



ARMS & ARMOUR

IN THE COLLECTION OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

European Armour

A.V.B. NORMAN

AND

IAN EAVES

Introduction by Howard L. Blackmore

ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST

COMPLETE AND PARTIAL ARMOURS

[1]

Composite 'Gothic' Armour

Mainly South German, late fifteenth century, but incorporating some elements of the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries

RCIN 72829

Consisting of a composite visored **SALLET**, South German, early sixteenth century; an articulated **GORGET**, South German, about 1530–40; a composite two-piece **BREASTPLATE** with articulated **FAULD**, German, late fifteenth century; a pair of articulated **TASSETS** for tilt use, North Italian, about 1560–70; a four-piece **BACKPLATE** with articulated **CULET**, South German, late fifteenth century; two narrow-fronted **PAULDRONS**, not a pair, German or north-west European, late fifteenth century; a pair of articulated **VAMBRACES**, probably partly Flemish, about 1500; a pair of **BESAGUES**, partly South German, late fifteenth century; a pair of mitten **GAUNTLETS**, partly South German, late fifteenth century; a pair of long **CUISSES** with articulated **POLEYNs**, partly South German, late fifteenth century; a pair of tubular **GREAVES**, partly South German, late fifteenth century; and a pair of articulated **SABATONS**, nineteenth century in the German late fifteenth-century style.

DESCRIPTION

The **SALLET**, of so-called 'owl-faced' form, comprises a one-piece skull, a pivoted visor and an articulated neck-guard. The **SKULL**, originally that of a close helmet, has a broad crown decorated medially with a boldly roped low comb, and to either side of it with flutes in the 'Maximilian' fashion arranged in groups between raised bands. It is patched at the brow and each side of its face-opening, as well as at the nape where it gives issue to a modern neck-guard of three articulated lames struck internally with the initials of their maker, James L. Jackson, The Queen's Armourer (1958–2002). Attached to the skull by a pair of modern pivots is an associated **VISOR** of deep, flat form, embossed with three transverse ribs, each of which is pierced with horizontal slots: the uppermost ones for vision and the remainder for ventilation. The area between the uppermost and central ribs is pierced with twenty-five small, circular ventilation-holes arranged in three rows. The area between the central and lowest ribs is etched with the inscription 'XS6' separated from its mirror-image by an interlace pattern, possibly representing the superimposed letters 'M' and 'W'. The visor is secured to the skull at the right of the neck by a modern spring-catch.







Sallet: front view



Sallet: left view

The **GORGET** comprises three lames front and rear, the lowest of which is in each case deeper than the rest and formed with a square lower edge. The associated first lame is in each instance decorated at its upper edge with a roped inward turn. The lowest two lames have been cut at their outer ends to fit it.

The **BREASTPLATE** comprises a main plate covering the chest, a lower plate or **plackart** covering the belly and a **fauld** of two lames. The **MAIN PLATE** has plain, inward turns at its neck and arm-openings and is struck to either side of the former with an unidentified mark. Pierced in a vertical line adjacent to the right arm-opening are four holes for the attachment of a lance-rest, the top two of which are slightly larger than the lower two. The holes are most likely to have been occupied by staples since they are not threaded for screws. The associated **PLACKART**, which overlaps the lower edge of the main plate and is attached to it at its centre by a modern round-headed sliding stud retained by a transverse pin, rises at its centre to a cusped and fretted upper edge. Its heart-shaped central piercing has been opened out. The plackart is embossed medially with a flattened ridge, and at each side of its upper edge with a pair of shallow flutes. Its lower edge, which has a patched repair at its right end, is flanged outwards to receive a **FAULD** of two upward-overlapping lames, both of which are associated and have been reworked to fit their present context. The upper edges of the lames are cusped just above their articulating-rivets. The lower lame is fitted at each side with a pair of straps for the suspension of the tassets.

The shield-shaped **TASSETS** each comprise three upward-overlapping lames, the first of which is fitted at its upper edge with a pair of later iron buckles to accommodate the suspension-straps of the fauld, and the last of which has an obtusely pointed lower edge. The inner edge of each is cut away in a concave curve to clear the crotch. It, like the upper and outer edges, is formed with a partial turn. That at the upper edge is file-roped, as is a decorative medial rib that widens to its lower end. Single, incised lines border the main edges and each side of the rib.

The **BACKPLATE** comprises three downward-overlapping main plates, a fixed gusset at its neck-opening and a **culet** of three lames. The first and third of the main plates are deeper than the second. Riveted within the V-shaped neck-opening cut into the upper edge of the first plate is a separate gusset which is pierced at the centre of its upper edge with a pair of suspension-holes. Semicircular arm-openings cut into each side of the first plate have plain, outward turns at their edges, bordered in each case by three flutes. A further three flutes diverge from the centre of the waist of the lowest plate to the tops of each of the arm-openings. The lowest plate is fitted at each side with a modern waist-belt. Its lower edge is flanged outwards to receive a **CULET** of three upward-overlapping lames, the lowest of which is deeper than the rest. The slightly V-shaped lower edge of the latter has a plain, angular, inward turn bordered by a pair of flutes interrupted

[225]

Harquebusier's Long Gauntlet for the Left Hand

RCIN 67613

Formed of a slightly flared tubular CUFF closed by a riveted joint at the inside of the arm, gently curved round the point of the elbow, fitted at its lower end with four METACARPAL-PLATES and a KNUCKLE-PLATE (perforated), lacking thumb- and finger-defences and decorated with single incised lines; English, third quarter of the seventeenth century.



Cat. 225

[226]

Two Lames of a Culet

RCIN 67620

Articulated to one another at their outer ends by sliding-rivets and decorated with flutes in the 'Maximilian' fashion (each much patched); nineteenth century in the early sixteenth-century German style.



Cat. 226

[227]

Small Tasset

RCIN 67618

Of sub-rectangular outline, fitted at its upper edge with a hinge, and decorated with vertical flutes; nineteenth century.



Cat. 227

SHIELDS



[228]

Round Target

RCIN 72856

Of iron and of low convex form, fitted at its centre with a later spike of square section, and from which radiate eight pairs of incised lines, formed at its outer edge with a plain inward turn accompanied by a recessed border occupied by round-headed rivets of brass, pierced with holes, in some cases occupied by later rivets, for the attachment of a pair of enarmes, and fitted at the rear of its upper edge with a sturdy suspension-bracket; possibly German, late sixteenth century.



Back view



[229]

Round Target

RCIN 67784

Of iron, formed of a convex main plate with a flanged edge that overlays and is riveted to a separate four-piece border formed at its outer edge with a boldly roped inward turn, the main plate embossed in high relief and chased with pseudo-classical warriors in combat around a central grotesque mask, and the border similarly decorated between four similar but smaller masks with a repeated pattern of linked circles each enclosing a quatrefoil and interrupted by four small applied plates bearing an omega-like design and concealing beneath them the butted joins of its plates, and the rear fitted with a pair of enarmes of iron retaining the remains of a covering of olive velvet; nineteenth century in the sixteenth-century Italian style.

Possibly G.F.L. p. 147, unnumbered



Back view

[408] CAT. 229