THE NEW GALLERIES OF EUROPEAN ARMS AND ARMOR

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The study of arms and armor involves a wide field of interest. Armor is an important record in the history of the wars of mankind. It is associated with military architecture; with sports and pastimes; with law; with the mythology, symbolism, and ceremony of all nations and religions. Arms and armor are closely connected with the deeds of chivalry that were the inspiration of a whole literary art. They have always been accessories of the painter and the sculptor, and they furnish a wealth of material for the study of the evolution of form and decoration. Finally they include objects of the most remarkable workmanship ever made in metal.

In planning the reinstallation of the Museum’s collection, now shown in eight renovated galleries and two corridors of the Morgan Wing, special attention has been paid to the intrinsic beauty of the objects selected for exhibition. Our aim has been to show only those that are distinguished by excellence of form and workmanship or variety of type and to feature the historical pieces, usually the work of the great artist armors. While no effort has been made to reproduce the spectacular accessories originally worn with armor, the modern soft trappings of the horse panoplies and the flags enhance our exhibits effectively. To enable the visitor to enjoy a more realistic glimpse of the colorful contemporary background of armor a few distinguished paintings, for instance, Carlo Crivelli’s Saint George, a French fifteenth-century stained-glass Saint Michael, a fifteenth-century Tournaí tapestry of the Arming of Hector, medieval knightly sculpture, and a sixteenth-century colored tournament book are also shown. Not only are these works of art informative armor documents but their exhibition here gives one a better understanding of the place of arms and armor in the studies of history and art.

Among the notable features of the exhibition are the new methods employed to provide a more effective installation. With the use of plastic it has been possible to display many objects, especially the firearms and swords, so that they may be seen at close range and without having parts of them obscured by their mounting. The careful selection of the objects exhibited has given the advantage of showing only a few pieces in each case, thus encouraging the visitor to study and appreciate thoroughly a limited number instead of yielding to the temptation to skip from one to another. Space economies have been made by showing only one pistol of a brace, except in a few instances where it was considered advisable to emphasize special features.

An arrangement has been followed which furnishes an outline of the armorer’s art in various countries, more or less in chronological sequence. Separate galleries are principally devoted to the
Barbarian chieftain's helmet. The shape is Asiatic, and the gilded embossed pattern shows the influence of Christian art on the tribes that conquered and divided the Roman Empire. Frankeish, 6th century. Dick Fund, 1942

following divisions: equestrian equipment; medi-
eval; early sixteenth century; historical arms and
armor of the Renaissance, showing especially the
work of the distinguished armorers of Milan,
Augsburg, and Paris; swords and daggers; sport-
ing weapons (firearms, crossbows, and shafted
weapons); seventeenth to nineteenth centuries,
including American, English, and Scottish pieces
in the corridor adjacent to the American Wing.

Entering from the south the visitor finds him-
self in the central court, which presents a bird's-
eye view of arms and armor during three cen-
turies, beginning with the fifteenth. Here may
be seen seven equestrian harnesses covering ap-
proximately a century in style. The earliest, a
battle harness, dates from the time of the dis-
covery of America. The others are parade equip-
ment reminiscent of an earlier period when
cavalry was the strongest arm of military power.
Flanking the horses are knights' battle, tourna-
ment, and parade suits that show the changes
in style and decoration from the mid-fifteenth
century to about 1590. There are also various
elements of horse armor, painted shields of types
carried by knights as well as by crossbowmen,
sporting crossbows dating from the fifteenth to
the seventeenth centuries, historical shafted
weapons and lances. Gay banners, accurately
reproduced, give the central hall an atmosphere of pageantry. Early banners were often painted by well-known artists; a splendid fourteenth-century banner by the Florentine Spinello Aretino is in one of the paintings galleries.

