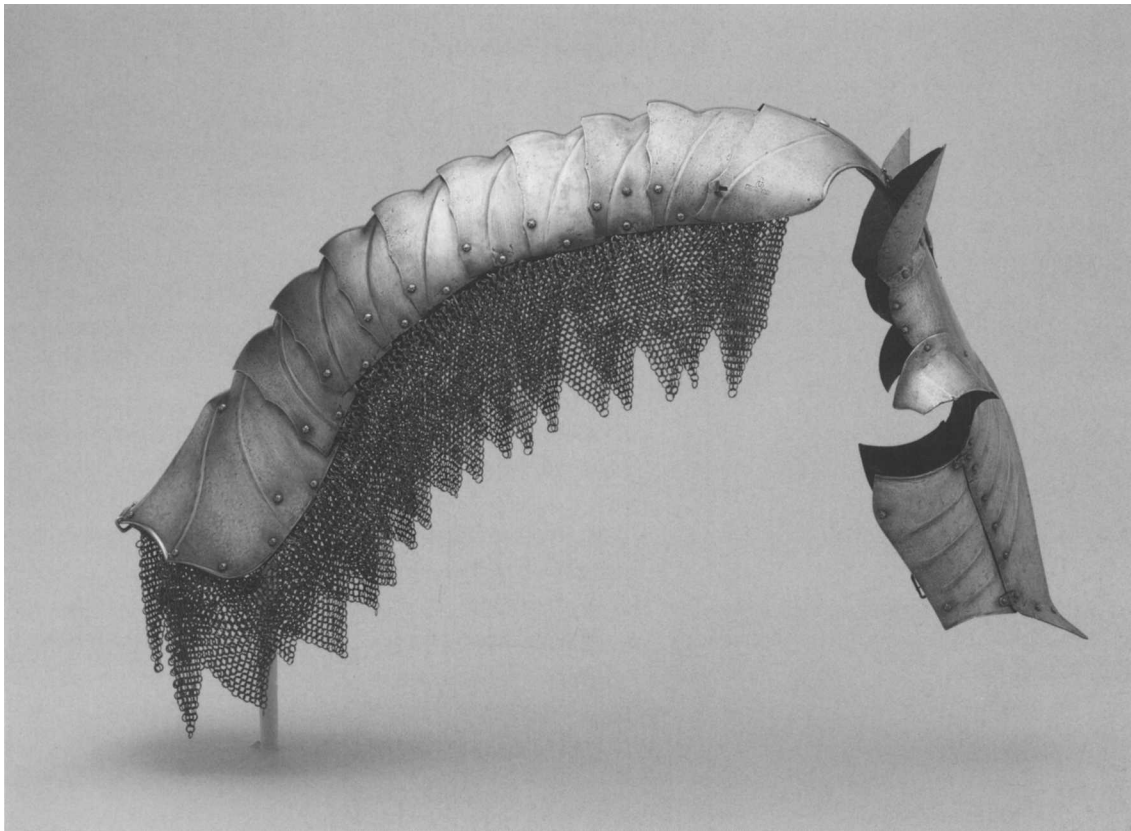
*Shaffron* 24<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 13 in. (63.2 x 33 cm), wt. 4 lb. 4 oz. (1,918 g); *crinet* 33<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (85.9 x 17.5 cm), wt. 9 lb. 10 oz. (4,360 g)  
*Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1661, .1662)*

This is a rare example of a late Gothic shaffron preserved with its matching crinet. The shaffron consists of a main plate with modern ear and eye guards but retains its original hinged sideplates and poll plate. The crinet is constructed of

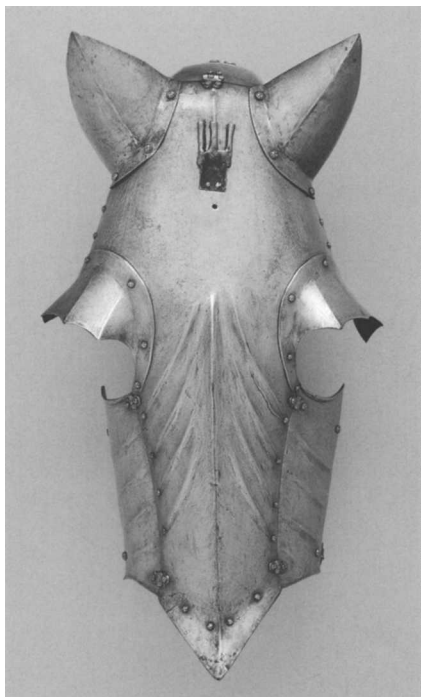
nine plates, of which the bottom one is modern. Both pieces are recorded in their present condition (except for the bottom crinet lame and mail fringe, which were added by the collector William Riggs sometime after he acquired them in 1863) in a drawing by Antonio Dassi, now preserved in the library of the Castello Sforzesco in Milan. Dating to about 1830–40, the drawing was made as an illustration for a catalogue of the collection of arms and armor belonging to the Milanese banker Ambrogio Uboldo (1785–1865). At that time the shaffron was also mounted with a large, fluted rondel stamped with the mark

of the armorer Kaspar Rieder of Mühlau/Innsbruck (rec. 1452–99), which has since been removed (see cat. no. 5). The three-tube plume holder, probably a restoration, was formerly concealed beneath the rondel.

The shaffron's slender, pointed shape and the radiating ridges raised on the surfaces reflect the German late Gothic style, manifest in armor dating from the last third of the fifteenth century. The presence of Italian-style armorer's marks stamped on the poll plate suggests, on the other hand, that this is an Italian work *alla tedesca* (in the German fashion), presumably made either for export north of the Alps or for use



Cat. no. 4, side view



Cat. no. 4, front view of the shaffron

in northern Italy, where German influence was particularly strong. The marks consist of an orb surmounted by a cross above the letters ROM ROM.

The same marks are recorded on a handful of pieces, three of them in the Metropolitan Museum: in addition to the shaffron under discussion, there is the parade shaffron bearing the device of Dauphin Henry of France, later King Henry II (cat. no. 7), and a right pauldron (shoulder defense) that forms part of a composite, heavily restored armor in the late Gothic style (04.3.293). Judging from the style of the armor elements stamped with the marks, the armorer most probably worked between about 1480 and 1510. Intriguingly, two of the recorded pieces by this master are associated with the French court: the Metropolitan's shaffron of Henry II, mentioned above, and portions of a steel bard of early-sixteenth-century date that was refurbished and redecorated more than a century later to match an armor made about 1630–40 for Louis XIII of France (fig. 11). The French association of these pieces and the unusual abbreviation of the armorer's name, ROM, led A. V. B. Norman to the very plausible identification of this master as one Romain des Ursins, a Milanese armorer recorded



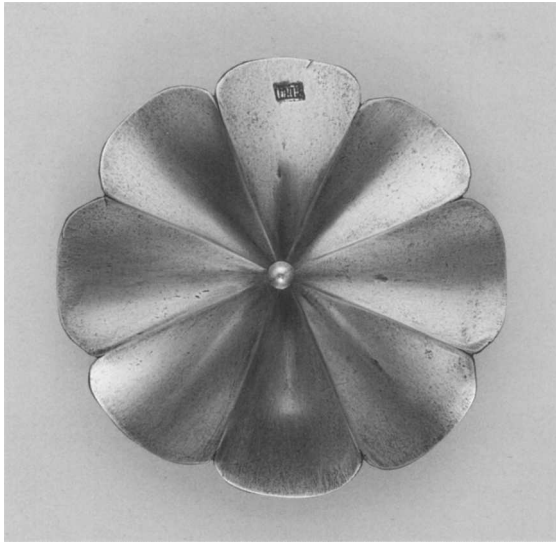
Cat. no. 4, armorer's marks

as working in Lyons in 1493 and 1495. This would account for the northern taste of the shaffron's ridged decoration as well as for the Italian form of the armorer's mark.

SWP

EX COLL.: Ambrogio Uboldo, Milan; William H. Riggs, Paris

REFERENCES: Mann 1929–31, p. 302; Beard 1932, pp. 222–23; Norman 1960, p. 10



Cat. no. 5

KASPAR RIEDER  
AUSTRIA, REC. 1452–99

## 5. Rondel for a Shaffron

*Austrian (Mühlau, near Innsbruck), ca. 1480–90*  
Steel

*Diam. 7½ in. (19 cm), wt. 8 oz. (226 g)*  
*Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1661b)*

This plate was formerly attached to the late-fifteenth-century Franco-Italian shaffron discussed above (cat. no. 4). The identification of its deeply stamped mark, formed of the letters KASP in Gothic script, as that of the important Austrian armorer Kaspar Rieder warranted its removal and display as a separate element. The plate's fluted-rosette shape and large size suggest that it was originally made either as a besague (a circular plate suspended at the front of the pauldron to protect the armpit of the armored warrior) or as a rondel affixed to a shaffron for either field or tournament service. A "blind" tournament shaffron in the Hofjagd- und Rüst-kammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum,



Cat. no. 5, armorer's mark

Vienna (B66b), to which is riveted a similar rondel struck twice with the same mark, indicates that it is probably the latter.

Active between 1452 and 1499, Rieder belonged to a small community of armorers located at Mühlau, near Innsbruck, in the Tyrol. Though independent craftsmen, these armorers worked extensively for Archduke Siegmund, Duke of Tyrol, producing field and tournament armors for Siegmund and aristocratic members of

his court, as well as gifts for his family and relations. Relatively few works by Rieder are preserved today, but the Metropolitan Museum possesses, in addition to this rondel, an important helmet of the sallet type (42.50.32) that bears the same mark.

Dating to about 1480 and retaining portions of its original lining, the sallet comes from Churburg Castle in the Tyrol and presumably belonged to Count Gaudenz von Matsch (d. 1504). SWP

EX COLL.: Ambrogio Uboldo, Milan; William H. Riggs, Paris  
Unpublished

## 6. "Blind" Shaffron for the Joust

*German, ca. 1490*  
Steel, brass, and textile  
*21¼ x 10⅞ in. (54.1 x 27.6 cm), wt. 5 lb. 13 oz. (2,638 g)*  
*Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.292)*

The joust was a friendly contest fought by two horsemen armed with lances, each intent on unseating his opponent, or at least breaking his lance squarely on the other's shield or helmet. In German lands in the fifteenth

and sixteenth centuries, the two principal forms of joust (of which there were many variations) were the *Gestech*, or joust of peace, fought with blunt lances, and the *Rennen*, or joust of war, fought with sharp lances, each form having its own specialized type of armor. The contestants might fight in the open field, the horses protected by large stuffed peytrals hung across their chests that acted as "bumpers" to prevent injury should they collide, or they might be separated by a wooden barrier, or "tilt," following the Italian custom. The horse's head was usually protected by a steel shaffron that was often "blind," that is, the eyes were covered so that the animal would not shy away as the opponent approached. Bells placed around the horse's neck created noise that further distracted the beast from the onslaught. The armor and colorful trappings used in the *Gestech*, including blind shaffrons and collars of bells, are illustrated in a



Cat. no. 6





Fig. 28. Page from an illustrated tournament book. Nuremberg, late 16th century. Watercolor drawing. Rogers Fund, 1922 (22.229)

series of watercolor drawings from a late-sixteenth-century Nuremberg tournament book in the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 28).

The present shaffron covers only the front of the horse's head and is shaped around the ears; a short plate with a cusped upper edge and a curved lower edge with an outward turn extends it over the nose. In keeping with the late Gothic taste of northern Europe, the surfaces are enlivened by a wide, notched medial ridge, a series of raised ridges radiating below the ears and across the nose, and stylized representations of the eyes and nostrils. Circular plates riveted inside the shaffron behind the eyes reinforce these vulnerable areas. Small circular plates (rondels) or shields of various shapes (escutcheon plates) were frequently attached by screws or rivets to the forehead of a shaffron and provided additional defense, as well as a useful surface for the display of heraldry, emblems, and pictorial devices (see cat. nos. 5, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, and 21). The rondel attached to this example is a late-nineteenth-century restoration.

A similarly constructed shaffron with articulated nose plate and reinforcing disks riveted behind the eyes is in the Hofjagd-

und Rüstkammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (B4). On that example and on others in the same collection, the ears are protected by short, upstanding flanges; these may have been trimmed off the Museum's example, perhaps because of damage.

S W P

EX COLL.: [Philibert Bachereau, Paris]; Constantine Resson, Paris; Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duc de Dino, Paris

REFERENCES: De Cosson 1901, pp. 12–13, no. A.3, pl. 2; Dean 1905, p. 75, fig. 39, p. 77; Laking 1920–22, vol. 2, pp. 127–28, fig. 469; Dean and Grancsay 1930, pp. 114, 115, fig. 70

## 7. Shaffron of Henry II of France, When Dauphin

*Franco-Italian, ca. 1490–1500; redecorated in 1539*  
*Steel, gold, and brass*  
 27½ x 15 in. (69.8 x 38.1 cm), wt. 5 lb. 3 oz. (2,350 g)  
 Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.253)

The shaffron is composed of seven plates attached by modern brass rivets: the main

plate in two sections, the upper one overlapping the lower and extended over each eye with a large, convex semicircular flange; a deeply arched convex nose piece ending in a sharp point; two deep one-piece cheek plates shaped around the eyes and mouth; and two pointed ear guards with undulating sides. The poll plate is missing, as is the rondel, escutcheon plate, or perhaps a plume-holder, for which there are rivet holes in the center of the forehead region. The lower half of the main plate has three rounded bosses down the center that suggest a rippling snout, and the cheek pieces are embossed to simulate an open mouth with

bared teeth. The surface decoration includes wide bands of gold-damascened ornament on a blued ground around the eyes, bases of the ears, and rear edges of the cheek plates, wavy gilt stripes on the ears, and gilt leaves down the sides of the nose and across the snout. Among the ornament on the wide bands are foliate scrolls, grotesque figures, rectangular tablets of classical type, and (on the right cheek) a fleur-de-lis. Each of the eye flanges is decorated in gold with the letter H surrounded by a dolphin; the lower half of the main plate is decorated at the center with a rectangular cartouche suspended from a ribbon that encloses the date 1539 and, below, with the letter H enclosed by two intertwined, crowned dolphins. The surfaces were formerly heavily corroded, and much of the gilt decoration is lost.

Stamped on each cheek plate are the armorer's marks, an orb and cross above the letters ROM ROM (see detail), which have been tentatively identified as those of the Milanese armorer Romain des Ursins, who was recorded as working in Lyons in 1493 and 1495. The same marks appear on another shaffron in this exhibition (see discussion under cat. no. 4).



Cat. no. 7





Cat. no. 7, side view

The fantastic shape of the shaffron, with its rippled, cusped snout and simulated teeth, effectively transforms the horse's head into a dragon's. Despite the shaffron's redecoration in 1539, the dragon-like form belongs to a period of manufacture in the late fifteenth century, as is suggested by the armorer's marks and by the existence of a second shaffron of very similar construction, with the same rippled snout and embossed teeth, in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (fig. 29). That example, now heavily corroded and missing the plate at the end of the nose, is decorated with the ridged and cusped surfaces characteristic of the northern late Gothic style, in contrast to the smoother, more Italianate forms of the Metropolitan's example. Although no armorer's marks are visible on the Paris shaffron, it very likely originated in the same workshop. These two shaffrons may

be considered among the earliest surviving examples of parade armor *all'eroica* (in the "heroic" style).

In the Renaissance, "heroic" armor, including horse armor, of fantastic form was intended to allude to the heroes of literature and legend. Probably originally fashioned from lightweight materials such as textile, papier-mâché, or leather, costume armor of this type was employed in tournaments, ceremonial entries, and court pageants. The use of such equipment in a tournament is attested as early as 1387, in a German manuscript illumination (Schultz 1892, pl. XIV) in which the jousting horse wears a dragonlike shaffron, demonstrating that such equipment belonged to a late medieval courtly tradition. In Italy several similar shaffrons are recorded; a drawing by the Venetian artist Jacopo Bellini dating about 1450, for



Cat. no. 7, armorer's marks

example, shows such a shaffron, with a scaly crinet, winged peytral, and scaly tail piece, as clearly part of a pageant costume (fig. 30).

The present shaffron was redecorated in 1539 for use by Dauphin Henry of France (1519–1559; crowned King Henry II in 1547), as is indicated by the prominent date, the letter H surrounded by crowned dolphins, and the fleurs-de-lis. Armor associated with the French court during the reign of Francis I (1515–47), the dauphin's father, is exceptionally rare, in contrast to that made during the second half of the sixteenth century for Henry II and his successors. (The Metropolitan Museum possesses a richly embossed armor and shield for Henry II [39.121 and 34.85, respectively], which were both produced in French workshops, probably in Paris.) The two surviving armors known to have been made for the dauphin are both Milanese: a silver-damascened harness of about 1540 from the workshop of Francesco Negroli (Musée de l'Armée, Paris, G.118) and an embossed armor of about 1540–50 from the workshop of Giovan Paolo Negroli (private collection). This royal shaffron is therefore important both as an early dated example of Italian parade armor and for its association with Henry II, one of the greatest French patrons of the armorer's art. It can probably be related to events connected with the tour of France made by Emperor





Fig. 29. Shaffron. Probably Franco-Italian, late 15th century. Musée de l'Armée, Paris (G.587)



Charles V in 1539, during which the dauphin was in constant attendance. The reuse of an older piece of armor, redecorated for this occasion, suggests that there was considerable haste in the assembly of the necessary equipment for the ceremonies and tournaments held in honor of the emperor.

