



Head of a Halberd for the Guard of Graf Heinrich Posthumus Reuss von Plauen (1572-1635)

Date

1600–1610

Primary Maker

German

Medium

etched and blackened steel with wood and leather

Description

Halberd, now with shortened haft, in the style associated with the Saxon Electoral court of the early 17th century. Head with long triangular apical blade of hollow-ground diamond section to reinforced point. Base of blade decoratively cusped. Recurving, S-shaped axeblade opposed by downcurving, flat fluke having pair of outwardly curving lugs at base. Short conical socket with pair of long, plain langets. Faces of head identically decorated with etched running, scrolling leafy vines on blackened, stippled ground, within an arabesque strapwork cartouche along medial line from the socket onto the thrusting blade. Centered on the axeblade faces is arms of the Grafen von Reuss (quarterly, 1 & 4 Sable, a lion or, crowned gules, 2 & 3 Argent, a crane or; surmounted with a Brackenhaupt, per pale Argent and sable, and a crane Or. Flanking the crests are upper-case letters "HR" and "HVP," probably for "Heinrich Reuss, Herr von Plauen" (Graf Heinrich Posthumus Reuss von Plauen [juengere Linie], 1572-1635). The staff, of 2 unrelated pieces, is modern, but of some age. Lower part is lighter weight wood and once spirally wrapped with narrow leather strip.

Dimensions

114.5 x 60 x 30 cm (45 1/16 x 23 5/8 x 11 13/16 in.), 3 lb, 10 oz. (weight)