After the tour of the central court one should enter the medieval room, one of the few galleries in the world where a comparative study of medieval arms and armor can be made. In addition to the work in steel, the accessories that accompany the arms and armor show a variety of materials and techniques: heraldic enamels, engraved latten ornaments, a saddle with plaques of sculptured staghorn, painted wooden shields, carved ivory dagger grips and plaques of crossbow stocks, carved boxwood hilts, and skillfully tooled leather sword and dagger sheaths. But the objects made of iron and steel are the core of the exhibition. “Steel is the most noble metal—if it one makes war harnesses, swords, daggers and other gaives by means of which valor is shown by enemy against enemy.” So wrote Messire Olivier de la Marche, the Burgundian chronicler, who was Captain of the Guards of Charles the Bold.

Our earliest defensive elements are a Frankish spangenhelms and a shield boss of the sixth century. Very little armor has survived from the period between Merovingian times and the late Middle Ages, and eight centuries separate this early helmet from the fine series of visored basins dating from 1380 to the mid-fifteenth century. These are practical battle pieces, their pleasing contours designed to present a glancing surface to an opponent’s weapon. There are also a series of basins reminiscent of the early Christian wars in the East (found in 1840 in the Castle of Chalcis on Euboea, an island in the Aegean Sea), and a remarkable group of German sallets and Italian barbutes and armets à rondelle. The armet à rondelle was the most protective medieval headpiece. An early example, dating about 1440, is signed with the name of the armorer Lionardo.

A number of our medieval elements were made by the Missaglia masters and bear their marks, the crowned MY and M within a split cross (also carved on a capital of their house in Milan, demolished in 1901). The Missaglias were the most distinguished family of armorers of the fifteenth century and the earliest whose works can be identified and about whom something is known. Under Filippo Maria Visconti, Tomaso Missaglia was knighted, in 1435, and by a decree of Duke Francesco Sforza, dated April 22, 1459, he was excused from payment of taxes. Innsbruck in Austria was the rival of Milan, and three pieces with the marks of Innsbruck armorers are exhibited: a sallet by Jörg Wagner, a transitional helmet by Hans Maystetter, and a breastplate by Hans Prunner. These pieces were among the objects lent to the exhibition of the work of Innsbruck armorers held in Innsbruck in 1954.

The group of knightly swords in this gallery is worth noting. A characteristic of fifteenth-century swords is the exceptionally long grip, which enabled knights to wield them with both hands when on foot. The blades are wide, double-edged, and tapering, so that they could be used for both cut and thrust. One of our swords has its hilt wrought in bronze, chiseled and gilded,
and on the pommel are the enameled arms of the Sieur de Gaucourt of the court of Charles VIII. Another, according to the Arabic inscription on its blade, was part of the booty captured in Alexandria by the Egyptian Mamelukes. The swords are supplemented by a rich series of contemporary daggers and a number of fine pommels, one with the enameled arms of Peter of Dreux, Duke of Brittany and Earl of Richmond and a Crusader with Louis IX (Saint Louis).

The shafted weapons on the walls include a series of halberds, the hook or beak of which was used to drag a knight from his saddle, to trip a horse, or, at need, to grapple a wall. Some of our halberds are of the types used by the Swiss infantry at the victorious battles of Granson, Morat, and Nancy. There is also a group of war hammers and axes, weapons used in combat on foot as a display of prowess or in a judicial combat to terminate some personal quarrel.

The later shafted weapons, many with heraldic arms, are distributed through the remaining galleries. Most of them are richly decorated, bringing to mind the pomp and ceremony of ancient warfare. They are arranged in groups that were borne by the state guards of the imperial house of Austria, French royalty and nobility, the prince archbishops of the Holy Roman Empire, the Saxon electors, the dukes of Bavaria, and Italian princes. These weapons of state had a humble origin: they developed from the primitive pole-arms that were the tools of the peasantry and were carried by them when drafted into military service.