The shaffron's gold-damascened decoration raises the question of whether such specialized goldsmith's work might be by the hand of Diego de Çaias, a Spanish damascener and swordsmith documented as working at the French court between 1535 and 1542. De Çaias is first recorded in 1535 as a member of the household of the sons of Francis I, which included the dauphin Francis and his younger brother Henry (who succeeded to the title of dauphin in 1536 following Francis's death). As he was in England in the employ of Henry VIII early in 1543, Diego presumably left France in 1542, when aliens were expelled because of the outbreak of war between France and the Holy Roman Empire. Among the damascened arms by or attributed to him are a signed dagger and a mace bearing the motto of Henry II, both in the Metropolitan Museum (39.159.1 and 04.3.59, respectively). In the style of its decoration, however, the shaffron differs from these pieces, having a more direct relation to Renaissance ornament of the period as found in woodcuts and book illustrations. Accordingly, it should be attributed to another contemporary damascener attached to the French court.

SWP

EX COLL.: Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duc de Dino, Paris

REFERENCES: De Cosson 1901, p. 47, no. E.1, pl. 6; Dean 1905, p. 119, fig. 70D; Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, p. 205, fig. 1014e; Mann 1929–31, p. 302; Beard 1932, pp. 222–23; Cripps-Day 1956, pp. 105–6; Norman 1960, p. 10; Reverseau 1982, p. 100; Reverseau 2003, pp. 94, 95, fig. 2

Fig. 30. Jacopo Bellini, *Knight on Horseback*. Italian, ca. 1440–50. Silverpoint on paper. Musée de Louvre, Paris



Cat. no. 8

## 8. Shaffron

*German (probably Nuremberg), ca. 1515–20*  
 Steel  
 25 x 13½ in. (63.5 x 34.3 cm), wt. 7 lb. 2 oz  
 (3,218 g)  
 Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1645)

The shaffron is constructed of nine plates: a main plate in two halves, two eye plates, two cheek plates, tubular ear plates, and a hinged poll plate; the escutcheon plate formerly riveted between the eyes is missing. Its massive form is lightened and articulated by the pairs of flutes with engraved edges that radiate from the center of the main plate up and around the eyes and down across the nose and cheeks. The ear

plates, poll plate, and flange of the nose are also fluted, the edges of the ears faceted, and the edges of the eye plates notched. The surfaces are given additional relief by a large, circular boss in the center of the forehead and by two parallel roped ribs, converging at the top and bottom, down the center of the nose.

This shaffron exemplifies the distinctive new armor fashion that developed in Germany in the early sixteenth century and remained popular until about 1530. Christened the “Maximilian style” by nineteenth-century collectors (after Maximilian I, who ruled as Holy Roman Emperor from 1508 to 1519, the period in which it first emerged), the fashion is

characterized by robust, rounded forms adopted from Italian armor, combined with splayed or parallel fluting. In earlier examples, such as this, the flutes are less numerous and more widely interspersed; on later examples, dating to about 1520–30, fluting is denser and more regularly parallel and covers the entire surface. This shaffron is noteworthy not only for its large size and almost complete enclosure of the head, but also for its unusual sculptural quality, imparted by the boldly roped double ridges and the boss on the forehead.

SWP

EX COLL.: Samuel R. Meyrick, London and Goodrich Court, Herefordshire; [Samuel L. Pratt, London]; [Carlo Ferrario, London]; William H. Riggs, Paris

REFERENCES: Skelton 1830, vol. 2, pl. 128; London 1869, p. 14, no. 188; Pratt sale 1879, lot 339; Wainwright 1989, p. 267, fig. 239

## 9. Shaffron of Ottheinrich, Count Palatine of the Rhine

*German (probably Nuremberg), dated 1529*  
 Steel, copper alloy, and leather  
 22¾ x 13 in. (56.8 x 33 cm), wt. 3 lb. 15 oz.  
 (1,794 g)  
 Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1654)

Constructed of six plates, the shaffron consists of a large main plate to which are riveted separate plates for the eyes, ears, and nose. The hinged poll plate is missing and the associated escutcheon plate has been removed (see cat. no. 10). A narrow, roped ridge extends down the forehead, and another, much bolder roped ridge extends down the nose. The edges of the nose, ear, and eye plates have roped turns. Narrow bands of etched foliate ornament on a blackened, dotted ground follow the main edges. The etched bands framing the ridges on the nose include a classically inspired candelabra ornament that incorporates vasselike pedestals supporting two Landsknechts (German mercenary soldiers known for their colorful and extravagantly cut clothing), one holding a banner, the other a spear, with trophies of arms above (see detail). A vase on the left band bears the date 1529. The separate lame at



Cat. no. 9

the nose is etched with two half-figures supporting a shield emblazoned with the arms of the Palatinate and Bavaria: quarterly, 1 and 4, *sable*, a lion *or*, crowned *gules* (Palatinate), 2 and 3, bendy lozenges of *argent* and *azure* (Bavaria) (see detail). Each ear plate is etched below the edge with a cherub's head.

Although the escutcheon plate formerly mounted on the shaffron bears the personal device of Ottheinrich (1502–1559), Count Palatine of the Rhine, the two pieces are etched in different styles and therefore do not belong together. The association is undoubtedly an old one, as the shaffron also bears the arms of the Palatinate, confirming that it too comes from the large armory at Neuburg Castle, which rises over the Danube in the vicinity of Ingolstadt. The arms there were used by both Ottheinrich and his brother Philipp (1503–1548), who were co-rulers. The shaffron's date of 1529 was particularly significant for each sibling, as it marks the year of Ottheinrich's marriage

to Susanna, daughter of the Duke of Bavaria, and Philipp's participation in the defense of Vienna against the Turks. It seems more probable that the shaffron, like the escutcheon, belonged to Ottheinrich, who undoubtedly would have ordered new armor for the ceremonies attendant upon his wedding.

Ottheinrich, who had little political influence until he became Elector Palatine (one of the seven electors of the Holy Roman Empire) in 1556, was one of the most important patrons and collectors of the German Renaissance. A noted builder and bibliophile, he rebuilt and refurbished Neuburg Castle, sponsored the construction of the Ottheinrichbau, the Renaissance wing of Heidelberg Castle, and founded the

Palatine Library at Heidelberg University. He was also a dedicated patron of the armorer's art and commissioned numerous harnesses from the leading masters in Augsburg and Nuremberg; many of these are identifiable today either because they incorporate his arms or devices or because they are recorded in the detailed inventories made of the Neuburg armory in the years 1628, 1654, and 1750. After the armory was plundered by Napoleon's officers in 1800 during the French occupation of Bavaria, its contents were widely scattered. One of the dispersed pieces must be an armored saddle in the Metropolitan Museum (14.25.1653), now mounted on an Italian horse armor (fig. 23), which appears to match the present shaffron. Not only is the etching of the saddle plates consistent in style with that of the shaffron, but it also includes the same quartered arms of the Palatinate. While the shaffron and saddle are unmarked, the style of etching suggests a Nuremberg manufacture.

SWP



Cat. no. 9, detail of etched decoration along center of nose

EX COLL.: Armory of the Counts Palatine of the Rhine, Neuburg Castle, Bavaria; Frédéric Spitzer, Paris; William H. Riggs, Paris

REFERENCES: Spitzer Collection 1890–92, vol. 6, p. 98, no. 501; Spitzer sale 1895, lot 94, ill.; Reitzenstein 1940, p. 50, fig. 10; Reitzenstein 1943, p. 191; Louisville 1952, no. 17; Reitzenstein 1956, pp. 109, 116, n. 7



Cat. no. 9, detail of etched decoration at tip of nose

## 10. Escutcheon Plate with the Device of Ottheinrich, Count Palatine of the Rhine

German (Augsburg), ca. 1525

Steel

5¼ x 5⅜ in. (13.2 x 13.7 cm), wt. 3 oz. (93 g)  
Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1654)



Cat. no. 10

Initially intended to reinforce the shaffron in the vulnerable forehead region, escutcheon plates became increasingly decorative in the sixteenth century and even ultimately included imaginative figural ornament (see cat. no. 12). The present escutcheon plate is essentially square in shape but with strongly rounded corners and with shaped sides rising to a point in the center; it is concave toward the viewer and has a raised median ridge. The face is etched in the center with an hourglass, the letters M, D, and Z disposed around it on three sides, and the background is filled with scrolling foliage on a dotted and blackened background.

The hourglass, often accompanied by the (here abbreviated) motto *Mit der Zeit* (“with time,” in the sense of “All in good time”), is the well-known device of Ottheinrich (1502–1559), Count Palatine of the Rhine. The emblem was used by Ottheinrich from his youth and embellished not only his armors but also his bookbindings, tapestries, and interior architectural ornament. Another detached

escutcheon plate etched with the same abbreviated motto and the date 1516 is found in the Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (A. 200), whereas the hourglass device, without motto, is rendered in high relief on one of Ottheinrich’s horse armors in the Musée de l’Armée, Paris (G.552), an Augsburg work of about 1520.

This escutcheon plate was formerly mounted on the previously described shaffron of Ottheinrich (cat. no. 9), perhaps since the time when both were in the armory at Neuburg Castle. Their association is inaccurate, however, as the difference between the etched decoration of the escutcheon and that of the shaffron indicates that the plate must come from yet another of Ottheinrich’s armors. The loose foliate scrolls and large, cloverlike leaves, with “balls”

interspersed in the tendrils, are typical of etching in the manner of Daniel Hopfer (ca. 1470–1536) of Augsburg and probably date to the 1520s. Similar etching on a blackened and dotted ground is found, for example, on a saddle and shaffron belonging to Ottheinrich in Vienna (Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, A. 239a and b, respectively), the former containing the numerals XXIII, which probably indicate a date of 1523. While the escutcheon plate is most likely contemporary with these, it appears not to match them: its dotted ground, formed of tiny crescentic marks, differs from that of the shaffron and saddle, which is made up of circular dots.

SWP

EX COLL.: See cat. no. 9

REFERENCES: See cat. no. 9

## 11. Pair of Ear Guards from a Shaffron

German (probably Augsburg), ca. 1525–30

Steel

Right ear 7⅝ x 6 in. (19.4 x 15.2 cm), wt. 4 oz. (105 g); left ear 7¾ x 5¼ in. (19.7 x 14.6 cm), wt. 4 oz. (123 g)

Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.619a, b)

Long overlooked in the Museum’s collection, these unusual ear guards are exceptional in taking the form of stylized dolphins. Each dolphin is forged in high relief from a style plate with an outward-turned flange at the base that is pierced with a series of rivet holes through which it was attached to the shaffron. Each dolphin has a bulbous, furled brow with ridges that extend down either side of the face; eyes; a rippled snout with upturned end; and a mouth. When mounted, each would have faced upward, its brow facing forward and the horse’s ear contained within its mouth. The ear guards have never been etched and show no signs of surface coloring such as bluing, blackening, gilding, or damascening. They therefore may have been intended to be left “white” (brightly polished). The plates have suffered heavy corrosion over the years, resulting in a number of small holes or cracks that were filled with lead or riveted patches in the nineteenth century.

These ear guards belong to the same Renaissance tradition of armor *all’eroica* as the shaffron of the dauphin Henry of France (cat. no. 7), in which elements such as helmets, pauldrons, and shaffrons were transformed into fantastic zoomorphic creatures. The choice of dolphins may indicate that the shaffron and possibly other parts of the horse armor were decorated with aquatic imagery. In the Renaissance decorative vocabulary, dolphin imagery, based on classical Roman examples, was incorporated into fashionable fifteenth- and sixteenth-century ornament. Apart from their obvious heraldic reference to the dauphin of France, dolphins were associated in antiquity and the Renaissance with love (as creatures on which Venus often rides), music and





Cat. no. 11

poetry (for their association with both Apollo and Arion), and haste (for their speed), as well as with Neptune and water in general. Without imputing too much specific symbolic value to their iconography, however, the depiction of dolphins here surely reflects the armorer's (or his patron's) choice of a classical theme and a metalworking technique (*repoussé*) that was directly associated with antique armor. Nevertheless, the dolphin is employed in a purely Renaissance manner, as the horse's ears are playfully transformed into these engaging sea creatures.

A useful comparison can be made between these objects and the dolphin-shaped tail piece worked in high relief, with etched and gilt details, that forms part of a well-known bard in the Real Armería, Madrid (fig. 31). Embossed with scenes from the lives of Hercules and Samson, the bard is attributed to Kolman Helmschmid (1470/71–1532), the leading

armor in Augsburg at the time, and is thought to have been made for Emperor Maximilian I about 1517–18. Apart from its general classical associations, the tail piece is not thematically related to the bard's iconography and is thus essentially ornamental. Another dolphin-shaped tail piece, made in Germany about 1540, is in the Wallace Collection, London (A 448), and attests to the popularity there of this theme on horse armor.

No surviving shaffron with dolphin-shaped ear guards is known. Although they were invariably decorated to match the shaffron, ear guards in fact rarely deviate from the standard form. The notable exception is found in a series of shaffrons in which the ears are fashioned as curled ram's horns. This innovation was apparently introduced to Augsburg by Kolman Helmschmid about 1520 on a bard made for Emperor Charles V (Real Armería, Madrid, A. 37; New York 1991, no. 18, ill.)

and subsequently adopted by Kunz Lochner (1510–1567) of Nuremberg on a series of shaffrons produced in the 1540s and 1550s. The shaffron on the armor that Lochner made for Duke Johann Ernst of Saxony-Coburg, dated 1548 and now in the Metropolitan



Fig. 31. Tail piece from a bard of Maximilian I. German (Augsburg), ca. 1518. Real Armería, Madrid (A.149)

Museum (fig. 18), once had ram's-horn ear pieces, but these were presumably damaged and have since been filed down to look like conventional ears.

Although embossing as a technique for the decoration of armor is more frequently associated with Renaissance Italy, the examples cited above demonstrate that German armorers employed it earlier and with equal skill. In fact, one of the earliest and most ambitious examples of embossed parade armor in the heroic style is German: the dolphin-shaped helmet made by Helmschmid for Emperor Charles V about 1530 (Real Armería, Madrid, A. 59). The Museum's ear guards belong to the same tradition and find their parallel in the low-relief embossed creatures added to eye guards and nose plates on German shaffrons, including those on Helmschmid's shaffron of about 1526 for the future Emperor Ferdinand I (Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, A349) and a South German shaffron of about 1530 in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (G552). The ear guards probably also date to this period.

SWP

EX COLL.: Bashford Dean, New York  
Unpublished

## 12. Escutcheon Plate from a Shaffron

German (probably Augsburg), ca. 1530–40  
Steel and gold  
7 x 4½ in. (17.9 x 11.5 cm), wt. 3 oz.  
(82 g)  
Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald S. Lauder Gift,  
1985 (1985.259.2)

Although escutcheon plates were employed primarily for the display of dynastic arms or personal *imprese*, they occasionally also incorporated more fanciful motifs of a purely decorative type. This highly original escutcheon is a rare example with anthropomorphic decoration, here a nude black woman, undoubtedly a Moors, holding in her arms a shield. The figure is embossed in high relief, particularly the

head and breasts, with the details of the hair, facial features, skin, and jewelry delicately etched. She wears a jewel across her brow and a wide necklace with a pendant jewel, both gilt. Her left arm is cracked, and the lower right arm missing except for the thumb gripping the shield. The gently concave, pointed shield has a low medial ridge and is etched and gilt overall. The edges are embossed with thick leaves, and the center is etched with a figure of Hercules wrestling a bull, with two flaming cornucopias above; the background is dotted. The shield is cracked along the center and has a circular hole for attachment to the shaffron.

The subject etched on the shield has in the past been identified as Hercules Wrestling the Cretan Bull, one of the canonical Twelve Labors. It is more likely, however, to represent the story of Hercules and the river god Achelöüs. In the version recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (book 9), Hercules battled Achelöüs to win Deianira as his wife. During their struggles, Achelöüs transformed himself into a snake and then into a bull in order to escape Hercules' grasp. At last Hercules leaped on the bull, forcing it to the ground, and broke off its right horn. Later the naiads made off with the horn, filled it with fruits and flowers, and offered it to the Goddess of Plenty, the cornucopia henceforth becoming her symbol. The pair of cornucopias embossed on the escutcheon above Hercules confirms the identification of the subject.

The shaffron from which this escutcheon was taken has not been identified. Reputedly found in the flea market of Madrid, it has been published with the claim that it belonged to a shaffron from a horse armor owned by Emperor Charles V in the Real Armería, Madrid (A. 149; New York 1991, no. 20, ill.). That bard, which is decorated with scenes from the lives of Samson and Hercules and is thought to have been made by Kolman Helmschmid about 1517–18, shows no direct relationship to the escutcheon other than its reference to Hercules. Another of Charles V's garnitures in Madrid (Real Armería, A. 115–127), known as the “horn



Cat. no. 12

of plenty” garniture because of the embossed cornucopias in its decoration, would appear to be a more likely candidate, though here too there is no documentation to indicate that it formerly possessed an escutcheon of this type. The identification of the cornucopia garniture as a late work of Kolman Helmschmid (1470/71–1532) or an early work of his son Desiderius (1513–1579), perhaps made about 1532–35, nevertheless provides a useful reference point for attributing our escutcheon to Augsburg workmanship in the same period.

