



Helmet ("Rennhut")

Date

about 1590–1600

Primary Maker

workshops of Wolf and Peter von Speyer

Medium

Steel, leather, black paint, textile and horsehair stuffing

Description

(* Rennhut) The skull or sallet is formed from one piece of steel, with a separate piece for the visor pivoted at the temples. The rounded skull has a roped comb of moderate height, extending from the facial opening to the back of the skull, and is framed at its base by a pair of narrow, incised lines. The comb is transversely pierced for the angled, forked bracket near its rear where the comb drops nearly vertically to the deep, pointed downturned tail. This is rigid, and is arched with a sharp medial ridge extending to the wide shallow recessed rivet-filled band that borders the inwardly turned roped edge. The domed rivets and circular washers retain the leather band and lining of the tail. At the base of the comb is a stout, threaded stud which may have served a detachable mount for a plume or crest. Below this, extending across the back of the skull, is a row of ten domed lining-rivets. These retain the original, padded and quilted linen lining-cap open at the top. On either side of the skull just above the row is a horizontal pair of small holes, presumably for drawstrings to adjust the lining. The lining-rivets also extend across the brow. Here the

eight rivets are near-flush, in recessed holes. The edge at the facial opening is level, unturned and roped. The prow of the sallet juts forward in front of the face; it is fitted at center with a riveted, heavy threaded bolt with wing-nut for fastening the sallet to the bevor. The wing-nut is handmade, with filed decorative recesses, and is probably original. The visor extends up over the brow, and rises in a low, embossed cusp at the comb. The bevelled upper edges curve off to the rounded terminals with domed, decoratively-incised pivots. The visor projects forward beneath the single unbroken sight without flange, and is fitted with a cord-operated spring catch at the right, locking the visor to the prow of the sallet. The visor rises just high enough to clear the face opening. The "Rennhut" and all other components are black-painted "en suite", with silvered (now tarnished) painted bands as framing. On the sallet, these enclose the sight and pass across the brow edge of the skull. Similar bands also frame the top and sides of the visor. Traces of the original blueing can be seen where the paint has come off. The lining of stuffed fabric inside the skull, with leather inside the tail of the sallet, is at least of the 1800s, but probably not as old as the 1700s--among other clues, it shows no indications of having ever been worn.

Dimensions

25.5 × 23 × 40 cm (10 1/16 × 9 1/16 × 15 3/4 in.), 7 lb, 1 oz (weight)