Renaissance armor (beginning in the central gallery on the east and continuing in the two northwest galleries) was designed for display rather than use. In the fifteenth century the beauty of armor was related to its utility. By the middle of the century armorers had developed a simplicity of line with protective qualities that could not be improved upon; hence the energies of renaissance artists were necessarily expended upon ornamentation and enrichment. A characteristic of sixteenth-century armor is surface decorations in a variety of techniques. Surfaces were fluted, or channeled, thus giving an effective play of light and shadow; they were colored, etched, gilded, embossed, and damascened. In the exhibition are several fine fluted, or Maximilian, harnesses of Bavarian origin (Augsburg, Nuremberg, and Landshut). In the Emperor Maximilian’s reign armor also developed a style of ornamentation simulating the fantastic costume of the period, with its puffings and slashings, familiar to us from the drawings of Burgkmair, Cranach, Dürer, and Holbein. One of our harnesses imitates contemporary dress in both form and decoration. The same is true of a backplate with buttocks defense and a pair of arm defenses like exaggerated sleeves, with recessed slashes at regular intervals. The design on these pieces appears in two woodcuts, one showing it on costume, the other on armor, by David de Necker. The slashes in costume represented wounds, indicating the valor of the wearer. The clothes themselves furnished, when compressed, a comfortable lining for armor.
Italian armor, about 1400. Composed suit with an early body defense of plates covered with fabric. Gift of Helen Fahnestock Hubbard in memory of her father, Harris C. Fahnestock, 1929
LEFT: Italian basinet, 1380. The curved contours of the steel are not only graceful but practical in diverting blows. The visor, with two ocularia and 63 holes on the right side for breathing, is flanged at the sides to fit over the vervalles. Twenty-nine vervalles follow the edges of sides and lower border; to these is still attached the leather to which the mail defense for neck, shoulder, and chin was once sewn. Weight 6 1/4 pounds. Rogers Fund, 1904.

RIGHT: Venetian sallet, 1460. This is an extraordinary headpiece, which captures the attention the moment it is seen. The embossed lion’s head, which is so lavishly gilded that it appears to be of virgin gold, encases a steel helmet that retains its original blued surface and its cushioned lining. Dick Fund, 1923.
Many artists whose names are familiar to us in other fields were engaged in the design and enrichment of arms and armor. Albrecht Dürer made the designs for the silver armor that Maximilian ordered in 1516 from his court armorer, Kolman Helmischmied; he also illustrated books on fencing and fortification. A jousting helm in the Museum is not unlike the one represented in Dürer’s Three Views of a Helm. Hans Burgkmair the Elder, who was a neighbor of Kolman Helmischmied, is believed to have etched the steel skirt (tonlet) exhibited in the central court.

Etching on armor preceded the making of plates for reproducing drawings on paper. One of the earliest known etchers was Ercole dei Fideli, a goldsmith of Ferrara, who etched the blade of the sword of Caesar Borgia before 1498 (now in the collection of Prince Gaetani). The first etching for print-making was also done on iron; it was not until 1520 that Lucas of Leyden made etchings on copper. Augsburg was a famous center for the etching of armor. Jörg Sorg etched designs for Matthaüs Frauenpreis, Kolman and Desiderius Helmischmied, and Anton Peffenhauser, the work of all of whom is represented in the Museum. Another Augsburg artist who etched armor was Daniel Hopfer.

Most of our sixteenth-century objects have little to do with war since they were used on state occasions or in the tournament or the chase, sports which played an important part in the daily life of the time, or in festivals or pageants. A pageant of victory was valued principally as propaganda, and its success depended on the magnificence of its visual appeal. The rich armor worn on such occasions—the helmet of Francis I made by Philip de Negroli, the gilded armor of Galiot de Genouilhac, Grand Master of Artillery of Francis I, the richly embossed and damascened shield of Charles V, the embossed headpiece of Henry II, the harnesses of Philip II of Spain, the jousting harnesses of the Earl of Pembroke and the Earl of Cumberland—were all made to strike the eye.