The motif of a Moeress holding a shield reflects the European fascination with “exotic” races. In Spain, which had been occupied by the Moors for many centuries until they were expelled in 1492, the

motif obviously had special significance. The present example also recalls an earlier tradition, that of angels supporting shields, often found in late medieval painting, sculpture, and goldsmiths' work. This motif, embossed in steel, forms the center panel of the peytral of a horse armor made for Emperor Frederick III in 1477 (fig. 8). A generally similar escutcheon is attached to a shaffron belonging to an Augsburg-style armor for man and horse of about 1580 in the Kremlin Armory, Moscow (Arendt 1935–36, p. 70). This escutcheon takes the form of a woman holding a shield bearing the arms of the margraves of Brandenburg. Another is recorded in the 1628 inventory of the armory of the Counts Palatine of the Rhine at Neuburg Castle on the Danube: “an



etched shaffron, embossed above and below, on the escutcheon an embossed Mooress” (Reitzenstein 1973b, p. 152).

SWP

EX COLL.: Said to have been acquired in the flea market, Madrid; Rainer Daehnhardt, Lisbon

REFERENCES: Lisbon 1983, no. 113; Christie’s sale 1985, lot 79

VALENTIN SIEBENBÜRGER  
GERMANY (NUREMBERG),  
CA. 1510–1568, MASTER IN 1531

### 13. Crinet

*German (Nuremberg), ca. 1535*

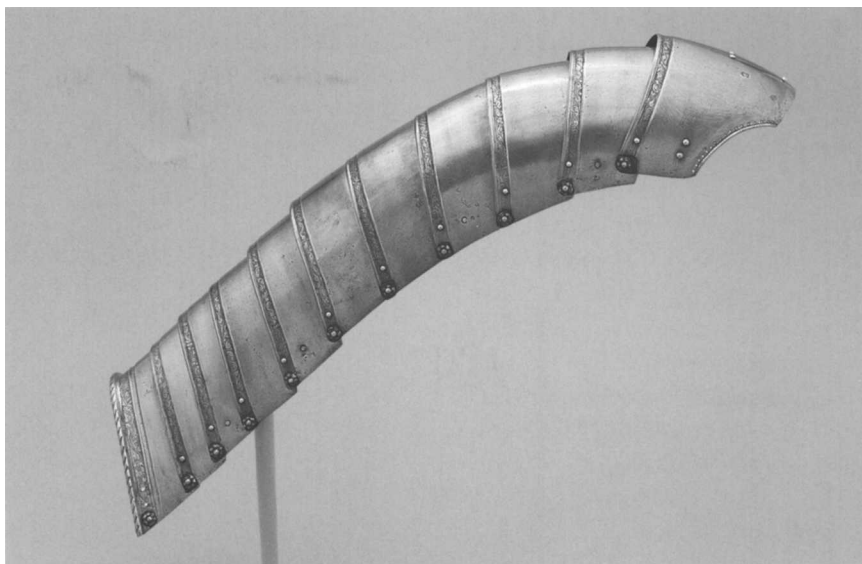
*Steel*

*37½ x 11¾ in. (95.2 x 29.9 cm), wt. 6 lb.*

*14 oz. (3,070 g)*

*Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1655)*

Constructed of eleven plates, this neck defense is remarkable for retaining what



Cat. no. 13

appear to be its original buckles and straps, the latter wrapped in green velvet. Each plate, at its lower edge, is decorated with a narrow band etched with foliate scrolls on a dotted (and formerly black-

ened) ground; the bottom edge of the first, or lowest, plate also has a roped turn. The crinet was made in Nuremberg by the noted armorer Valentin Siebenbürger, whose mark—a jousting helm flanked by the letters V and S—is struck near the top edge on the outside of the uppermost lame. The same plate is further struck with control marks of Nuremberg: the city’s coat of arms on the outside next to the Siebenbürger mark and the letter N within a pearled circle on the inside of the plate.

The Metropolitan Museum’s crinet is very similar to another example by Siebenbürger, formerly in the armory of the Counts Palatine of the Rhine at Neuburg Castle, Bavaria, and today in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rennes (inv.

no. 2888, cat. 1909). That piece belongs to an armor for man and horse datable to about 1535 and most likely made for Philipp, Count Palatine (1503–1548), who reigned from 1522 together with his elder brother, Ottheinrich (1502–1559). The Rennes example, which is struck with a variant Siebenbürger mark incorporating the letters FS rather than VS, is also etched with foliate scrolls contained in narrow bands along the edges of the plates, but the decoration is gilt.

The similarity of the two crinets, as well as the fact that horse armor fitted with straps wrapped in green silk is mentioned in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century inventories of the Neuburg armory (Reitzenstein 1973b, pp. 151–54), suggests that the Metropolitan Museum’s example may also come from Neuburg



Cat. no. 13, detail



Cat. no. 13, armorer’s mark

and may have once belonged to a horse armor commissioned by one of the two brothers. It was probably worn together with a leather peytral and crupper, since many such combinations are recorded in the Neuburg inventories. A third crinet by Siebenbürger, also struck with the FS mark (Musée de l'Armée, Paris, G. 568), is likely also to come from Neuburg.

DJL, DHB

EX COLL.: Armory of the Counts Palatine of the Rhine, Neuburg Castle, Bavaria; Marquis de Pérignon, near Montaubon, France; William H. Riggs, Paris

Unpublished

## 14. Shaffron

German (probably Landshut), ca. 1540

Steel, pewter, leather, and textile

24<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (63.2 x 31.1 cm), wt. 4 lb.

13 oz. (2,188 g)

Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1644)

A large main plate, short sideplates at the brow, ear guards, and a hinged poll plate make up this shaffron. The main plate is shaped around the eyes with outward-turned flanges, and the brow area, as well as the poll plate, is decorated with three recessed bands, each with a medial ridge. The lower half has a roped medial ridge and is boxed to either side. The main edges have roped turns and are followed by recessed bands with lining rivets that secure portions of the original internal leathers. The leathers around the eyes retain portions of the original blue (now green) fringe. Three pairs of lacing holes are pierced at the brow, two pairs on each of the sideplates, and two on the poll plate; each hole was originally lined with a decorative pewter grommet (three are now missing). A buckle is riveted near the tip of the nose on either side. Riveted between the eyes is a shield-shaped escutcheon plate emblazoned with the arms of the noble Freyberg family: *per fess argent* and *azure*, in base three stars *or*. Above this is riveted a plume-holder.

Three vertically aligned holes in the center of the poll plate were intended to receive the spring pin from the top of a matching crinet. A line of small holes along the sides of the poll plate indicates that it, like the shaffron's main plate, was once fully lined.

This shaffron comes from the armory at Hohenaschau Castle in Bavaria, the seat of the barons Freyberg, and probably belonged to Pankraz von Freyberg (1508–1565), a courtier in the service of the dukes of Bavaria in nearby Munich. The contents of the armory, sold at auction in 1861, are now widely scattered. Two identical shaffrons are known, one in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich (W. 1377), the other in the Metropolitan Museum (14.25.1641). As all three have escutcheons with the Freyberg arms, they must have been made contemporaneously for members of the family. The three large holes meant to attach the poll plates to matching crinets suggest that there may also have been matching saddles, as minimal horse armor.

Landshut, where a small community of armorers worked for the dukes of Bavaria, is the probable source of the shaffron.

The most famous Landshut armorer in this period was Wolfgang Grosschedel (rec. 1517–62), the author of two important works in the Metropolitan Museum's collection that also come from Hohenaschau: a man's armor of about 1535–40 and a horse armor dated 1554, which are exhibited together as a single equestrian figure in the Arms and Armor Galleries (figs. 21, 22). Although made at different times, both armors bear Grosschedel's mark and the Landshut control mark. Unlike these pieces, however, the Hohenaschau



Cat. no. 14

shaffrons are unmarked, but they can be attributed to Landshut by reason of their similarity in style to Grosschedel's work (as, for example, the shaffron on the Grosschedel bard of 1554, cited above) and that of other armorers in that city.

SWP

EX COLL.: Armory at Hohenaschau Castle, Bavaria; [Christian Winter, Munich]; William H. Riggs, Paris

REFERENCES: Reitzenstein 1962, p. 41, fig. 17, p. 50; Allentown 1964, no. 34; Seattle 1982, no. 30



ATTRIBUTED TO DESIDERIUS  
HELMSCHMID  
GERMANY (AUGSBURG), 1513–1579

## 15. Two Ear Guards from a Shaffron of Emperor Charles V

German (Augsburg), 1544

Steel and gold

Right ear  $5\frac{3}{8} \times 2\frac{3}{4}$  in. (13.7 x 7 cm), wt. 2 oz.  
(47 g); left ear  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 2\frac{7}{8}$  in. (13.3 x 7.3 cm),  
wt. 2 oz. (51 g)

Rogers Fund, 1920 (20.151.7 [right ear], .8  
[left ear])



Cat. no. 15

The decoration of these detached ear guards consists of a recessed band following the turned and roped outer edge that is etched and gilt with scrolling foliage on a dotted ground; the band is bordered on the inside by a contiguous series of etched, pointed scallops, or ogives, each filled with leaves on a blackened, dotted ground, separated by linear foliate designs. This distinctive decoration, and particularly the presence of the pointed-scallop border, readily identifies the pieces as belonging to the most famous armor of Emperor Charles V (1500–1558), the so-called Mühlberg garniture, the majority of which is still preserved in the Real Armería in Madrid (A. 165–187). The armor is attributed on stylistic grounds to Desiderius Helmschmid of Augsburg, who made most of the emperor's harnesses in the 1530s and 1540s, and is dated 1544 in the etched decoration. Intended for both

mounted and infantry use in the field, this large garniture consists of several hundred elements, including six shaffrons, of which two are full length and four are half-shaffrons, as presented in the illustrated inventory of the emperor's armory (fig. 32). Very minor differences in the etched decoration of the shaffrons allow us to identify the present ear guards as belonging to the full shaffron number A. 183. The Metropolitan Museum also possesses a single toe-cap belonging to the same garniture (20.151.9).

The Mühlberg garniture takes its name from the Battle of Mühlberg, which was fought on April 24, 1547, between the imperial Catholic forces, led by Charles V himself, against the Schmalkaldic League, an alliance of Protestant German princes led by Elector Johann Friedrich of Saxony.

The defeat of the Protestant forces brought a temporary end to the religious and political differences among the German states of the Holy Roman Empire and was one of Charles V's most celebrated victories. The battle was commemorated in Titian's famous equestrian portrait of Charles in the Prado, painted in 1548, in which the emperor wears portions of the Mühlberg garniture. SWP

EX COLL.: Emperor Charles V and thereafter the Spanish royal collections; Real Armería, Madrid; Guy F. Laking, London

REFERENCES: Laking sale 1920, lot 51; Dean 1921b, pp. 188–89; Grancsay 1966, p. 7, no. 2

## 16. Shaffron

German (Augsburg), ca. 1545

Steel, brass, and leather

$21\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  in. (54.6 x 28 cm), wt. 3 lb. 2 oz.  
(1,430 g)

Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.607)



Fig. 32. Portions of the Mühlberg garniture, from the *Inventario Iluminado* of Charles V. Spanish, ca. 1544. Watercolor drawings. Real Armería, Madrid (N.18)

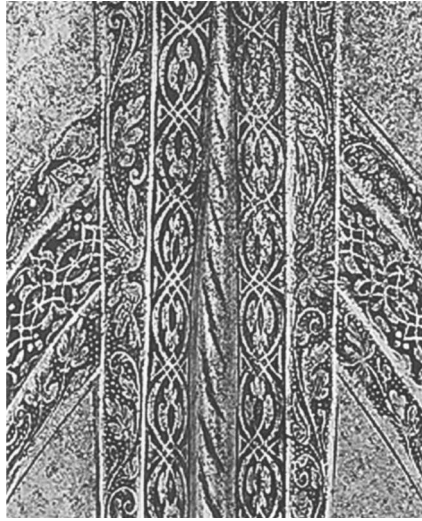
The shaffron consists of a two-part main plate, the upper one fitted with short sideplates and ear guards, with an escutcheon plate and plume-holder in the center; the poll plate is missing. The two halves of the main plate are currently attached by modern turning pins and thus are detachable, but they were initially rigidly joined by three rivets. The free edges have

roped turns, and there is a low medial ridge on the upper main plate and a roped medial rib on the lower one. The left side-plate is modern, having been forged and etched by the Museum's armorer Leonard Heinrich in 1931. The escutcheon plate and plume-holder are probably associated.

The decoration is composed of a wide recessed band of interlacing foliate arabesques on a plain, blackened ground framed on either side by a narrow recessed band filled with scrolling foliage on a dotted, blackened ground. Interspersed with the foliage is a variety of motifs that include a rabbit, parrot, grotesque head, dolphinlike creature, bow and arrow, wing, and cornucopia. The triple bands of ornament extend down the center of the upper main plate, across the top of the ears and tip of the nose, and diagonally across



Cat. no. 16



Cat. no. 16, detail of etching

the sides of the lower main plate. Where the wide arabesque band is interrupted by the roped rib in the center of the lower plate, it splits to either side into narrow bands of repeating strapwork interlace.

Although unmarked, this shaffron can be attributed to Augsburg manufacture of about 1545 based on the similarity of its etched decoration to that of the "knots" garniture made by Desiderius Helmschmid in 1544 for Philip II of Spain while he was still a prince (Real Armería, Madrid, A. 189–216). The decoration of Philip's armor derives from a design supplied by the Spanish painter Diego de Arroyo and was executed in Augsburg by the etcher Ulrich Holzmann (rec. 1534–62). The principal difference between the decoration of the two shaffrons is that the framing foliate bands on Philip's are gilt while those on the Museum's are blackened.

The etched decoration of this shaffron appears to match that found on several widely scattered elements of armor, notably a cuirass

formerly in the Robin Wigington collection, Stratford-upon-Avon; the center plate from a cante sold at Christie's, London (November 13, 1985, lot 58), and perhaps also a reinforcing bevor in the same sale (lot 53); and pieces in the Royal Armouries, Leeds, that include a left tilt pauldron and field vambrace (III.738), a right tasset and right cuisse and poleyn (III.713), and possibly a gauntlet cuff (III.810). If these pieces do indeed belong to the same armor, it was most likely constructed as a garniture for field and tournament use. Very similar decoration is found on the Metropolitan's saddle steels 29.158.391a and b, one of which is included in this exhibition (cat. no. 33), and attests to the popularity of this design in Augsburg. In the absence of the etcher's initials, however, it cannot be determined with certainty if the decoration of these closely related groups of armor was executed by Ulrich Holzmann or by a contemporary Augsburg etcher.

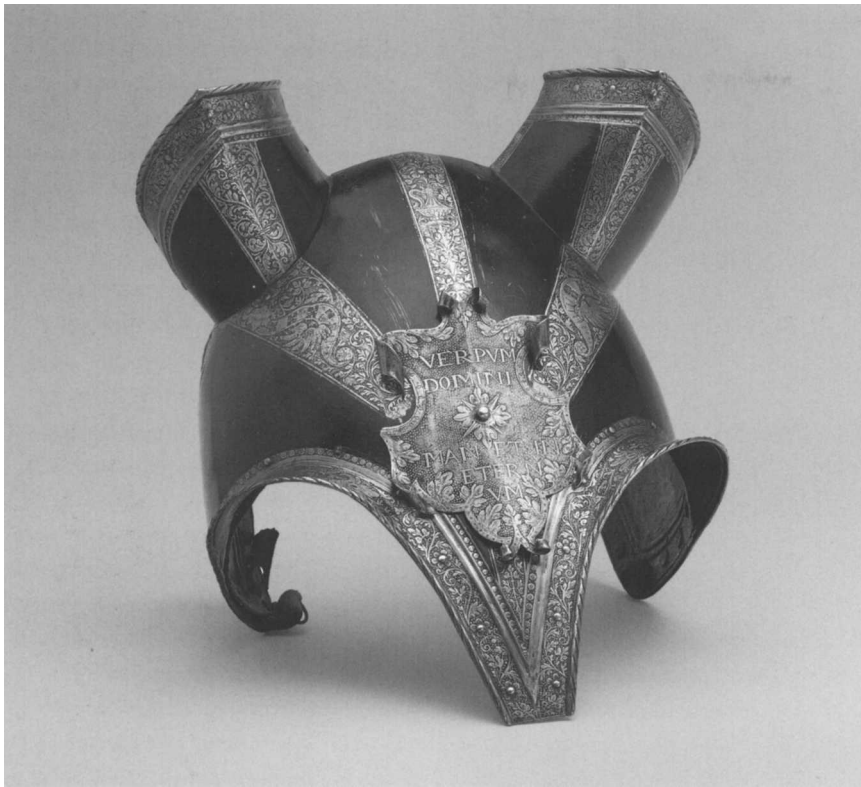
SWP

EX COLL.: Bashford Dean, New York  
Unpublished

## 17. Half-Shaffron

*German (possibly Brunswick), ca. 1553*  
*Steel, etched and blackened; leather*  
*14<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in. (37.4 x 31.7 cm), wt. 2 lb.*  
*13 oz. (1,286 g)*  
*Rogers Fund, 1928 (28.25.1)*

The shaffron is constructed of a main plate that tapers to a deep, blunt point in the middle of the nose, with bold flanges over the eyes and deeply arched sides. The ear guards are separate, as is the escutcheon plate; the poll plate is missing. The edges are turned and roped. The etched decoration, organized in bands around the edges and in three bands converging down the center of the main plate to the escutcheon, consists of scrolling foliage, cornucopias, vases, and a distinctive grotesque motif that comprises a slotted scroll with wings and a monstrous, leafy face, all set against a dotted and blackened ground. The undecorated surfaces are blackened (modern). The escutcheon plate has scrolled



Cat. no. 17

edges and is etched with foliage on a dotted ground against which is set the Latin inscription *VERPUM DOMINI MANET IN ETERNVM* ("The Word of the Lord endureth forever" [1 Peter 1:25]).

