



Buckler with "Dark" Lantern

Date

1550–1600

Primary Maker

Italian

Medium

steel, once blackened

Description

Circular steel buckler once blackened, nearly flat to body, and drawn out in truncated conical point at center. This is fitted with an old, but associated spike of quadrangular section, with molded base. Spike screws into restored internal mount which is riveted at either end to sides of central cone. Perimeter of shield has slightly angular, outwardly flanged, inwardly turned edge, with thick, iron wire core. Buckler is held by a hollow iron grip, slightly arched for palm, and mounted vertically across recess of the cone, secured via a pair of flat, irregularly round rivets at both ends. Centered at top of buckler, and riveted to the inside by a set of four rivets of later date, is body of so-called "dark" lantern. This seems to be of slightly more recent vintage than the buckler itself, and is probably a working-life addition. The lantern is designed to function in three positions: covered, open, and with a pane of horn (now lost). The body of the lantern is of iron, cylindrical, with a circular bottom that

is crimped over the basal flange of the body base. Body is riveted together at the left front, & has a large, vertical rectangular aperture for the lamp once held within. The sides and bottom edges of the opening are inwardly flattened to reinforce them. Riveted to the anterior sides are L-shaped, bilobated brackets that extend the full length of the body, and are fastened by rivets whose flattened heads bear a raised-dot pattern on the inside, but are nearly flush within. Inserted within the body of the lantern is a cylindrical rotating shutter once fitted with a window pane of thin horn (lost). The shutter is constructed like the body, and has two vertical apertures, en suite. One of these has thin narrow iron strips riveted at the sides; these have enough "spring" so as to retain an inserted sheet of thin horn to diffuse the light and provide a wind break. The other opening is similar, but without such provisions. The solid face blocks the light. At the top of the shutter is a truncated conical iron cap, open at the top, and crimped over a flange of the shutter perimeter. Riveted to this is a conical top, embossed to form eight downturned louvers, which when viewed from above, produced a petalled motif. This portion may be an old replacement, or at the least, has more-modern repairs. About one-third up from the bottom of the shutter body is found a small hole each opposite one another; the purpose of these holes are unknown, but could have to do with the internal mounting of the oil lamp. The face of the buckler is cut with a vertical rectangular aperture with rounded corners. This is fitted with a flat, similarly formed hinged cover.

Dimensions

10.2 × 34.6 × 40 cm (4 × 13 5/8 × 15 3/4 in.), 3 lb (weight)