The embossed and chased arms and armor of the sixteenth century demonstrate two techniques of sculpture—raising ornament in relief from a surface by hammering from beneath and chiseling motives out of the solid steel. Our finest embossed pieces are mainly Italian (Milanese) and French (Paris). Milan was the greatest armor-making center in Europe, and the work of some of its most distinguished masters is in our collection. There was a direct connection between these two schools, for many Milanese armorers settled in France, especially in the royal workshops. In Paris, the armuriers or heamiers were located in the parish of Saint-Jacques-de-l’Houppet. In 1516 their guild had a statue of Saint George, their patron saint, placed in the church of Saint-Jacques, and in 1596 the guild was even accorded a chapel. Two daughters of Jean Cousin the Elder (1490–1561) married master armuriers of Paris, and it is probable that both Cousins, father and son, collaborated with their armurer relatives in designing and decorating armor.

The technique of chiseling motives out of solid steel is represented in the mountings of a number of swords of French, German, and Italian workmanship, all of which are extremely fine. The hilt of the sword of Ambrogio di Spinola is chased and chased with scenes of almost gemlike minuteness from the life of David. The sword cane of Don Juan José of Austria has an exquisitely chased hilt, the ornamentation including the cross of the Order of St. John of which Don Juan José was Grand Prior. The hilt was made about 1560 by Caspar Spät, a master of steel-chasing who worked for the Bavarian court. The blade, too, is a masterpiece; it bears the inscription Espebro del Rei and the three marks of Juan Martinez, bladesmith to Philip IV of Spain, Don Juan José’s father.

The swords and daggers are magnificent in quality. They show the techniques of chiseling, damascening, inlay, and pierced work, as well as costly blades made of what is now known as “carbon tool steel” (produced by carburizing small quantities of iron in a closed oven with charcoal or other substances rich in carbon). The late sixteenth-century swept hilt, with its gracefully branching guards, was the culmination of a hundred years of development. As armor was gradually dispensed with and greater skill was developed in the use of the sword, the hilt was made to protect the sword hand by
Italian armor, 1450. Composed and partly restored. A complete suit of medieval armor is rarer than a medieval castle or cathedral. The large shoulder defenses, similar to those on Verocchio's statue of Colleoni, protected the armpit. Weight of plate armor 57 pounds, mail shirt 12. Bequest of Bashford Dean, 1928.
Italian armor, 1460. Originally a basinet or an armet à rondelle was worn with this suit, as we know from the cut of the shoulder plate. The deep skirt was worn in foot combat. The plates are skillfully modeled; armor afforded really effective protection only when its elements fitted accurately. Rogers Fund, 1904
various combinations of curves and connecting bars. The cup-hilt, developed in Spain during the second quarter of the seventeenth century, is a more perfect form of guard for a thrusting sword than the most elaborate bar hilt. A fine Italian cup-hilted rapier, presented to the Museum by J. Pierpont Morgan, is unusual in having the signature of its maker, Carlo Picinino, a member of a distinguished family of Milanese armorer and swordsmiths.

Milan was already renowned in the thirteenth century for its weapons. Milanese swords had no inconsiderable sale in spite of the keen competition of Brescia, Toledo, Valencia, Passau, and Solingen. We are told that Milan not only made blades that cut any kind of iron without injury but also “glassy” swords and daggers that were tempered in a peculiar way so as to splinter like broken glass when handled by the unskilled.

With the decline of chivalry knights changed from warriors to courtiers, and from 1650 onward the sword degenerated as a weapon of warfare, though for more than a century it remained in general use as a dress or court sword. The court sword, or small sword, no longer had the functional importance of the rapier, and strength of material was less necessary. Thus in the hilt steel was superseded by bronze, bronze by silver and gold and in turn by such fragile and brittle materials as tortoise shell, thin plaques of ivory, porcelain, mother-of-pearl, even by lace-like filigree set with paste or diamonds. The blade, too, since it was seldom used, followed a line of decadent changes. After 1780 dueling with small swords went out of favor, and affairs of honor were settled with the pistol rather than the blade.