Compact and powerfully formed, this shaffron has a distinctive shape and style of etching that allow us to identify it as having originated in one of the court workshops in the north or east of Germany. The closest analogy is a half-shaffron dated 1553 that belongs to the armor of Margrave Johann of Brandenburg-Küstrin (1513–1571) in the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin (AD3002 and W2329, respectively). The two shaffrons have the same unusual pointed shape, nearly identical etching, and escutcheon plates bearing pious inscriptions (that on the Berlin example reads *SOLUS SPES MEA CHRISTUS HELP GODT 1553* [My Hope is Christ Alone, Help God 1553]). Both were undoubtedly made in the same workshop and at approximately the same date. Were it not for the different inscriptions, the Metropolitan's shaffron could be proposed as a second shaffron for the margrave's armor.

The decoration on both shaffrons includes a plain narrow, sunken band followed by a similar band etched with a row of "pearls," or balls, that outline the wider bands of etching around the edges. These "pearled" bands are a distinctive feature found on a large number of armors made for the court of Duke Heinrich of Brunswick (1489–1568) and his son Julius (1528–1589). However, harnesses of similar form and decoration are also associated with the margrave of Brandenburg, mentioned above, and Prince-Elector August of Saxony (Rüstammer, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, M. 97). The Saxon court armorer Peter von Speyer the Elder (rec. 1524–1560/62) of Annaberg is sometimes claimed to be the author of all these armors, but as the greatest number of armors decorated in this fashion are associated with the dukes of Brunswick, their manufacture by local craftsmen in Brunswick or Wölfenbüttel is more likely. In any event, the Metropolitan's shaffron can be confidently identified as originating in one of the small court workshops far from the larger, more "industrial" centers in the south of Germany, such as

Augsburg and Nuremberg. The dukes of Brunswick, margraves of Brandenburg, and prince-electors of Saxony were by this date Protestant in faith and shared close political and cultural ties. Their evangelical faith is frequently reflected in the decoration employed on the armors worn at these courts, which includes figures from Old and New Testament history and pious inscriptions.

The motto on this shaffron was a popular one and is associated with several German princes, among them Friedrich the Wise (d. 1525), Elector of Saxony; Johann Friedrich (d. 1554), also Elector of Saxony; Christoph (d. 1568), Duke of Württemberg; and Alexander (d. 1592), Duke of Schleswig (Dielitz 1884, p. 348). It has therefore not been possible to identify the owner of this shaffron with certainty. SWP

EX COLL.: [Altkunst, Berlin]

REFERENCES: Los Angeles 1953, no. 36; Louisville 1955, no. 50

KUNZ LOCHNER  
GERMANY (NUREMBERG),  
1510–1567

## 18. Shaffron and Crinet Plate Belonging to a Garniture of Armor Made for Prince Nikolaus "the Black" Radziwill

*German (Nuremberg), ca. 1555*  
Steel, etched, gilt, and painted; gilt brass  
Shaffron 23¼ x 13¼ in. (59 x 33.6 cm),  
wt. 4 lb. 8 oz. (2,034 g); crinet plate: 4⅛ x  
14 in. (10.2 x 35 cm), wt. 9 oz. (261 g)  
Shaffron: Rogers Fund, 1921 (21.42)  
Crinet plate: Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913  
(14.25.854)

The shaffron is constructed of a main plate in two riveted halves to which are attached sideplates (originally of deep form covering the cheeks but now severely cut down) and domed, openwork eye guards. The ear guards and poll plate are missing. A roped ridge extends down the center of the main plate, and the edges of





Cat. no. 18, shaffron

the eye guards and nose, like the free edges of the main plate, are turned and roped. Portions of the left eye guard are original, the remainder completed in modern times; the right one is a restoration. The etched and gilt brass plume-holder, of Augsburg type, is associated. The principal surfaces are etched overall with a dense pattern of interleaving strapwork painted in red and black against a ground of finely etched scrolls painted white. Bands around the ears and nose, as well as the eye guards, are etched with a repeating pattern of interlaced strapwork on a scroll ground and are gilt overall. Most of the poly-

chrome is repainted. The crinet lame, which is probably the second to the last at the back of the neck, is decorated to match.

This shaffron forms part of an important garniture of armor for field and tournament use made for Nikolaus "the Black" Radziwill (1515–1565), Duke of Nieśwież and Olyka, Prince of the Empire, Grand Chancellor and Marshal of Lithuania, one of the wealthiest and most important nobles in Poland and Lithuania. Made by the famous Nuremberg master Kunz (Konrad) Lochner, the armor can claim to be the most colorful example from the sixteenth century. Reminiscent of an oriental

carpet, its unusual and distinctive decoration must surely have been prescribed by the patron and was guaranteed to impress. The Radziwill armor is unfortunately incomplete today, the surviving elements consisting of a half-armor for infantry use in the Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (A1412), a helmet of sallet type for the joust of war (*Rennen*) in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (H.52), and six elements in the Metropolitan Museum: a reinforce for the left shoulder for use in the tourney (14.25.856), a vamplate (handguard for the lance) for use in the field and tilt (14.25.855), a pair of asymmetrical tassets for the tilt (14.25.881a, b), as well as the present shaffron and crinet lame.

The Radziwill garniture can be compared with a contemporary armor for man and horse made by Lochner for King Sigismund II Augustus of Poland (1520–1572) (Royal Armory, Stockholm, 2603). Although also etched overall with strapwork, the royal armor is painted in more sober colors of black and white, with gilt highlights. The shaffron of that armor retains its ear guards in the form of curled ram's horns, a feature especially favored by Lochner. As the ear guards are missing from the Museum's shaffron, one can only speculate as to their form. Survival of this shaffron and crinet plate attests to the existence of at least a partial horse armor that undoubtedly would have included a saddle with matching steels. No elements indicating the presence of a bard of plate, such as that in Stockholm, are known.

Apart from the armor in Vienna, which was acquired from the Radziwill family by Ferdinand II (1529–1595), Archduke of Tyrol, for inclusion in his Armory of Heroes assembled at Ambras Castle near Innsbruck, the elements in Paris and New York appear to have come from Russia in the nineteenth century. The helmet in Paris belonged to Prince Petr Soltykoff (1804–1889), a Russian resident in Paris whose collection was acquired by Napoleon III in 1860; the Museum's elements, except the shaffron, also came from Soltykoff, who sold them to the American collector William H. Riggs that same year.





Cat. no. 18, crinet plate

shaped around the eyes; the separate ear guards are attached by rivets, and the poll plate by a modern leather strap. The free edges are turned and are followed by a row of brass-capped steel rivets that encircle the nose and the eyes and extend up the front to meet at a point at the top of the main plate. These rivets secure a narrow, tightly woven linen strap to which

is sewn the original lining of coarse-woven linen filled with loose linen fibers to serve as padding. Riveted at the sides above the eyes are leather tabs once attached to short sideplates, now lost. Original leathers also include lining straps riveted around the edges of the ears and poll plate, a strap that encircled the horse's left ear, and lacing tabs at the sides of the poll plate. A tubular brass plume-holder is riveted in the center of the brow, and below it is a spirally twisted spike (modern).

The brightly polished surfaces are decorated with bands etched with trophies of

The shaffron, reportedly seen in an unnamed Saint Petersburg collection in the late nineteenth century, was sold anonymously in Paris in 1912. The Russian provenance of these pieces reflects the vicissitudes of the Radziwill armory at Nieśwież, which, because of its location southwest of Minsk, in the region once known as White Russia (now Belarus), was looted by Russian troops on several occasions during Polish-Russian disputes. Much of the Radziwill collection was taken to Russia in 1831, and only a portion was returned to the family in the early twentieth century. SWP

EX COLL.: (Both) Radziwill Armory, Nieśwież Castle, Poland. (Shaffron) Anonymous Russian collection, Saint Petersburg, [Victor Bachereau, Paris]. (Crinet plate) Prince Petr Soltykoff, Paris; William H. Riggs, Paris

REFERENCES: Drouot sale 1912, lot 17; Dean 1921a, pp. 80–82; Thomas 1944, p. 115, pl. 47; Thomas 1947–48, pp. 61–92, figs. 42–47; Thomas 1971, pp. 66–68, figs. 55–58; Gamber 1984, pp. 56–57; New York 1986, pp. 468–69, no. 278, ill.; Nuremberg 2002, pp. 468–69, no. 43, ill.

## 19. Half-Shaffron

*Italian (probably Milan), ca. 1570–80*  
 Steel, gold, brass, leather, and linen  
 15¼ x 10¾ in. (38.7 x 27.3 cm), wt. 2 lb.  
 11 oz. (1,208 g)  
 Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1666)

The shaffron consists of a main plate reaching only to the middle of the nose, with a low medial ridge and with flanges





Cat. no. 19, interior showing lining

arms, vases, birds, and grotesque creatures on a dotted and blackened ground framed by narrow gilt bands etched with a repeating leaf pattern. Especially distinctive in this decoration is the motif of a gilded leaf, resembling an ace of spades, that appears regularly down the center of the bands of trophies. The gilding has been restored.

The shaffron belongs to the Italian armor in the Metropolitan Museum (14.25.1717) that is today mounted on the Milanese bard from the Collalto armory (see fig. 23). The armor and shaffron were acquired by William Riggs on August 15, 1860, from the Geneva dealer D. A. Kuhn, who indicated that they had come from a private collection in Italy, unfortunately not identified.

Trophy decoration of the kind found on this shaffron and on the saddle in this exhibition (cat. no. 29) is of a debased type

dating to about 1570–90, when the vertical bands of ornament that embellished Italian armors of the period became narrower and more numerous. As a result, the individual motifs became smaller, more jumbled, and less well drawn. In the 1550s and early 1560s, on the other hand, the fashion was for wider bands of ornament in which larger trophies could be grouped. The Museum's Milanese bard from the Collalto collection, referred to above, which dates to about 1560, as well as the pommel plate dated 1546 in this exhibition (cat. no. 34), exemplify this earlier fashion.

The presence of a gilded leaf in bands of black-and-white trophy ornament is an unusual and distinctive feature of this shaffron and of the Museum's armor to which it belongs. This same feature is also found on two fragmentary cuisses (thigh defenses) and a shaffron

with poll plate in the Museo Stibbert, Florence (2579 and 2458, respectively), as well as on another shaffron with poll plate formerly in the Henry G. Keasbey collection (sold at the American Art Association, New York, November 27–28, 1925, lot 309, and sold again at the Galerie Fischer, Lucerne, June 17–19, 1993, lot 8386). If these additional pieces do not belong to the Metropolitan's harness, they clearly come from nearly identical armors.

SWP

EX COLL.: [D. A. Kuhn, Geneva]; William H. Riggs, Paris

REFERENCE: Hagerstown 1955, no. 40

## 20. Shaffron

*Italian (probably Brescia), ca. 1560–70*

*Steel, brass, and leather*

*24<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (63.2 x 31.1 cm), wt. 4 lb.*

*11 oz. (2,132 g)*

*Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1664)*

This shaffron is unusual in both construction and decoration. The upper part of the main plate is solid, but the lower part is articulated over the nose by four cusped plates, the lowest one arched over the muzzle and ending in a point; the plates are articulated at the sides by sliding rivets and down the center by a bifurcated leather. Separate pointed eye guards and ear guards are riveted beneath the main plate, and the poll plate is attached by two external hinges. A smooth medial rib extends down the top of the main plate, the center of the nose, and the poll plate; the ear guards also have a sharp medial ridge. Sideplates, consisting of a single plate above each eye, and cheek plates constructed of four horizontal lames articulated to one another by sliding rivets, are attached to the main plate by three rows of riveted mail. The edges of the nose plate, ear guards, and poll plate have smooth turns. Brass-capped iron lining rivets follow the main edge. A small iron plume-holder is riveted near the top of the main plate and, below, there is an iron spike on a brass washer set into the center of the main plate between the eyes.

The etched decoration covers the entire surface and consists of trophies of arms, musical instruments, animals, birds, and a variety of grotesque creatures on a dotted ground formed of tiny circles. On the upper part of the main plate the decoration is arranged in horizontal bands divided by plain transverse bands in imitation of the lower articulating lames. The ornament on the ears and nose plate is contained within strapwork. The area around the spike is etched as a lobed quatrefoil.

The complex articulation of the main plate and sideplates and the attachment of the two to one another by mail appear to be in conscious imitation of Turkish armor of the period, which, like most contemporaneous armor worn in the Islamic





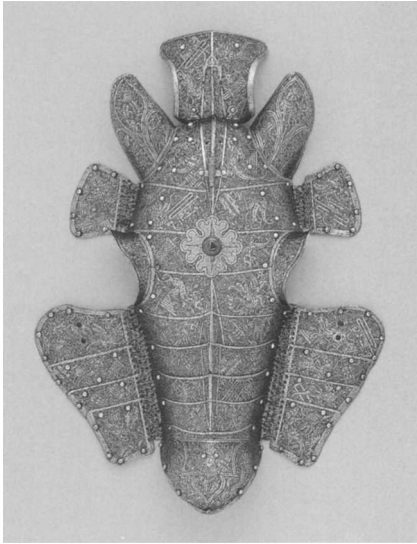
Cat. no. 20

world, was made of multiple small plates of iron attached by mail to form a very flexible defense. Examples of Turkish-inspired Italian armor are exceedingly rare but include a complete horse armor with matching harness for the man, both from the Farnese armory and now in the Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples (1291), and a shaffron in the Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan (2114). The shaffrons in New York, Naples, and Milan are so similar in con-

struction as to suggest that they come from the same workshop.

Despite its unusual construction, there is nothing exotic in the etched decoration of the Museum's shaffron, which is typically Italian in its use of trophies and grotesques inspired by classical prototypes. The style of etching and the overall covering of the armor surface with ornament appears to be characteristic of Brescia and is found on several armors made for

that city's noble Martinengo family in the Armeria Reale in Turin (B3, B5, and B6) and on armors associated with officers in Venetian service. Such is the case with the Museum's bard made for a member of the Collalto family (see fig. 25). The fragmentary crinet in this exhibition (cat. no. 22) is also etched with trophy ornament of very similar type. The aforementioned Turkish-style armor in Naples and the shaffron in Milan, etched overall with arabesques



Cat. no. 20, view showing articulated plates

rather than trophies of arms, are likewise attributed to Brescia.

Ruled by the Venetian Republic from 1426 to 1797, Brescia was the principal arms-manufacturing center in the Veneto and was a rival of Italy's most famous center, Milan, which from 1535 was under Spanish control. In the sixteenth century Brescia was known for the large quantities of ready-made munitions armors it produced for the Serenissima and her allies. On a much smaller scale, however, Brescian armorers also made harnesses of higher quality for use in the field, tournament, and parade by the local nobility (such as the Martinengo and Collalto families) and high-ranking officers. The creation of armors constructed in emulation of Turkish examples reflects a taste for the exotic that had existed in Venice for centuries as result of the city's trade with the Middle East. By the sixteenth century, when the Ottoman armies repeatedly threatened the eastern states of the Holy Roman Empire, such as Bohemia and Hungary, and attacked Venetian outposts in the Mediterranean and along the Italian coast, there grew a familiarity and respect for the enemy that inspired a Turkish fashion in dress and even ornament. North of the Alps, at the imperial court for example, "Hungarian" tournaments with participants dressed as Turks were popular. It is not known in what context these Turkish-

inspired Brescian armors were used, but their plate-and-mail construction was undoubtedly appreciated as something novel and exotic. S W P

EX COLL.: Prince Petr Soltykoff, Paris; William H. Riggs, Paris

REFERENCE: HOUSTON 1960, no. 73a

## 21. Shaffron

*German (Augsburg), ca. 1570–80*

*Steel, brass, and leather*

*22<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in. (57.8 x 26.7 cm), wt. 3 lb.*

*14 oz. (1,767 g)*

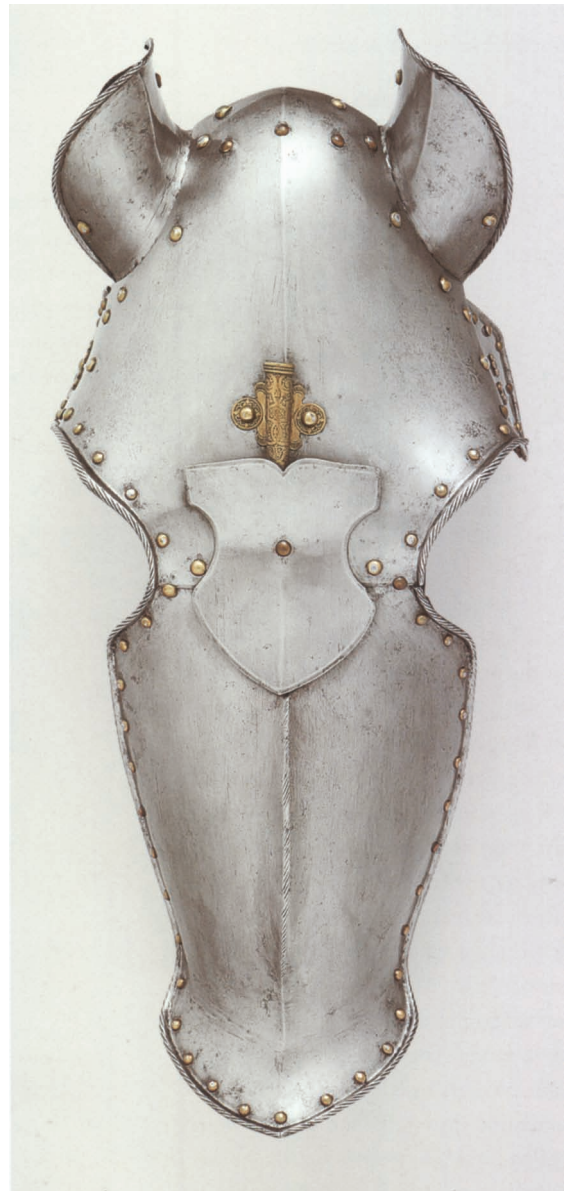
*Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1647)*

The main plate is formed in two halves, the upper plate having small sideplates, ear guards, an escutcheon plate (blank), and a brass plume-holder, as well as a hinged poll plate. The surfaces are plain and brightly polished, with a strong medial ridge that extends the length of the main plate and is roped on the lower half; the free edges have roped turns and are followed by brass-headed iron rivets securing the leather lining straps. The sideplates and poll plate both have two lining holes fitted with rosette-shaped brass grommets. The poll plate is attached by a wide leather strap (modern).

