



## Head for a Horseman's Warhammer

### Date

late 1400s

### Primary Maker

Northern German

### Medium

brass and iron

### Description

Comprised of a long, brass-alloy conical socket cast in one piece with two stout, grimacing lion heads surmounted by a carved lion "couchant" above. The socket is fitted with a long, iron belt hook, positioned such that when on the belt, the surmounting lion faces the wearer's body. The base of the socket has a narrow, file roped molded band. The body has an engraved spiralled banderolle inscribed in "Gothic" characters, the legend reading from the base upwards, "Ave Maria Gracia Plena Helf Maria." The terminals of the ultimate characters are finished in oak leaves. The lion heads are fitted with a cleated hammer head and a short quadrangular spike, both of iron. The recurving tail of the lion is circularly pierced, perhaps for a cord, though the location at the working end of the weapon is curious; the piercing may merely be part of the decorative rendering of the tail. Centered on the front and rear faces below is a heraldic shield charged with a lion "rampant" in

carved relief. There are some dents in the brass, especially on the socket beneath the lion's rear. There are also various nicks and scratches.

### Dimensions

16.5 cm (6 1/2 in.), 1 lb, 7 oz (weight)