The sporting firearms and crossbows, an important part of the exhibition, show unusual structural features as well as extraordinary workmanship. Most of our early firearms are of German origin, for the cities of Augsburg, Nuremberg, and Munich were great firearms centers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but in addition to the German pieces there are also cases devoted to French, Swiss, and Dutch wheellock firearms. Among the important pieces are: the double-barreled wheellock pistol of Emperor Charles V, made by Peter Pech of Munich about 1540; the wheellock hunting gun of Philip, Duke of Croy-Renty, the stock of which is entirely overlaid with plates of ivory carved in relief with scenes representing the gods of Olympus and the story of Perseus; and four wheellock rifles that were made for the Bavarian court by Daniel Sadeler and Caspar Spätt, with stocks by Elias Becker of Augsburg and Hieronymus Borstoffer of Munich.

The wheellock was the popular weapon for sportsmen, while the matchlock was preferred by soldiers. The butt of the early sporting gun was based on the stock of the crossbow in design, and both gun and crossbow were often ornamented with sculptured and engraved plaques of ivory, bone, or staghorn. As the early gunstocks were heavy in form in order to balance the heavy barrel they provided plenty of surface for decoration. Our firearms show great variety of ornament. The stocks of walnut, rosewood, ebony, and other woods are effectively carved; they are overlaid with ivory plaques that are engraved, carved, stained, and inlaid with staghorn, enamel, mother-of-pearl, silver plaques, wire of different metals, and chiseled bronze and steel mountings. The result often made an effective color scheme. The locks and barrels are chiseled and engraved, gilded and damascened. Such weapons are objects of luxury, created for the richest and most critical personages of their time by the most skillful artists and craftsmen.

The armorer was highly esteemed by his contemporaries and took his place with other able artists in the patronage of the great. Vasari in his Lives of the Most Eminent Painters mentions the Milanese armorer Philip de Negroli, whose works had “brought him great fame.” The Negroli were ennobled, fame and fortune came to the Helmschmieds through the Austrian emperors, and the imperial Maximilian was pictured in his workshop with his hand on the shoulder of the master armorer Seusenhofer. Donatello made his statue of Saint George for the Armorners' Guild of Florence. Military panoplies were designed by Leonardo. We are sure that in their new installation the fine works in our collection, from the medieval period through the Renaissance, will make more real for the visitor the part arms and armor played in the glamour and magnificence of these ages.
Armor for man and horse (associated). Italian, 1490. This armor shows the elegance of plain surfaces of skillfully modeled steel. The horse supported much of the weight, but we know from modern experiments in wearing armor that weight was well distributed so that the knight could move with ease. Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913
ABOVE: Italian sallet (Milanese), 1470. This helmet, shaped like the Corinthian casque, was made for the Venetian municipal guard by one of the Missaglias, a celebrated family of armorers, whose mark appears three times on the bowl (showing that it was triple proof, tested against crossbow bolts). The rectangular riveted border secured a velvet covering. Dick Fund, 1942.

RIGHT: Great basinet of Sir Giles Capel, friend of Henry VIII and a famous jouster. About 1511, probably the work of Italian armorers established by Henry at Southwark before the Greenwich shops were ready. The simple rounded visor, with over 250 openings for air and vision, is of great strength. Sir Giles took part in Henry's coronation tournament in 1509 and was present at the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520. Weight 13 1/2 pounds. Rogers Fund, 1904.
Maximilian armor. German (Nuremberg), 1505. The steel has a characteristic silvery color. The fluting gave increased strength without extra weight. It was first used in Milan, which set the fashion for all Europe in matters of dress and armor. Gift of Alan Rutherfurd Stuyvesant, 1949
ABOVE: Detail of the etched decoration on an Italian (Milanese) breastplate, 1500, showing figures of Saint Christopher, the Christ Child, and Saint Sebastian. Bequest of Bashford Dean, 1929.