Though the shaffron is unmarked, the fine quality of the hammerwork, the elegant form, the decorative grommets, and especially the plume-holder etched with strapwork interlace are stylistic features pointing to Augsburg origin.

The Museum possesses an almost identical shaffron (32.75.96) that probably belonged to the same series.

The latter has two punched dots on the inside of each plate, whereas the present shaffron is marked on several of its components with a series of marks, now partly obscured, but apparently consisting of either three or four dots. The existence of two shaffrons with similar markings recalls the series of plain tournament armors of Augsburg manufacture said to have come from the armory of the dukes of Bavaria in Munich. Several of these are in the Wallace Collection, London (Norman 1986, pp. 20–23). These armors too are struck with markings consisting either of dots or crescents, or combinations of both, to distinguish the parts of one armor from another. The Metropolitan Museum possesses two



Cat. no. 21



Augsburg armors for the tilt (14.25.689 and 29.154.1) that are very similar to the Munich group in both construction and markings, the latter consisting of the Augsburg control mark (a pinecone) and different numbers of punched crescents and dots. It cannot be determined, however, if the shaffrons under discussion belong to the Munich group or to another series made at a different time and perhaps for a different court.

Both of the Museum's shaffrons have been attributed in the earlier literature to Anton Peffenhauser (1525–1603), the most renowned Augsburg armorer in the second half of the sixteenth century, but in the absence of his mark, and given the close similarity of Augsburg armors made by different makers in this period, the attribution cannot be sustained.

SWP

EX COLL.: Prince Petr Soltykoff, Paris; William H. Riggs, Paris

REFERENCES: Los Angeles 1953, p. 16, no. 37, ill.; Louisville 1955, no. 51, ill.

## 22. Portions of a Crinet

*Italian (probably Brescia), ca. 1580–90*

*Steel and leather*

*18 3/8 x 14 3/8 in. (47.2 x 36.5 cm), wt. 3 lb.*

*14 oz. (1,765 g)*

*Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.254)*

This splendid fragment, etched overall and richly gilt, must have belonged to one of the most magnificent Brescian horse armors of the sixteenth century. It consists of five plates forming the rear half of a crinet that originally must have comprised ten or more plates; the poor alignment of the plates indicates that they are not in their original order. The inverted, U-shaped plates are embossed along the medial ridge with backward-overlapping scales etched with foliage. The sides of each plate are etched in alternating designs (see detail). One pattern consists of foliate scrolls inhabited by birds, grotesque creatures, and nude putti (with and without wings), the ornament left white against a plain recessed and gilt ground. The other com-



Cat. no. 22, detail of etched decoration

prises symmetrical, vertically aligned candelabra ornament consisting of vases or foliage, trophies of arms, and platforms supporting images of warriors or allegorical figures. All the designs are gilded and executed against a dotted ground. The lowest crinet lame, which is etched with two panels of alternating pattern, ends

with a boldly turned and roped edge. The lower edges of the plates terminate in semicircular scales, each having a roped edge bordered by a sunken band etched with foliage on a dotted ground. The centers of the scales are etched with flowers, trophies, or a mask left white on a plain recessed and gilt ground.



Cat. no. 22



Fig. 33. Shaffron. Italian (probably Brescia), ca. 1580–90. Konopiště Castle, near Prague (K618 [239])

The variety of ornament, high quality of etching, and extensive gilding distinguish this crinet from most other Italian armors of the second half of the sixteenth century. It comes so close to the Metropolitan Museum's Brescian horse armor from the Collalto armory (fig. 25) in the style of etching and choice of motifs, as well as in the organization of the designs into panels of alternating motifs, as to have originated in the same workshop. The raised band of overlapping scales down the center of the crinet is echoed in the etched scales on the tail guard of the horse armor. It is possible that, like the Museum's bard, this crinet originally belonged to a complete armor, perhaps with a matching armor for the man as well.

The only other element matching the crinet appears to be a shaffron in Konopiště Castle, near Prague (fig. 33). The collection at Konopiště comprises principally the remnants of two distinguished armories: the dynastic armory of the Este family, dukes of Ferrara and Modena, and that of Tommaso degli Obizzi, at Catajo Castle, near Padua, which included the Obizzi family armory along with pieces collected by Tommaso in the late seventeenth century. The Obizzi collection, which contained pieces acquired from the Medici armory in Florence, dispersed between 1773 and 1780, was bequeathed to the Este in 1803; the newly augmented Este collections passed by inheritance into the Hapsburg family that same year. The penultimate owner, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who was assassinated at Sarajevo in 1914, transferred the arms and armor to his hunting castle at Konopiště, which was nationalized by the new Republic of Czechoslovakia

in 1918. The complex and confusing provenance of arms and armor at Konopiště—Este, Obizzi, or Medici—makes it difficult now to identify the source of the shaffron and its matching crinet.

SWP

EX COLL.: Samuel R. Meyrick, London and Goodrich Court, Herefordshire; Alessandro Castellani, Paris; Charles Maillet du Boullay, Paris; M. Bécoulet, Paris; Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duc de Dino, Paris

REFERENCES: Skelton 1830, vol. 2, pl. 129, fig. 2; London 1869, p. 25, no. 348; Castellani sale 1879, lot 109; Bécoulet sale 1883, lot 41; de Cosson 1901, p. 48, no. E4

## 23. Shaffron

Dutch, ca. 1620  
Steel, gold, and leather  
21¼ x 10¼ in. (54 x 26 cm), wt. 4 lb. 5 oz.  
(1,949 g)  
Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.109)

This shaffron is a late example of its kind and a rare specimen of probable Dutch manufacture. The main plate ends in a blunt point near the top of the nose and has wide cutouts for the eyes and ears. It is fitted with ear guards, which were originally attached by screws (one screw for each remains, the second now replaced by a rivet), small, hinged sideplates above the eyes, and a hinged poll plate. The edges of all the plates are turned and are followed by a series of steel rivets with gilt domed heads that secure portions of the original leather lining straps, indicating that the shaffron was once fully lined. Confined to narrow vertical bands over the main surfaces and similar bands around the edges, the decoration, which is chiseled and gilt overall, consists of flowers, trophies of arms, and bound captives suspended on a central ribbon, the background punched with tiny circles (see detail). The plain surfaces, now polished white, were formerly blued, but only traces of the bluing remain in the margins of the plates. At the center of the main plate is a spike set on a washer that is decoratively cut and pierced in the form of four conjoined fleurs-de-lis; the spike and washer are gilt.

The shaffron belongs to a distinctive group of early-seventeenth-century armor formerly thought to be English but recently identified as Dutch (Richardson 1991). Two shaffrons of nearly identical form, having wide eye-openings, bluntly pointed ends, lining rivets encircling each plate, and similar chiseled and gilt decoration, are found among the English royal armors preserved in the Royal Armouries, Leeds. One of them (II. 91) belongs to an armor originally made for Henry, Prince of Wales, the eldest son of King James I, but not delivered until after his death in 1612. The armor, chiseled with foliate scrolls and gilt overall, is documented as having been purchased from the armorer of





Cat. no. 23

Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange, at The Hague. The other shaffron (VI. 59) forms part of an armor believed to have been produced for the future Charles I, Henry's younger brother, perhaps in 1616, when he was invested as Prince of Wales. Its decoration consists of wide vertical bands of chiseled and gilt foliate scrolls. Though no documentary evidence attests to its manufacture in Holland, Charles's armor is so similar in build, construction, and decoration to that of his brother, made in The Hague, that it too can be securely identified as Dutch. The washer beneath the spike at the center of the Museum's shaffron, with its openwork fleur-de-lis motif, echoes generally similar decoration on the openwork plume-holders found on Dutch helmets.

This important shaffron has failed to attract scholarly attention since it was acquired by the Museum with the Dino collection in 1904. It was listed but not



Cat. no. 23, detail of etched decoration

illustrated in the Dino catalogue, but its significance was recognized by the catalogue's author and by the shaffron's former owner, C. A. de Cosson, who considered it to be English and quite rightly compared it to the royal armors mentioned above. S W P

EX COLL.: Charles Alexander, Baron de Cosson; Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duc de Dino, Paris

REFERENCE: De Cosson 1901, p. 48, no. E 3

## PEYTRALS AND CRUPPERS

### 24. Left Side Panel of a Crupper

*Probably South German or Austrian,*

*ca. 1480–1500*

*Steel*

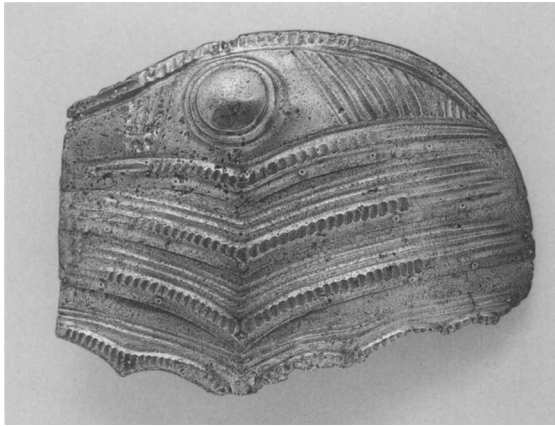
*21 x 29 in. (53.3 x 73.7 cm), wt. 7 lb.*

*(3,138 g)*

*Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.606)*

This left side panel of a crupper is a rare survival of horse armor in the so-called Gothic style. Its four long, horizontal plates overlapping downward are characteristic of horse armor dating from the late fifteenth to the second or third quarter of the sixteenth century. The treatment of the surfaces, however, is unusually complex, with parallel grooves following the edges of the plates in a shallow chevron pattern and bands of short, straight

notches highlighting the top and bottom edge of each plate. The top plate features a prominent boss, which would sit over the point of the horse's hip, flanked by diagonal grooves at either side. Construction and decoration give this element an unusual horizontal emphasis instead of a stress on the vertical line, more commonly associated with both the ridges of "Gothic" armor and the fluting of so-called Maximilian-style armor. The combination of ridges



Cat. no. 24

with “notched” sections, in particular, appears to associate this example with a South German or Austrian workshop and, together with the scalloped lower edge, indicates a date of manufacture within the last two decades of the fifteenth century.

The Museum’s side panel can be compared to similar plates belonging to complete bards of corresponding date in Berlin (Deutsches Historisches Museum, W1422) and Leeds (fig. 7). DHB

EX COLL.: Bashford Dean, New York  
Unpublished

## 25. Side Panel of a Crupper

German, ca. 1485–1500

Steel

25¼ x 21⅞ in. (64.1 x 55.5 cm), wt. 5 lb.

15 oz. (2,694 g)

Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.605)

Another rare survival of so-called Gothic horse armor, this side panel of a crupper, now incomplete, differs from the previous example (cat. no. 24) both in construction and decoration. Its most notable features are the parallel ridges embossed on the surface and the scalloped lower edge. Groups of parallel or flaring ridges were used to decorate plate armor since at least the second quarter of the fifteenth century. Although particularly favored in German-speaking regions, such decoration was also found in Spain, France, and England.

Italian armorers frequently employed ridges to ornament armor *alla tedesca* (in the German fashion), which was made for export north of the Alps. During the first three decades of the sixteenth century, this style of decoration reached its climax: entire surfaces, especially of German armor, were often covered with parallel vertical ridges, today known as fluting. Since the appearance of this style coincides to some extent with the reign of Emperor Maximilian I (1492–1519), armor thus decorated is commonly referred to as Maximilian-style armor.

Here, however, the scalloped lower edge and diagonal ridges bordering the vertical ones argue for a date of manufacture in the closing years of the fifteenth century. Comprising two plates, the panel is subtly embossed over the point of the hip and retains twelve of its original rivets, with heads in the shape of a six-petaled flower. The piece would have been either attached to an upper part of a crupper or suspended from a lighter harness, a system of leather straps fastened over the croup.

Apart from shaffrons, horse armor of the fifteenth century is relatively rare. The Metropolitan’s collection includes three crupper elements in the late “Gothic” style: the present example, the left side panel previously discussed (cat. no. 24), and—most noteworthy—the right half of a crupper, one of the few surviving elements of fifteenth-century horse armor



Cat. no. 25

retaining its original blued and gilt decoration (fig. 17). DHB

EX COLL.: Bashford Dean, New York  
Unpublished

## 26. Leather Peytral and Crupper Plates

Possibly Flemish or German, early 16th century

Hardened leather, gesso, and paint

Crupper 22⅞ x 25⅞ in. (58.1 x 65.1 cm),

wt. 5 lb. 14 oz. (2,666 g); left peytral plate

24½ x 18⅞ in. (62.2 x 46.7 cm), wt. 2 lb.

(907 g); right peytral plate 25⅜ x 16¾ in.

(64.4 x 42.6 cm), wt. 1 lb. 15 oz. (876 g)

Gift of Henry G. Keasbey, 1926 (26.235.1–3)

Much lighter, and probably faster and cheaper to produce than metal defenses, armor made from shaped and hardened leather (*cuir bouilli*) was used throughout Europe for war, tournaments, and parades from at least Roman times until the end of the sixteenth century. Although very few examples of *cuir bouilli* armor survive, its use as a defense for both man and horse was once much more widespread than is commonly assumed. In 1547, for example, the Master of the Armoury at the Tower





Cat. no. 26, peytral plates

of London bought forty-six “leather barbes” (bards), together with the same number of leather crinets, for an imminent campaign in Scotland (Dillon 1902, p. 81). In addition, the inventories of the armory at Neuburg Castle, Bavaria, seat of the Counts Palatine of the Rhine, list no less than half a dozen sixteenth-century leather bards for the personal use of the counts’ horses (Reitzenstein 1973b, pp. 151–54). Leather bards could be worn without further protection for the head or neck, although shaffrons, with or without crinets, were usually added for increased protection. The record of the 1547 English purchase reveals that such neck defenses could also be of leather, while the

Neuburg inventories indicate that their leather bards were completed by metal shaffrons and crinets (see cat. nos. 9, 13).

The Museum’s three *cuir bouilli* elements originally formed part of a horse’s complete front and rear defense. The front defense, or peytral, which protected the chest and shoulders, is represented by its two side panels; the central section that connected them is missing. Of the rear defense, or crupper, which covered the horse’s croup and hindquarters, only the upper plate is preserved. Shaped over the points of the hips and tail, the crupper would have been completed by one or more small pieces elongating it at the front, as well as by several plates at the

sides and rear protecting the rear flanks down to the level of, or slightly below, the abdomen. Several pairs of holes running along the main edges of all three plates indicate that the missing pieces were once attached by laces, the common form of construction for leather bards according to pictorial evidence.

All that is known of the history of these pieces is that they are said to have come from the collection of the barons Biche of Teruel in Spain. A circular mark painted on the inside of all three could not be identified, nor do the form and construction reveal any information about their origin. It may be significant that the small triangular extension at the rear of each peytral panel and the panels’ rounded upper edges are also found on a number of surviving peytrals associated with the Brussels workshop of Emperor Maximilian I. Analysis of the pigments shows them to be consistent with sixteenth-century paints (the white, for example, contains lead rather than zinc, the usual modern component). However, the colors themselves—white with a red border—are not helpful because they are not accompanied by a coat of arms or inscription. This combination was used widely throughout Europe as an allusion both to Christ and more commonly to Saint George; in a more specifically heraldic context, white and red were the colors of both England and Austria.

