

Basic Detail Report



"Sallet" Helmet

Date

1480–1490

Primary Maker

Southern German

Medium

steel with modern restorations

Description

Skull of rounded form with a low medial keel, having a V-section groove running its length. The center of the V and the outsides of the keel are marked by incised lines. A hole is pierced in the crest at the top. The front edge of the skull is cut with a low, broad face-opening. A series of lining-rivets run round the skull, at the level of the nape and continue round the face opening. They have round heads, except under the visor where they are flush. A full visor is pivoted at the sides of the skull. It has a broad vision-slit, the lower edge of which forms a slightly protruding lip. The lower edge of the visor has a plain outward turn. The upper edge rises to a centrally-cusped brow-reinforce. The point of this is shaped with a hollow keel to accommodate the keel of the skull. The outer limits of the keel are marked by incised lines. The short arms of the visor have both lost their original terminals which have broken off through the pivot holes. These have been restored with patches riveted from behind and hammered flush. The pivots have a quatrefoil form, rising to a pyramidal point at their centers. The rear edges of the visor, below the arms, each have a cusped projection, pierced with a trefoil. The lower right hand corner of the visor is pierced with a hole which engages a push-button-operated spring-stud riveted inside the forward lower edge of the tail. Attached to the rear edge of the skull is a long, pointed, downward-sloping, articulated tail of four lames. Its lower edge has plain outward turns. It has a marked central ridge. The tip of the tail is missing. The top edge of each lame of the tail is cusped, nine times on the top lame, seven times on the next, five on the third, and three on the last. The skull shows some cracking and delamination; there are some patches, and brazing repairs at the forehead. The skull features a double-peaked ridge along the sagittal crest highlighted with incised lines along each side and down the middle between the peaks. The facial opening is slightly rough cut, esp. at the R side. This could be a working-life alteration. There are lining rivets around the perimeter of the skull; the rivet holes at the jaw (of which the R is filled) probably secured a chinstrap. There is a pierced hole at the apex of the skull. There is a good flex on the tail lames, except for the restored terminal lame. There are two holes at the lower back edge of the skull as if for an articulation leather, but nothing corresponding on the lames below. There are large flat rivet heads inside the tail lames similar to those on pauldron 2608.d. Visor associated, but looks good. The pivot-wings have been extended with modern additions. The visor cants slightly to the R. The 2 very small holes at the sagittal cusp may once have secured some sort of crest. The high-domed rivets appear to be modern. A hole in the keel of the skull, just above the brow, has been internally patched, conceivable during its working life. The visor, although contemporary, is clearly associated with the skull. Its lower edge projects below the line of the skull, and its arms may have been reworked slightly to fit the skull better. The front lower edge of the skull has perhaps been reworked a little at its center to fit the visor better. The keel in the top end of the visor does not match that of the skull. The tips of the visor arms and the pivots were probably restored when the visor was adapted to the present skull. At the same time, the modern trefoil-piercing were added, and the hole which engages the spring stud was enlarged. All four neck lames and the spring stud riveted to them are probably modern restorations, made from old pieces of armor, reworked to their present form at that period. The rear edge of the skull is pierced, at its center, with a pair of holes for an internal leather which would have run down the tail, although the tail itself has no holes for such a leather. The third lame of the tail has an older hole just inside its right hand rivet, which serves no purpose in the present configuration. The way in which the tail-lames are connected to one another leaves awkward gaps between their turned edges. Since the rivet-holes have never been moved, this represents a poor standard of manufacture not to be expected on a sallet of this high quality. Moreover, the tail is a little flat in design, and ought to slope down rather more. It must be concluded that the tail lames are modern additions of slightly incorrect design. The old and the new elements have all been repatinated to match one another.

Dimensions

22.9 × 22.2 × 43.2 cm (9 × 8 3/4 × 17 in.), 8 lb, 6 oz (weight)