LEFT: Backplate with etching of Saint James, Saint Anne with the Virgin and Child, and Saint Sebastian. German (Augsburg), 1510. Armor attributed to Kolman Helmschmied; the etching to his son-in-law Daniel Hopfer. Two methods of etching were used: The figures were drawn with a stylus on the acid-proof varnish covering the steel. The design of the border was drawn on the steel in varnish with a brush and the background then etched away. The figure of Sebastian was taken from a woodcut by Hans Baldung Grien, about 1505, an original of which is in the Museum's Print Room. Gift of Marshall Field, 1938.
Embosed cuirass. Flemish, 1560. On the breastplate are figures of Mars, the god of brute force, and Minerva, the patroness of scientific warfare. On the backplate Diana, goddess of the chase, and Hercules with Cerberus, the triple-headed dog that guarded the entrance to Hades. The backplate is signed: D.G.V. LOCHORST FECIT. Gift of Christian A. Zabriskie, 1938
Armor of Anne de Montmorency (1493–1567), Constable of France. An emblem of peace in the ornament also appears on Montmorency’s funeral monument in the Louvre. French, 1555. Dick Fund, 1932
Parade helmet. French or Italian, 1550. Probably made for Cosimo de' Medici or for Henry II of France by the same armorer goldsmith who made the Henry II suit in the Louvre. It is embossed in low relief with the battle of centaurs and Lapiths, gorgons, and a Greek wave pattern on the crest. It appears in two portraits: that of Ferdinand I de’ Medici (ruled 1587–1609) in the Pitti Palace, Florence, and that of his son, Cosimo II de’ Medici (ruled 1609–1620), in the Metropolitan Museum. Rogers Fund and Joseph Pulitzer Fund, 1904 and 1922
Casque by the celebrated armorer Philip de Negroli, probably made for Francis I of France. Italian (Milanese), dated 1543. It is modeled in graceful lines and lavishly embossed with coiling tendrils and foliation, with a central flower from which a cupid half emerges. The crest is a supine female figure arising from acanthus leaves, her hands grasping the tresses of a gorgon's head. The boldness of the embossing and the beautiful bronze-black patina acquired in the course of centuries give the helmet the appearance of having been cast, although actually it was sculptured in cold steel. Its brow piece has the date and the signature of Philip de Negroli. Francis I was the ruling duke of Milan when Negroli was making this casque. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917.
Helmet of the armor of Henry II on the opposite page. The entire surface of helmet and armor is a field for the richest ornamentation—embossed, damascened, and gilded. The principal motives are: fighting warriors, bound captives, cherub heads, female sphinxes, masks, serpents, crescents, and stars, the whole arranged with splendid color contrast. The designs for many of the elements of this armor are in the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung in Munich, some of them with variant parts, thus offering a choice of motives.

Burgonet. French, 1550. The bowl, with cabled comb three inches high, is forged in one piece with the peaked nape defense and umbril. The etched and gilded bands enclose trophies and scrolls. This helmet, which is etched in the Italian manner, was made by an Italian artist for the French court. Brantôme tells us that Giovanni Pietro Negroli, one of the famous family of Milanese armorers, made fifty thousand crowns selling armor in France in the course of fifteen or sixteen years. Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913.
Embossed parade armor of Henry II of France. French, 1550. Said to have been given by Louis XIII to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, commander in the Thirty Years' War. Dick Fund, 1939
LEFT: Curb bit. North Italian, 1570. Of steel, with some of the original mercury gilding. The mouthpiece of two linked pear-shaped rollers is secured to the branches, which are connected by a chain of vase-shaped elements and have a rein ring at the end of each. This is a piece of extraordinary quality. Weight 1 3/4 pounds. Gift of Alan Rutherfurd Stuyvesant, 1951.