The Metropolitan Museum’s crupper and peytral plates appear to be the only surviving specimens of leather horse armor in North American collections. In addition to some excavated examples of Roman shaffrons and peytrals, the few remaining pieces of late medieval and Renaissance *cuir bouilli* horse armor include an early-fifteenth-century shaffron and an early-sixteenth-century crupper in Salzburg (Museum Carolino Augusteum, W 374 and W 375, respectively); a late-fifteenth-century shaffron and an early-sixteenth-century



Cat. no. 26, crupper plate

left peytral plate in Naples (Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, OA 1907, 1986 [the shaffron], s.n. [the peytral plate]); an early-sixteenth-century peytral and crupper at Erbach Castle, near Darmstadt; an early-sixteenth-century crupper in Leeds (Royal Armouries, VI.87); the peytral and crupper from a horse armor of about 1530 for Ottheinrich, Count Palatine (1502–1559), in Turin (Armeria Reale, ex B2); and a right peytral plate of about 1550 in Paris (Musée du Louvre, N 1137). The location of another “leathern horse armour,” said in 1922 to be in the collection of Mr. Godfrey Williams, Saint Donat’s Castle, Glamorgan, Wales, is presently unknown (Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, p. 197).

Most of the leather bards mentioned above are gessoed and painted with some form of ornament. Several, such as those in Capodimonte and the Louvre, have sophisticated figural compositions executed in grisaille and highlighted in gold, while the Turin bard has the personal emblems of Ottheinrich and his wife, Susanna, painted in color and presumably was made for use on the occasion of their marriage in 1529. The Museum’s leather elements, with their simple color scheme, are much more modest and probably were intended for a man-at-arms.

DHB

EX COLL.: Baron Biche, Teruel, Spain; Georges Pauilhac, Paris

Unpublished



Cat. no. 27

## 27. Peytral

*German (Nuremberg), ca. 1510–20*  
*Steel*  
*27½ x 25⅞ x 13¾ in. (69.9 x 65.8 x 34.8 cm), wt. 8 lb. (3,660 g)*  
*Gift of Prince Albrecht Radziwill, 1927*  
*(27.183.43)*

This peytral belongs to a large group of horse armor, including more than a dozen peytrals, which came from the armory of Nieśwież Castle, the seat of the Polish noble family Radziwill, the greater part of which was sold at two London auctions in 1926 and 1927. Most of the peytrals from the group were made in Nuremberg and are struck with that city’s control mark.

The present example also bears a related Nuremberg mark, the letter N within a pearled circle, on the inside of the central plate.

The Radziwills ordered armor from a number of German armorers during the sixteenth century. The Metropolitan Museum is fortunate to own important pieces from their armory, among them the portions of a magnificent “costume” armor made about 1525 by Kolman

Cat. no. 26, mark on underside of left peytral panel

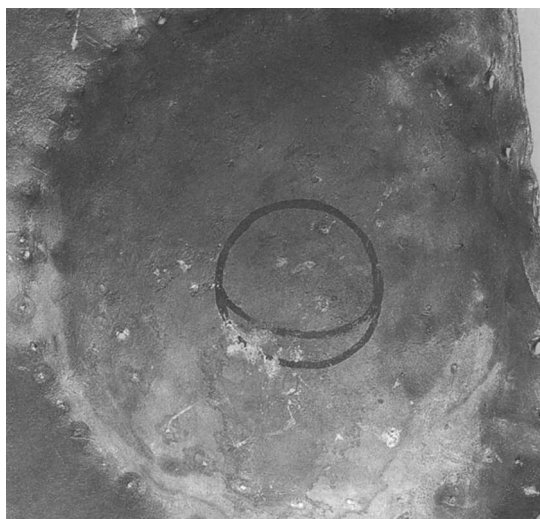
Helmschmid of Augsburg, possibly for Prince Jerzy Herkules Radziwill (24.179 and 26.188.1, .2; on permanent exhibition), and elements belonging to a larger garniture of armor with distinctive gilt and polychromed decoration made about 1555 by Kunz Lochner of Nuremberg for Prince Nikolaus “the Black” Radziwill (see cat. no. 18). In addition to the princely armory, which contained armor and weapons intended for use by the Radziwills and their retainers, the family’s collection is also thought to have included many pieces from the armory of the Teutonic knights at their stronghold of Königsberg, where Prince Boguslav Radziwill was governor from 1657 until his death in 1669.

The Museum’s peytral is comparatively plain in appearance. The presence of angular turns along the edges rather than roped ones suggests a date in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. The lack of decoration, apart from the wide, recessed band bordering the main edges, and the fact that it belongs to a large group of similar horse armor lend some credibility to the assumption that it may originally have come from Königsberg. All the rivets as well as the screws connecting the three plates are modern replacements.

DHB

EX COLL.: Radziwill Armory, Nieśwież Castle, Poland

Unpublished







Cat. no. 28

## 28. Upper Part of a Crupper

*Italian (probably Brescia), late 16th or early 17th century*

*Steel and gold*

*23<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 28<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (60 x 73 cm), wt. 8 lb. 5 oz.*

*(3,780 g)*

*Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.604)*

This upper part of a crupper comprises two large plates shaped to the horse's

croup that are joined by several rivets over the spine, leaving an opening for the tail at the end. In its original form, it would have had one or more transverse plates elongating it at the front, as well as several large plates at the sides and rear that extended the defense downward to slightly below the level of the abdomen. Four threaded holes along the rather rough joint where the two plates overlap indicate

that the joint was once covered by a tubular tail guard. The pairs of small holes (three on each plate around the embossed bulge over the point of the hip) are likely to have been for laces that served to secure a lining.

While the size and shape of the two surviving plates suggest a date in the second half of the sixteenth century, the decoration is unusual and defies conclusive identification. The surface is covered in parallel, scroll- or ribbonlike bands, now

much corroded but each formerly damascened with gold and bordered along its upper edge with punched trefoils. The closest comparison both in motif and technique is found on a horse armor in Turin (Armeria Reale, B5) believed to have been made in Brescia about 1560 for a member of the Martinengo family of that city. Although the crupper of the Turin bard is constructed differently—its elongated, articulated plates are joined vertically—the main edge of each plate is decoratively cut, etched, and gilt so that it closely resembles the ribbonlike bands on the Museum's example. This similarity implies that the Museum's crupper is also of Brescian origin, although its punched and damascened decoration indicates a date later in the century or perhaps even in the early seventeenth century, when punched ornament in particular was more customary.

DHB

EX COLL.: Frank Gair Macomber, Boston; Bashford Dean, New York

Unpublished

## ARMORED SADDLES AND SADDLE STEELS

### 29. Saddle

*Italian (Milan), ca. 1570–80*

*Wood, textile, iron, leather, steel, silver, and gold*

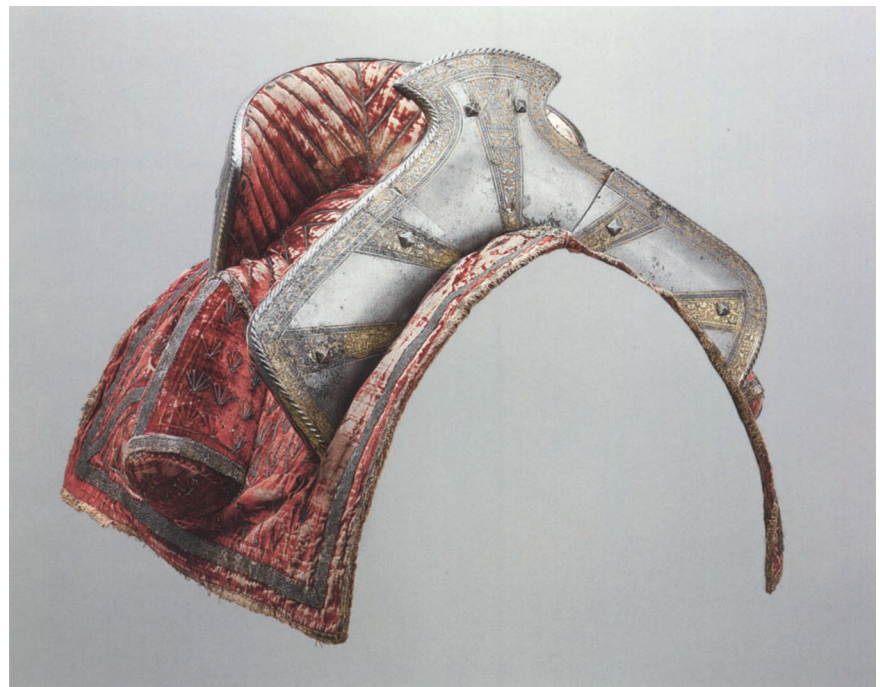
*22<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 25<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 24<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in. (54.6 x 64.1 x 62.2 cm),*

*wt. 22 lb. 1 oz. (10,024 g)*

*Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.252)*

This is an excellent example of a complete European war saddle of good quality from the mid- to late sixteenth century. The steels, padded saddle cover, and saddletree are original and all appear to belong together.

The saddletree is made up of both wooden and iron components. Its basic structure consists of a pommel and cantle of shaped wood, each of which is joined to a wooden base in the form of a semicircular arch, the arch being hidden under the saddle cover. The upper side of each arch is faced with leather, and the underside with canvas. The front and rear arches are



Cat. no. 29





Cat. no. 29

connected by two horizontal sidebars, each made of a flat band of iron, the ends of which spread into a trefoil shape where they are nailed to the underside of the arches. The sidebars are slightly bowed inward to correspond to the curvature of a horse's back. Similar iron sidebars occur on the saddle from the armor garniture probably made for Henry VIII in 1527 (the so-called Genouilhac armor; MMA 19.131.2a [saddle]). The outer surfaces of the wooden pommel and cantle (the areas covered by the saddle steels) are coated with a translucent layer of glue and fibers, probably composed of animal glue mixed with strands of sinew. This may have been intended to inhibit cracks in the wooden structure or to act as a moisture barrier between the steels and the underlying wood.

The saddle cover is made of red silk velvet that is enhanced with braided cord, woven trim, and woven fringe, and embroidered with a spray motif repeating in rows. The sprays are embroidered in silver and gilt-silver thread alternately by rows. The trim and fringe are also woven with alternate bands of silver and gilt-silver thread, all of which is now tarnished black. The area of the seat proper is quilted in a chevron pattern. The teardrop-shaped bolster on either side served as a cushion for the back of the rider's thigh. The form and decoration of the cover are also typical for saddles of



Cat. no. 29, detail of velvet and gold thread beneath pommel plate

this type. Although the cover is now faded and seriously worn, the brilliant color of the red velvet highlighted with glistening gilt-silver thread survives in a few small

areas that have been protected beneath the saddle steels (see detail). With its etched, gilt, and brightly polished steels and vividly hued textile covering, the saddle in its original condition would have produced an effect of great richness.

The steels are of a form that was in wide use at the time. Of the three pommel plates, the center one is fan-shaped, with its edges overlapped by two symmetrical sideplates; the two broad, upright cantle plates wrap around the cantle but do not extend down the sides. The steels are attached by bolts with pyramidal heads, each of which screws into a corresponding threaded hole reinforced by a threaded oblong iron washer inset into the wood. This was the standard method for the attachment of steels throughout the century. The steels have roped outer edges and are decorated with etched and gilt bands of trophies. The term *trophies* is used to describe a very popular form of ornament, which consists of stylized representations primarily of musical instruments, weapons, armor parts, and shields but also of ribbons, cornucopias, urns, masks, and other objects. Adopted from the ornamental vocabulary of classical antiquity, groups of trophies reappeared in Italian architecture and decorative arts early in the Renaissance and as part of armor decoration by the late fifteenth century. By the 1550s they were the favored form of ornament for the etched decoration of Italian armor and remained so for the rest of the century.

An early and valuable record of the present saddle is provided by a watercolored drawing made by the French artist Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863) during his visit to Samuel Meyrick's home in London in July 1825 (British Museum, 1975-3-1-35; see New Haven 1991, no. 37). Meyrick's renowned collection of arms and armor was a mecca for Romantic painters, including Delacroix and Richard Parkes Bonington (1802–1828), both of whom sketched details of armor and weapons for eventual use in their history paintings. When Delacroix drew the saddle, it was displayed on a horse with a German fluted armor of quite different style and date, an ensemble later illustrated in the catalogue of Meyrick's collection (Skelton 1830, vol. 1, pl. 22). DJL

EX COLL.: Samuel R. Meyrick, London and Goodrich Court, Herefordshire; E. Vaisse, Marseilles; Maurice de Tallyrand-Périgord, Duc de Dino, Paris

REFERENCES: Skelton 1830, vol. 2, pl. CXXVII, fig. 2; Vaisse sale 1885, pl. opp. p. 36; de Cosson 1901, no. E.7; Louisville 1955, no. 56

### 30. Cantle Plates

*Possibly Flemish or English, ca. 1475–1525*  
Steel  
15½ x 6½ in. (39.4 x 16.5 cm), wt. 2 lb. 4 oz.  
(1,021 g)  
Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Bequest of  
Bashford Dean, 1928 (29.150.9 ff, gg)

This two-piece cantle belongs to a style that appears to have been prevalent in Flanders in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and in England until the 1540s. Three key features distinguish the cantle plates of this Flemish/English style. First, the sides of the cantle extend forward in a narrow arm with a rounded end, the lower edge of the arm forming a sweeping, semicircular arc. Second, the upper edge of the arm is defined by an embossed ledge that falls in a gentle curve toward the bottom center of the cantle. Third, the top and side edges of the cantle plates are turned at a ninety-degree angle to form a strong but simple and well-defined border.

Several saddles with cantles of this form are included in the *Inventario Iluminado*,

an illustrated inventory of the personal armory of Emperor Charles V drawn up in Spain between 1544 and 1558, in which they are shown among a large group of older pieces of armor described as having come from Flanders. Some of these saddles are still preserved in the Real Armería in Madrid (F5, F7, F9, and F15). Other examples include three sets of saddle steels made in the Royal Workshops at Greenwich for Henry VIII (MMA 19.131.2a, part of an armor dated 1527, and Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds, VI.96-97, made about 1544, and VI.98-99, made about 1540) and the saddle of the so-called Burgundian Bard, made in Flanders about 1511–14 and also from the armory of Henry VIII (Royal Armouries Museum, VI.6-12). The saddle of a miniature armor for man and horse, which was given to the Armourers and Braziers Company of London by one of its members in 1528, is also of this type.

Relatively little extant armor can be identified as Flemish, and even less as English, outside of that produced in the Royal Workshops at Greenwich. The stylistic attribution of these cantle plates to Flanders or England is therefore a small but nonetheless significant addition to this corpus of rare material. DJL

EX COLL.: Bashford Dean, New York

REFERENCE: New York 1911, no. 4, pl. 3



## 31. Pommel Plates

German, ca. 1510–20

Steel and gold

Center  $13\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$  in. (34.9 x 17.1 cm); right  $16 \times 6\frac{1}{2}$  in. (40.6 x 16.5 cm); left  $16 \times 6\frac{3}{4}$  in. (40.6 x 17.1 cm); total wt. 2 lb. 15 oz. (1,329 g)

Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.623)

The three-piece construction of this set of pommel plates was standard across western Europe throughout the sixteenth century. A central plate covering the area of the pommel itself is flanked by two plates extending downward at a ninety-degree angle that serve both to cover the flanges of the saddle bow and to protect the front of the rider's thighs. During conservation two minute traces of mercury gilding were found around the rivet holes on the pommel plate and one sideplate, indicating that the steels were originally decorated to some extent with gilding.

Although armored saddles must have been fairly common for heavy cavalry by the late fifteenth century, surviving saddle steels dating earlier than about 1525 are surprisingly rare. A date of about 1510 to 1520 is suggested for this set because of the exceedingly bold form of the roped borders, found at the top of the pommel and the bottom edges of the sideplates, and the fluted decoration, consisting of pairs of shallow, concave diagonal grooves on the sideplates. The stylistic features indicative of an early date are the loose and open diagonal twist of the roped borders, as well as the concave nature of the paired flutes and the plain areas of smooth steel between them. These are also characteristic of the period from about 1510 to 1520, the first decade in which roping and fluting were combined in this way to decorate German armor.

DJL

EX COLL.: Bashford Dean, New York

Unpublished



Cat. no. 31



Cat. no. 32

## 32. Pommel Plates

German, ca. 1520–40

Steel

Max. l.  $24\frac{1}{4}$  in. (61.5 cm), max. w. 6 in.

(15.2 cm), wt. 2 lb. 2 oz. (950 g)

Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.624)

This set of pommel plates represents a particular variation on a basic type that

appears to have been fairly widespread, judging from the surviving number of comparative examples. This specific form is characterized by a central pommel plate consisting of a top piece in the shape of a flattened oval, beneath which there is a boxed or faceted base, with the facets merging into a chamfered recess that ends in a sharp, upward curve near the top of each sideplate. Additional examples of this



particular type include two other pommel plates in the Metropolitan Museum (14.25.1643, 29.158.398).

In a closely related and apparently more common variant, the pommel plate has a raised notch embossed at the center of its top edge, in addition to the other features described above. Examples of this type include the saddles belonging to two elaborate armors for man and horse made in Nuremberg for Ottheinrich (1502–1559), Count Palatine of the Rhine (Wallace Collection, London, A29, saddle dated 1532, and Musée de l'Armée, Paris, G.40, the man's armor dated 1533); the saddle on a composite horse armor from the Radziwill armory in the Kienbusch Collection (Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1977-167-21); and two more pommel plates (not part of a set) in the Metropolitan Museum (29.66, 29.158.383).

