



Close Helmet for the Field

Date

about 1535–1540

Primary Maker

Caremolo di Modrone

Medium

fire-blued steel with gilding, embossing, and incised decoration

Description

Of blued steel with gilded, embossed and incised decoration. The skull is ovoid, with a medium comb embossed and gilded with rearwardly overlapping scales, and bordered on each side with a pair of incised, full-length lines. From the base of the comb a pair of lengthening gilt palm fronds are embossed and accented with incised lines, and extend forward over the skull to the brow, their stalks intertwined at the nape of the neck. A similar decoration is

found on the basal lames of the front and rear gorget plates, following the contour of the edge which is inwardly turned over a flat wire, and chisel-roped. The upper edge of each of the two riveted lames is bordered with a gilt incised line decoration, and a "V"-shaped nick at mid-point. The narrow sunken gilded border of the terminal lames are pierced with eleven holes at the front, and nine at the rear for lining-rivets, all lacking. Five gilded iron dome-headed lining-rivets encircle the base of the skull, just below the comb. These bear fragments of material beneath their flattened internal heads. Similar traces remain on the flattened rivets of the basal edge of the bevor, and the facial opening of this and the skull. The facial opening edges of both are roped, gilded and incised as the gorget plates, but with a single line on each. The bevor has a pronounced, well-formed chin, itself with a strong medial ridge. There is no means to secure the bevor and visor, and the apparent pierced-post and pivot-hook once mounted at the right side are now lost. The visor is of one piece, with a deep brow rising to a cusp at the comb. It projects forward, nearly imperceptively concave along the medial ridge from the brow to the single occularium. The turned edge of this is roped, incised and gilded as the gorget terminal lames, but cut above with a pair of gilded lines. The strongly projecting medial ridge curves slightly inward immediately below the sight, then uniformly extends down deeply well over the chin. The perimeter of the visor has the typical double incised, gilded lines. The pivots are rough, small flattened rivets. The finish, and the presence of a single small hole just to the rear of the pivot suggests that some form of decorative cap may once have been fitted. The lower proper right side of the visor is pierced with twenty-nine breaths in a trapezoidal pattern. The entire helmet is hammer-rough, with some of the "sketch" lines of decoration of areas to be worked still visible. Uboldo's illustration of the helmet in 1843 shows a reinforcing visor, see copy in digital file. This was no longer present by the sale of 1906.

Dimensions

31.8 × 27 × 34 cm (12 1/2 × 10 5/8 × 13 3/8 in.), 8 lb, 3 oz (weight)