



## Close Helmet

### Date

about 1560–1570

### Primary Maker

Northern Italian

### Medium

etched steel with restored gilding

### Description

One-piece SKULL is ovoidal, with high chisel-roped comb, accented by closely set pairs of incised lines. Riveted to the base of the comb is a triple plume-pipe on a lobated mounting. The central pipe is decorated with oblique, incised lines. The base of

the skull is encircled by a row of brass-capped lining-rivets (6 of original 8 preserved). At either end of row is a modern hook-eye for restored pivot-hooks of bevor. Lower sides of skull are pierced for hearing with a circular pattern of eight small holes around a central ninth. The edge of the skull across the brow is unturned, but is roped, and is bordered above by a row of 12 lining rivets of which 11 are preserved, extending down either side of the skull edges. The base of the skull is drawn out in a shallow basal flange, to the ends of which is riveted a nape defense of a pair of semi-circular lames overlapping upwards, and riveted together at their ends. The terminal lame has a roped edge, inwardly turned over a wire core, and is bordered by a shallow, wide recessed rivet-filled band. Rearward of the temples, the sides of the skull are pierced with holes for the restored domed pivots of the two-part visor assembly and bevor. The 3 face-pieces pivot on domed screws & nuts at temples. The solid UPPER BEVOR is pointed and deep, with a near vertical profile. The medial line of this is embossed as a slightly rounded roped keel which extends down the well formed chin of the bevor and the gorget plates. At the upper right edge of the upper bevor is a notch for the visor lifting peg. The edge itself is inwardly crimped over a wire and roped, and sweeps up gracefully to rounded terminals. Below the notch is an empty hole for the now-lost pivot hook which would have locked over the visor lifting peg. On the lower edge below this is a restored hook-eye for the pivot hook of the bevor. To the rear of this, the basal edge has been slightly cut back, while the left side is bluntly pointed. The facial opening of the BEVOR is deep, with an inwardly turned, roped edge that rises slightly at mid point. This opening is bordered by a row of six lining rivets like those across the brow. At the right side of the bevor is an empty hole that may indicate the former location of the pivot hook to the upper bevor. The bevor is drawn out in a basal flange, which like that of the skull, is fitted with a pair of gorget plates riveted at their square ends. The terminal lame deepens lightly to a blunt medial point, and both front and rear have roped inward turns over a wire core. The VISOR fits into the upper bevor, and has a divided sight that is strongly stepped below. The visor rises moderately high up over the brow, and is embossed for the anterior end of the comb, and at this point it is bracket-cut on its edge. The lower edge of the visor is roughly cut and bevelled. On the right side of this it is fitted with a lifting peg of tapering octagonal section, terminating in a fifteen-sided polygon, the faces of which are each punched with a single, centered dot. Below the eyeslot is a second parallel eyeslit that was apparently never completed, possibly an abortive working-life alteration.

DECORATED with etched bands on all major components, each filled with running foliation, vines, grotesques. The sides of the comb are decorated with etching, as are the pairs of broad, shallow-recessed bands on either side of the skull, visor, upper bevor and gorget plates. Similar recessed bands flank the medial keel of the bevor and gorget plates, and the upper edge of the upper bevor, and border the turned edge of the terminal gorget plates. The decoration of the comb sides consists of undulating foliated tendrils with foliate and floral voluted terminals coarsely re-etched on a broadly stippled regilded ground. Near mid-length on the left face is etched Pegasus and a griffin-like creature, while the latter only is similarly positioned on the right. Framing the base of the comb are candelabra-filled etched and gilded bands on a plain ground, themselves framed on the outer edge by a running fleur de lys-like etched motif. The broad recessed bands noted above as present on the skull et al are filled with a candelabrum-like treatment of foliate tendrils, grotesqueries, urns, and flowers, all on a stippled ground as above, contained within the fleur de lys by a manneristic, running voluted foliate trendril offset by a fillet below, and the fleur de lys band. The recessed band along the upper edge of the upper bevor and that of the terminal lame of the gorget defense are similarly decorated. On either side of the roped medial keel, and in the bands on the sides themselves, are candelabra motives like those on the skull and visor. These extend down the bevor and gorget plates. The decorative bands discussed above all give evidence of extensive re-etching, and have been regilded. The originality of the decoration is also questionable because bordering the plain edges of major plates are worn traces of close-set thin lines, some of which cut through, or are interrupted by, the etched decoration. There are sword marks on the visor and skull, including some heavy ones on the comb; these markings are typical of helmets used

for barriers combat. This, in combination with the altered decoration and incomplete lower eyeslit might indicate a working-life alteration for tournament use.

**Dimensions**

41.3 x 22 x 37.4 cm (16 1/4 x 8 11/16 x 14 3/4 in.), 7 lb, 2 oz (weight)