In another variant, the flattened oval pommel still has a faceted base, but the facets do not extend onto the sideplates. Examples of this type include the saddle of an armor garniture made about 1540 by Jörg Seusenhofer of Innsbruck for a member of the Trapp family, probably Count Jacob VI (Churburg Castle Armory, Schluderns, Italy, 100), two other saddles in Churburg (255, 256), and a saddle of about 1530–40 associated with a complete horse armor attributed to Konrad Seusenhofer of Innsbruck (Landeszeughaus Graz, 1401A).

Two very unusual decorative features, however, distinguish the set of pommel plates illustrated here. Foremost are the four palmettes, made up of sprays of teardrop-shaped lobes embossed in high relief. The most important example of embossed palmettes being used in this way occurs on the Jörg Seusenhofer armor garniture mentioned above, in which prominently embossed palmettes appear on the man's armor, the horse's armor, and the saddle steels. The second feature, more subtle but nevertheless distinctive, is the double border found on the sideplates. This consists of a large, roped outer edge, next to which are a plain sunken band, a narrower raised roped ridge, and then another plain sunken band. This unique

combination of the raised palmettes and the double border must have been used on the matching but no longer extant cantle plates, which would have completed the set of saddle steels. It is also possible that, as in the Churburg garniture, the saddle steels originally were part of a complete armor for man and horse decorated with this combination of palmettes and double borders. However, no further pieces of such an armor have been identified.

DJL

EX COLL.: Radziwill Armory, Nieśwież Castle, Poland; Bashford Dean, New York

REFERENCE: American Art Galleries (Dean) sale 1928, lot 138

### 33. Front Left Pommel Plate

*German (Augsburg), ca. 1545*

*Steel*

*17<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (45.1 x 15.6 cm), wt. 14 oz.*

*(402 g)*

*Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.391b)*

The distinctive triple bands of decoration on this saddle steel are extremely similar to the etched and gilt ornament found on an extensive armor garniture that belonged to Philip II of Spain (1527–1598), which is dated 1544 and part of which he wore at



Cat. no. 33, detail of etched decoration



Cat. no. 33



Cat. no. 34

the Battle of Mühlberg in 1547. The garniture includes complete field armors for light and heavy cavalry and tournament armors for foot combat and the tilt (Real Armería, Madrid, A189-A194, A198-A212; and Hofjagd- und Rüstkammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, A547). It was made by the noted Augsburg armorer Desiderius Helmschmid (1513–1579) and etched by Ulrich Holzmann (rec. 1534–62), also of Augsburg, whose initials, VH, appear on the backplate of the Vienna armor (see Thomas 1980, pp. 506–8).

The Metropolitan Museum possesses a small group of elements with this decorative pattern or a slight variation of it, including the present saddle steel (and the matching right half [29.158.391a], which is less well preserved), a shaffron (cat. no. 16), a pair of gauntlets (14.25.901a, b), and three collar plates from a helmet (20.150.2). While the gauntlets and collar plates apparently belong to Philip's garniture, the saddle steels and shaffron, which lack the gilding of the side bands that distinguishes the decoration of Philip's armor, appear either to come from another commission or commissions carried out by the same craftsmen or to be closely modeled after their work. The etching is characterized by groups of three broad, parallel bands, the center one filled with an interlacing, leafy arabesque pattern on a plain, blackened ground, and the sides with subtle foliage on a blackened and dotted ground.

The design represents a high point in non-figural ornament on South German armor from the first half of the sixteenth century.

DJL

EX COLL.: Anonymous collector, Saint Petersburg; Bashford Dean, New York

REFERENCE: Drouot sale 1912, lot 19

### 34. Inner Pommel Plate

*Italian (Milan or Brescia), dated 1546*  
Steel

8 x 2 in. (20.3 x 5.1 cm), wt. 2 oz. (65 g)  
Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Funds from various donors, 1929 (29.158.390)

The dates assigned to armor, whether complete armors or individual pieces, are usually estimates based on assessments of style and typology. Occasionally, the precise date of a specific armor may be known through a surviving document recording its commission or by a connection to a particular historical event. A relatively small number of armors, however, actually have dates on them, usually worked somewhere into the decoration. These securely dated examples serve as important benchmarks for understanding the development of armor styles, in terms of both form and decoration. This plate, which would have been attached to the inner face of the top of the saddle pommel, is a good example of how a seemingly

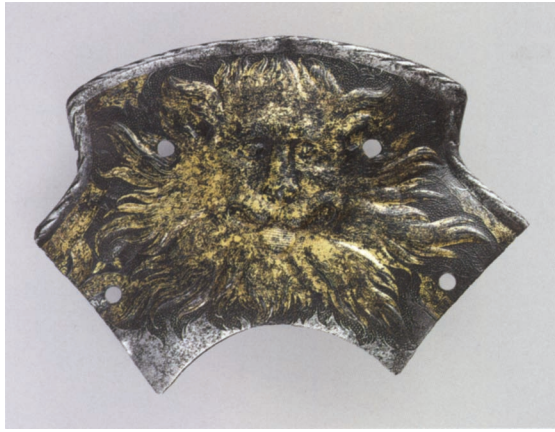
minor piece can be useful in establishing the dating parameters for a particular type of decoration.

The significance of this pommel plate lies in the fact that it appears to be the earliest precisely dated example of the use of trophies in the etched decoration on armor. The date, 1546, can be seen near the top of the right page of a stylized book located on the left half of the plate. The handling of the motifs has a spontaneity and clarity often lacking in later examples (see, for instance, cat. nos. 19, 29) and suggests the earlier phases of a decorative style, before standardization has set in. The most notable features distinguishing the trophies here from more typical later forms are that the individual motifs, while still overlapping, are bold and distinct and that they are arranged asymmetrically rather than being laid out mirrorwise in pairs, which subsequently became standard.

Armors with this form of trophy decoration are usually dated to the 1550s and 1560s. One of the best examples is the complete horse armor from the Collalto Castle armory, Treviso, now in the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 23). The existence of this pommel plate, however, shows that the decorative style found on the Collalto armor was fully developed by the mid-1540s.

DJL

EX COLL.: Bashford Dean, New York  
Unpublished



### 35. Pommel Plate

German (Augsburg), ca. 1550  
Steel and gold  
9 x 6 in. (22.9 x 15.2 cm), wt. 7 07. (185 g)  
Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.288)

The large mask of a lion with a fiery mane and the crescent pattern of the border decoration, just discernible at the edges of the plate, identify this pommel as part of a complex group of armors or armor garnitures made in Augsburg about 1550. More than forty individual pieces from this group in The Metropolitan Museum of Art represent the remains of two or perhaps three different but closely related armors. The ornamentation that

Cat. no. 35

unites the group is attributed to the Augsburg etcher Jörg Sorg the Younger (ca. 1522–1603) on the basis of an illustrated album, known as the *Stuttgarter Harnisch-Musterbuch*, which depicts armors decorated by Sorg for various clients (Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart). Of the three

armors in the album decorated in this manner, two are listed as having been made for Spanish noblemen in 1551 and 1553. While there is no direct link between the armors in the Sorg album and the elements in the Metropolitan Museum, most of the Museum's pieces can be traced to London auction catalogues from the 1840s and 1850s, which identify several of them as having come from Spanish collections. DJL

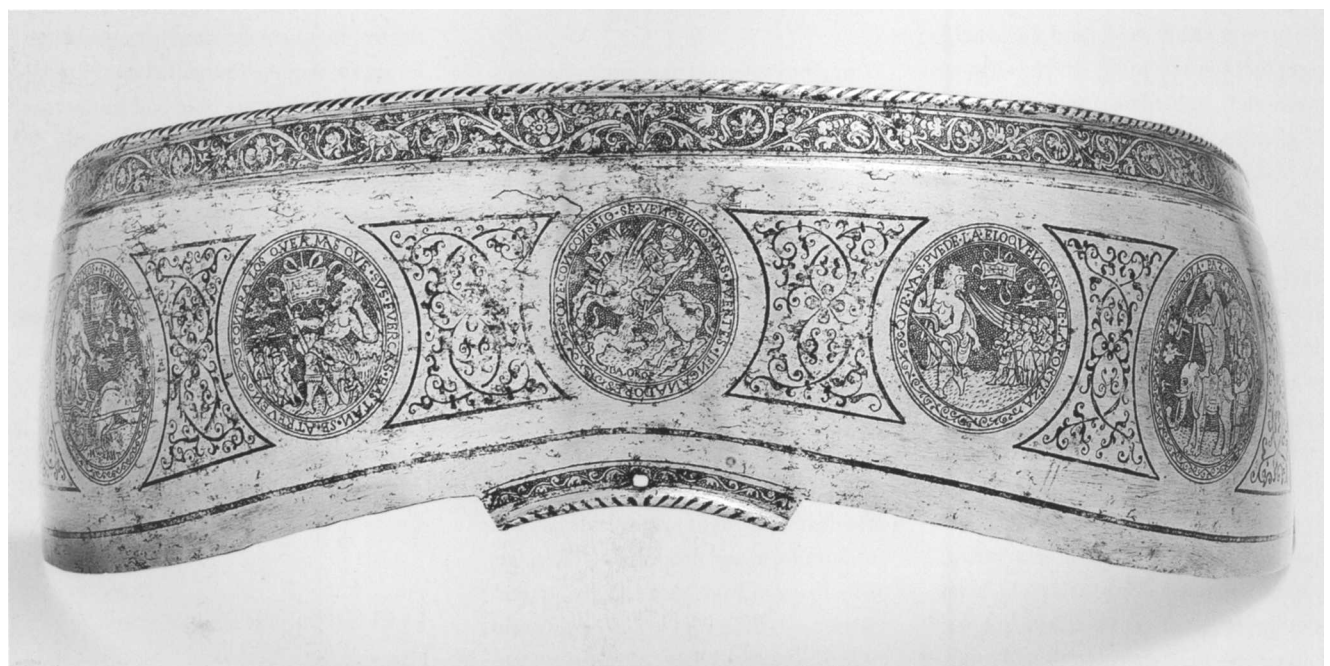
EX COLL.: Ralph Bernal, London; Albert Denison, first Baron Londesborough; William Henry Denison, Earl of Londesborough; Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duc de Dino, Paris

REFERENCES: Fairholt 1857, fig. following pl. XLIII; Londesborough sale 1888, lot 145 (12); Laking 1920–22, vol. 3, pp. 311–13, fig. 1068

### 36. Cantele Plate

Italian (possibly Milan), ca. 1550–60  
Steel and gold  
19 1/2 x 6 1/2 in. (49.5 x 16.5 cm), wt. 2 lb. 8 07.  
(1,137 g)  
Fletcher Fund, 1921 (21.102.10)

This cantele plate is distinguished by its very unusual etched decoration, featuring five emblematic scenes in rondels, each of which is surrounded by a motto in Spanish. Between the rondels there are cartouches filled with symmetrical arabesque patterns. The border at the top edge consists of a sunken band etched with an undulating leafy vine on a dotted ground. The etched decoration was formerly gilt, and faint traces of gilding survive. The emblems and mottoes are taken from *Los emblemas de Alciato traducidos in rhimas españolas* (Lyons, 1549), the first Spanish edition of the widely influential emblem books of Andrea Alciato (1492–1550). Alciato (also known as Andreus Alciatus) was a renowned Italian humanist and professor of law who enjoyed the patronage of Pope Leo X and King Francis I of France and held prestigious teaching posts in Avignon, Bourges, Pavia, Bologna, and Ferrara. The following emblems and mottoes from Alciato's works were



Cat. no. 36





Cat. no. 36, image of Bellerophon on central rondel

adapted for use on the cantele (from left to right):

EMBLEM: Mark Antony sits in a chariot drawn by two lions (Alciatus no. 29).  
MOTTO: *Que aun ferocissimos se doman* (Even the most fierce are conquered). A cartouche suspended from and framed by ribbons bears the letters MA A and at the base of the rondel are the letters M ANT, both alluding to Mark Antony.

EMBLEM: A dozing Hercules is menaced by a troop of Pygmies (Alciatus no. 58).  
MOTTO: *Contra los que à mas que sus fuerças bastan se atreven* (Against those who dare beyond their powers). The cartouche in the rondel is inscribed ALCH, probably for Alcides, which is Spanish for Hercules.

EMBLEM: Bellerophon seated upon Pegasus thrusts his lance at the Chimera (Alciatus no. 14) (fig. 34).  
MOTTO: *Que con consejo se vençen los mas fuertes y engañadores* (The stronger and the deceivers are overcome by determination). At the base of the rondel are the letters BAOROF, presumably for Bellerophon.

EMBLEM: Hercules leads a group of prisoners by light chains stretching from his mouth to their ears (Alciatus no. 181).  
MOTTO: *Que mas puede la eloquencia que*



Fig. 34. Pierre Eskrich, Woodcut from *Emblèmes d'Alciat . . .* (Lyons, 1549), p. 35. Purchase, Florance Waterbury Bequest, 1970 (1970.616.1). This French edition utilized the same woodcut illustrations as the Spanish one of 1549.

*la fortaleza* (Eloquence achieves more than strength).

EMBLEM: A man sits atop an elephant, guiding it by a tether attached to its trunk, while two armored figures follow behind holding military trophies aloft (Alciatus no. 177).  
MOTTO: *La paz* (Peace).

The use of figural scenes within large rondels of this kind was fashionable in Italian armor decoration from about 1510 to about 1530. The dotted background of the leafy border is a style that came into use in the second quarter of the sixteenth century. These factors, coupled with the 1549 publication date of the Spanish edition of Alciato, suggest that the Museum's cantele plate was made around midcentury, possibly for a Spanish nobleman serving in Italy. DJL

EX COLL.: Robert Curzon, Baron Zouche of Haryngworth, Parham, Pulborough, Sussex; Baroness Zouche of Haryngworth

REFERENCES: Zouche sale 1920, lot 87; Dean 1921b, p. 191, ill.

### 37. Cantele Plate

German (Augsburg), 1563

Steel

Max. h. 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (22.2 cm), max. w. 15<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.

(39.4 cm), wt. 2 lb. 7 oz. (1,114 g)

Fletcher Fund, 1921 (21.102.9)

This cantele plate was part of an armor garniture belonging to the Count Palatine (Pfalzgraf) Wolfgang von Zweibrücken-Veldenz (1526–1569), who inherited the

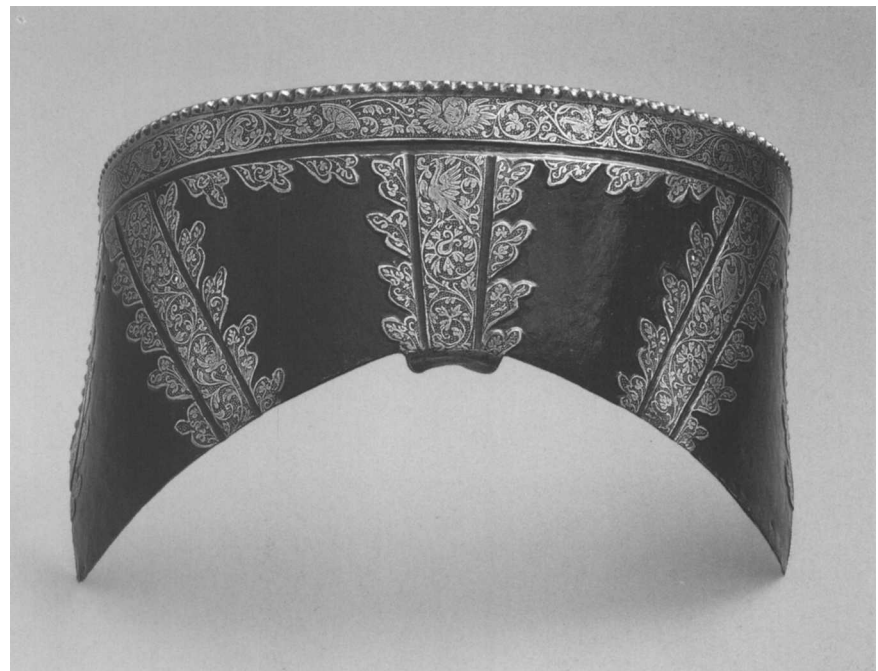




Fig. 35. A. Rockstuhl (artist), L.-A. Asselineau (lithographer), *Armor Garniture of Wolfgang von Zweibrücken-Veldenç*. From *Musée de Tzarskoe-Selo, ou Collection d'armes de Sa Majesté l'empereur de toutes les Russies* (Saint Petersburg, 1835–55), pl. cxv

principality of Pfalz-Neuburg (also known as the New Palatinate) in 1559 from his cousin Ottheinrich (1502–1559), the Elector and Count Palatine of the Rhine. Along with Ottheinrich's large personal armory, the garniture remained in a castle in the capital of the principality, Neuburg on the Donau, until about 1800, when it and many other important armors were removed by Napoleonic officers. The garniture was eventually split up, its known surviving elements now being divided among four collections: a complete heavy cavalry armor for man and horse (including an armored saddle) and an infantry shield in the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (fig. 35); a half-armor for infantry or light cavalry in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris (G.135); a second shaffron and crinet in the Musée Royal de l'Armée, Brussels (10.205); and the cantle plate illustrated here.

All the pieces of this garniture share matching decoration featuring a bold pattern of etched bands with a distinctive raised, leafy border and contrasting black surfaces in between. The bands are filled with designs of scrolling vines, cherubs' heads, animals, and musical instruments on a dotted ground, in a style of etched decoration that was popular in Augsburg and Nuremberg from the 1530s to the 1560s.

Inventories of the Neuburg Castle armory identify the garniture as having been made in Augsburg in 1563 for Count Palatine Wolfgang. His ownership is further confirmed by the presence of his coat of arms on the escutcheon plate of the Brussels shaffron. The inventories also mention two additional matching saddle steels, one of which is presumably the present cantle plate. For other pieces from the Neuburg Castle armory, made for Ottheinrich or his brother Philipp, see catalogue numbers 9, 10, and 13.

DJL

EX COLL.: Armory of the Counts Palatine of the Rhine, Neuburg Castle, Bavaria; Robert Curzon, Baron Zouche of Haryngworth, Parham, Pulborough, Sussex; Baroness Zouche of Haryngworth

REFERENCES: Zouche sale 1920, lot 88; Dean 1921b, p. 191, ill.



Cat. no. 38

### 38. Pommel Plate

*German (Augsburg), ca. 1560–70*

*Steel and gold*

*8½ x 9⅜ in. (21.7 x 23.7 cm), wt. 11 oz. (326g)*

*Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1680)*

This plate formed the center section of a three-part pommel, the sideplates of which are now missing. Its upper edge is embossed with a half-turn and roped. The decoration, now partially obscured by corrosion, consists of a wide band down the center etched with a repeating design of interlaced gilt strapwork forming knots and cartouches, the latter filled with gilt single-headed eagles, on a dotted, blackened ground; the narrow framing bands are etched and gilt with foliate scrolls. A band of identical ornament, but exactly halved, follows the roped edges. A small, circular hole at each side allowed the plate to be screwed to the saddletree.

The present piece provides evidence for the existence of an important Augsburg armor, otherwise unrecorded, of exceedingly high quality. Its etched decoration

closely resembles that on the so-called Lark Garniture in Vienna (Hofjagd- und Rüstammer, Kunsthistorisches Museum, A611), made in Augsburg in 1563 for Archduke Karl of Styria (1540–1590), the youngest son of Emperor Ferdinand I, who served as governor of the province of Inner Austria from that date. Named for the eagles (romantically identified as larks in the nineteenth century) on the coat

of arms of Inner Austria, the armor has these birds etched within the strapwork cartouches that repeat over its surfaces. A third armor etched with a closely related strapwork design, now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (Kienbusch Collection, 1977-167-13), bears cartouches filled with a variety of wild animals. The Museum's pommel plate differs from the Vienna and Philadelphia armors in small but significant details, including the pattern of the strapwork, the contents of the cartouches, and the ornament within the gilt side bands. All three armors, however, exhibit the same precise etching with strong color contrasts and a harmonious balance between the decoration and the brightly polished steel surfaces. It seems likely that they were etched in the same workshop, but unfortunately neither the name of the etcher nor that of the armorer is recorded.

SWP

EX COLL.: William H. Riggs, Paris

REFERENCE: Grancsay 1929–30, p. 89, fig. 7, and p. 91

### 39. Cante Plate

*German (Augsburg or Nuremberg), ca. 1565–75*

*Steel and gold*

*18¼ x 6 in. (46.4 x 15.2 cm), wt. 3 lb. 2 oz.*

*(1,425 g), including support material*

*Rogers Fund, 1955 (55.185.4)*

Despite its damaged condition, the rich decoration of this cante plate indicates







Cat. no. 39, detail, Apollo and Leucothae

that it once belonged to a very important armored saddle. The design, gilt overall, is dominated by three symmetrically placed figural scenes in rectangular panels, each flanked by a profile bust in an oval cartouche. The cartouches and the panels are embedded in a dense ground of open strapwork and intricate tracery motifs in a style evocative of the finest goldsmiths' work produced in Nuremberg and Augsburg during the third quarter of the sixteenth century.

Figural ornament employed in armor decoration was almost always copied from, or at least inspired by, published prints, many of which were specifically created to serve as models for goldsmiths, cabinet-makers, and decorators in various media. The decoration here is no exception: both the narrative scenes and the busts are based on the works of Virgil Solis (1514–1562) of Nuremberg, one of the most prolific German printmakers of the sixteenth century. The three narrative scenes, rendered with remarkable clarity and precision, are copied from Solis's woodcut illustrations to the edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, published in Frankfurt am Main in 1563 (reproduced in Peters 1987, p. 484, no. 7.50 [fig. 36]; p. 494, no. 7.92; p. 507, no. 7.143). The scenes can be identified as follows (from left to right): *Apollo and Leucothae* (*Metamorphoses* 4.190–255), *Minos rejects Scylla's gift of Nisus's purple lock* (8.81–

103), and *Halcyones' dream of Ceyx's death* (11.633–748). Three of the four busts derive from a frieze of six busts engraved by Solis in the 1550s (Peters 1987, p. 210, no. 454).

Despite the surface corrosion, this cantle plate is one of the most ambitious and masterly examples of armor etching of the period. Since no other armor matching its distinctive design is recorded, it is not known if the saddle to which it belonged was made as a single work—perhaps even as an etcher's "masterpiece" offered for entry into the guild—or was part of a horse armor or even a complete garniture for man and horse.

Strapwork, tracery, and arabesques were fashionable motifs in the decorative arts of the period and often appeared on armor, although usually confined to borders or well-defined bands of ornament. Employing them to cover the entire surface of an armor is rare; notable examples include two garnitures for man and horse by the Nuremberg armorer Kunz Lochner (1510–1567), one made about 1555 for King Sigismund II Augustus of Poland (Livrustkammaren, Stockholm, 2603), the other of about the same date made for the king's brother-in-law, Prince Nikolaus Radziwill (see cat. no. 18). In addition, there is a helmet made in Augsburg in 1555, possibly for Emperor Maximilian II, which, like this cantle plate, is gilt overall (Wallace

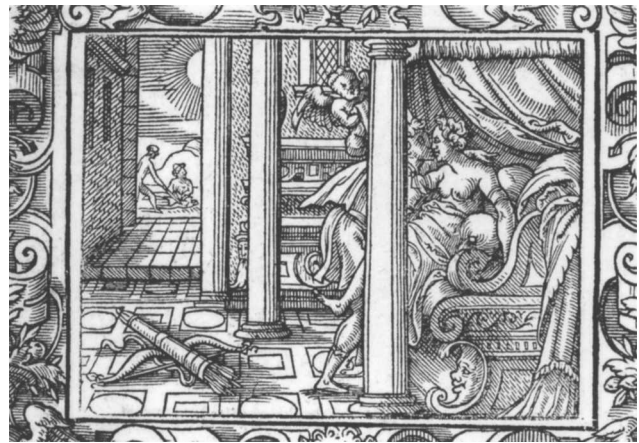


Fig. 36. Virgil Solis (German, 1514–1562), *Apollo and Leucothae*. Woodcut from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Frankfurt am Main, 1563), p. 50. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1941 (41.78.2)

Collection, London, A188). Among these examples, however, the present piece is the only one to include figural scenes.

SWP, DJL

EX COLL.: H.I.H. Archduke Leopold Salvator, Castle Herrenstein, Lower Austria; William Randolph Hearst, New York

REFERENCE.: Archduke Leopold Salvator sale 1927, lot 133, ill.

## 40. Pommel Plate

*French or Flemish, ca. 1580*

*Steel and gold*

*8 3/4 x 7 in. (22.2 x 17.8 cm), wt. 12 oz. (352 g)*  
*Rogers Fund, 1929 (29.171)*

While many saddle steels have some degree of embossed ornament, very few include figural representations or narrative scenes. The densely detailed style of the embossed, chiseled, and gilt decoration of this pommel plate is a notable exception, and one that allows it to be identified as belonging to a small group of rare parade armors made in France or Flanders in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Particularly close in style to this piece are another pommel plate in the Wallace Collection, London (A424), a pair of full leg defenses in the Museo Stibbert, Florence (1021), and an incomplete half-armor with a close helmet and arm defenses in the



Cat. no. 40

Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin (1022). All share the same highly idiosyncratic style of rendering human figures, horses, trees, and landscapes, which are spread over the entire surface of the plates, gilded overall, and lacking any of the ornamental borders or cartouches that usually surround decoration of this type. The

subjects depicted are derived from classical history and mythology. At the center of the Metropolitan Museum's pommel plate there is a prominent figure, wearing antique-style armor and mounted on a rearing horse, who possibly represents the legend of the Roman hero Marcus Curtius.

DJL

EX COLL.: Robert Curzon, Baron Zouche of Haryngworth, Parham, Pulborough, Sussex; Baroness Zouche of Haryngworth

Unpublished

# Glossary

DIRK H. BREIDING

**ARMOR** *ALL'ANTICA*, *ARMOR ALL'EROICA*.

Armor for man and horse, which by construction and/or decoration was intended to imitate that used—or thought to have been used—by the heroes of classical antiquity; almost exclusively produced for ceremonial purposes.

**ARTICULATION**. In plate armor, the joining of elements constructed of several **LAMES** (usually strips of metal) and connected to one another by sliding rivets and/or internal leather straps in order to achieve flexibility. In horse armor, the **CRINET** is usually articulated.

**BARD**. A general term for a complete horse armor. The “full bard” covers the animal head to tail and includes full defenses for head (**SHAFFRON**), neck (**CRINET**), chest (**PEYTRAL**), flanks (**FLANCHARD**), and hindquarters (**CRUPPER**). See also **TRAPPER**.

**BOSS**. An area on both sides of the **PEYTRAL** (and, occasionally, on the **CRUPPER**) embossed convexly over the pectoral muscle and elbow joints and usually hemispherical in shape, providing additional protection, comfort, and increased movement for the horse’s forequarters and/or hindquarters.

**BOW**. The front and rear parts of the saddle, more commonly referred to as the **POMMEL** and **CANTLE**, respectively.

**BUFFER**. A large cushion of crescent shape, used exclusively in tournaments, placed across the horse’s chest in order to protect it as well as the legs of the joust. The **hourt**, a somewhat modified version of the buffer, reinforced with rods, was employed only in the **TOURNEY**.

**CANTLE**. The rear **BOW** of the saddle.

**CANTLE PLATE**. In the **WAR SADDLE**, a plate or plates in the shape of, and attached to, the **CANTLE** to protect the rear of the saddle and thus the rider’s buttocks.

**CAPARISON**. A term usually applied by modern writers to describe a textile covering for the entire horse, but contemporaneous evidence suggests that it was also used to describe forms of horse armor synonymous with the **TRAPPER** (when made of textile or mail) or **BARD** (when made of *CUIR BOUILLI*, leather, mail, or plate).

**CHEEKS**. The lower sides of the **SADDLE**.

**CRINET**. A defense for the neck of the horse, usually made of **ARTICULATED** plates or plate and mail, and extending from the **POLL PLATE** of the **SHAFFRON** downward to the base of the neck. “Closed” crinets also have mail or plate defenses for the throat and front of the neck.

**CRUPPER**. Rear part of the **BARD**, protecting the horse’s croup, hindquarters, and upper legs, usually constructed of three parts joined together: an upper part, a lower part, and a tail guard.

*CUIR BOUILLI*. Literally meaning “boiled leather,” this misleading term is applied to objects, including armor, made by shaping and hardening leather by submerging it in cold water and then slowly drying it under moderate heat.

**EAR GUARDS**. Elements of the **SHAFFRON** protecting the horse’s ears; usually of half-tubular shape, sometimes truncated, sometimes pointed or shaped to the ear.

**ESCUTCHEON PLATE**. A small, shield-shaped attachment affixed centrally to the **SHAFFRON**, usually adorned with etched, painted, or embossed decoration, including heraldry, mottoes, or classical motifs.

**FIELD ARMOR**. Armor for battle, as opposed to that used in **TOURNAMENTS** or parades.

**FLANCHARDS**. Originally probably referred to rigid defenses of leather, reinforced canvas, or metal suspended from the top of the horse’s back to

protect its rear flanks. Modern usage specifically denotes elements of armor suspended from under the saddle in order to protect the flanks of a horse between, and not covered by, the **PEYTRAL** and **CRUPPER**.

**GARNITURE**. An ensemble including a basic field armor that, through the addition of reinforcing or exchange elements, could be adapted for various uses on the battlefield and in **TOURNAMENTS**. All elements were designed to structurally harmonize with one another and were decorated to match. Garnitures often included **SADDLES** and more or less extensive horse armor.

*GESTECH*. A form of **JOUST**, invariably fought with blunted lances and a special type of harness. During the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, it was especially popular in German-speaking regions.

“**GOthic**” **ARMOR**. Originally applied in the nineteenth century to German plate armor of the fifteenth century, presumably because of its resemblance, in form and decoration, to the architecture, sculpture, and painting of the Gothic period; during the twentieth century, has become increasingly applied to all fifteenth-century plate armor.

**HALF-SHAFFRON**. See **SHAFFRON**.

**HARNESS**. A complete armor for a man-at-arms; also, the entire trappings or accoutrements of a horse.

**JOUST**. General term for an encounter or mock combat between two mounted men-at-arms, invariably fought with couched lances. Its object could be either to unhorse the opponent, to break one’s lance, or to score points according to which area was hit by the lance. See also *GESTECH* and *RENNEN*.

**LAME**. A small iron or steel plate, usually of narrow, rectangular shape.

“**MAXIMILIAN-STYLE**” **ARMOR**. A modern, somewhat misleading term



denoting a style of armor decorated with vertical (mostly parallel) fluting that was fashionable during the first three decades of the sixteenth century, particularly in German-speaking regions.

**PEYTRAL.** Defense for the horse's chest and forelegs. See also **BUFFER**.

**POLL PLATE.** A flexible plate or **LAME** attached by hinges or leathers to the top rear of the **SHAFFRON**, protecting the back of the horse's head (the poll); often used to secure the shaffron to the **CRINET**.

**POMMEL.** The front **BOW** of the saddle.

**POMMEL PLATE.** In the **WAR SADDLE**, a plate in the shape of, and attached to, the front **BOW** to protect the front of the saddle and thus the rider's inner thighs and groin.

**RENNEN.** A form of **JOUST** fought with sharp lances, usually in complete **FIELD ARMOR** (sometimes including a **BARD** for the horse), until the last quarter of the fifteenth century, when a special type of half-armor was developed, the *Rennzeug*. The *Rennen* required greater skill and precision than the *GESTECH*; both were especially popular in German-speaking regions.

**RONDEL.** A small disk used to reinforce mail or plate armor, or—when attached to a lance or sword—to protect the hand. When centrally affixed to the **SHAFFRON**, rondels were intended as reinforces and decoration. See also **ESCUTCHEON PLATE**.

**SADDLE.** The part of the complete horse **HARNESS** on which the rider sits, usually comprising a wooden structure (**SADDLETREE**) that forms **BOWS** at the front and rear (the **POMMEL** and **CANTLE**, respectively) and a seat in the middle that is often padded. Its underside is usually fitted with quilted or stuffed panels, stirrup leathers, and a wide strap for securing it to the animal.

**SADDLETREE.** The wooden frame or support of the **SADDLE**, which is covered with hide or pigskin; often reinforced (not armored) at the front, externally or internally, by a steel plate known as a gullet.

**SADDLE STEELS.** Plate reinforce of the **WAR SADDLE**. The protection for the front is known as the **POMMEL PLATE**, while that for the rear is called the **CANTLE PLATE**.

**SHAFFRON.** Armor protecting the horse's skull, either partially or entirely. In medieval and Renaissance Europe, a shaffron consisted of a main plate following the contours of the head from ears to nostrils and muzzle. An additional plate, the **POLL PLATE**, is usually flexibly attached to the top and/or rear of the shaffron. Additional extension plates, known as **SIDEPLATES**, were sometimes riveted or hinged at either side to cover the cheeks.

Shaffrons with cutouts, rather than holes, at eye level are known as "open shaffrons"; those covering the forehead only to just below the

horse's eyes are referred to as "half-shaffrons." "Blind shaffrons," made for a special type of **JOUST**, lack eye openings in order to prevent the horse from shying.

**SIDEPLATES.** Extension plates riveted to or hinged at either side of the **SHAFFRON** to protect the horse's cheeks.

**TAIL GUARD.** Part of the **CRUPPER**, protecting the top rear of the animal's spine and croup, usually extending somewhat outward over the tail.

**TOURNAMENT.** Originally synonymous with the term "**TOURNEY**," it described any form of mounted combat or battle; from the late twelfth century, both terms referred only to military practice and mock combats. In its modern sense, it describes any form of chivalric mock combat with a variety of weapons, both on horseback and foot.

**TOURNEY.** Originally synonymous with the term "**TOURNAMENT**," it has applied since the fifteenth century to a mock engagement by two groups of mounted combatants, usually fought first with blunted lances, then with blunted swords.

**TRAPPER.** Generally, a complete covering for a horse including its head. Depending on its material (textile, leather, or metal), its function could be decorative, protective, or both.

**WAR SADDLE.** A **SADDLE** with additional armored protection at the front and rear. See also **SADDLE STEELS**, **POMMEL PLATE**, and **CANTLE PLATE**.

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