RIGHT: Double curb bit. German, 1600. Of steel, tinned. The mouthpiece, three cylinders with U-shaped port, is attached to two pairs of branches, the larger with perforated leaf motives and hooks for a curb chain. Weight 5 1/2 pounds. Dick Fund, 1942.
Armor for man and horse (associated). German (Nuremberg), dated 1548. Both harnesses are dated, both bear the Nuremberg Guild mark, and both are considered to be the work of Kunz Lochner (1510–1567), whose mark appears on the knight's armor. The embossed letters on the horse's peytral, or breastplate, stand for: "Ich traue Gott von ganzem herzen, Johann Ernst Herzog zu Sachsen" (I trust in God with all my heart, Johann Ernst, Duke of Saxony). The armor for man weighs 56 pounds, that for horse, with saddle included, 92 pounds. Knight's armor, Gift of Mrs. Bashford Dean, 1929, Bashford Dean Memorial Collection. Horse armor, Rogers Fund, 1932
Armor of Duke Johann Wilhelm of Saxe-Weimar. German (Augsburg), 1550. Originally part of a suite of harnesses for jousting, foot combat, ceremony, and so forth. The breast- and backplates are the tilting pieces. Gift of Helen Fahnestock Hubbard in memory of her father, Harris C. Fahnestock, 1929
Armor of George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland. English (Greenwich school), 1590–1595. This is the best-preserved Elizabethan armor in existence and also one of the few showing color almost as it appeared in the XVI century (see cover). Cumberland was the queen’s personal champion. Munsey Fund, 1932
LEFT: Hilt of the rapier of Ambrogio di Spinola (1569–1630), general-in-chief of the Spanish army in the Netherlands, presented to him by Henry IV of France. French, 1605. The hilt is chiseled with biblical scenes and symbolic figures and is a fine example of the difficult art of cutting decoration out of cold iron. In technical achievement it rivals the finest goldsmiths’ work. Rogers Fund, 1932. RIGHT: Hilt of a dress rapier made by Daniel Sadeler, with marks of the Toledo bladesmith Pedro de Belmonte. German (Munich), 1610. From 1594 to 1691 three masters of iron-chasing, the two Sadelers and Caspar Spät, were employed in succession at the Bavarian court in Munich. The Sadeler family were originally engravers and cutlers, later turning the skill of a long tradition to the designing and executing of the finest sculptured steel mounts for swords and firearms. This rapier has a companion dagger, and there are nine other pieces by Daniel Sadeler. The Museum also has a sword cane and two wheellock rifles by Caspar Spät. Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913.
Hilts of a cup-hilted rapier and its left-handed dagger. Spanish, 1650. These steel hilts are most elaborately pierced and chased. The edges of the cup and the dagger guard are rolled outward to catch the point of the adversary’s weapon. The rapier blade is inscribed: MARIA CONCEBIDA SIN PECADO ORIGINAL; the dagger blade has the mark of Pedro de Belmonte of Toledo. Although of the Spanish fashion the hilts of these weapons were probably chased in Italy. They were purchased from a noble family at La Cava, near Naples, and had probably belonged to a Spanish viceroy of Naples in the xvII century. Gift of Alan Rutherfurd Stuyvesant, 1951
Sword pommels, chiseled out of solid iron, pierced, and undercut. Italian and Swiss, xvi and xvii centuries. These fine pieces represent: above, a battle scene, Hercules slaying the centaur Pholus, and Hercules and Antaeus; below, a Moor’s head, female herms and masks, and the legend of William Tell. Dick Fund, 1942

OPPOSITE PAGE: Swiss daggers, about 1570. The subjects are the Dance of Death and the legend of William Tell. Daggers carried by Swiss officers often had richly ornamented sheaths of cast bronze, gilded, chased, and pierced. Some were made after designs by well-known artists: Aldegrever, Holbein, Dürer. Rogers Fund, 1904

OPPOSITE PAGE: Wheellock pistols, each one of a pair. Above, French, 1600, with a combination spanner-primer. Below, Italian (Brescian), 1650
It is extremely rare to have a spanner en suite with enriched wheellock pistols. Caliber of French pistol .44. Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913. The barrel of the Brescian pistol is inscribed LAZARINO COMINAZZO; the inside of the lock has the mark of Cavacciolo. Caliber .48. Rogers Fund, 1947.
Parade helmet of Louis XIV. French, 1700. This helmet and its companion shield, which is shown with it in the exhibition, were prepared for a ceremonial occasion when the king appeared in antique costume. Their heavy weight makes it seem probable that they functioned as accessories rather than as military equipment. They are of silver, chemically blued, with mountings in bronze, chiseled and gilded. The winged dragon forming the crest of the helmet and the head of Medusa on the shield are masterpieces of this type of ornament. A similar helmet and shield are represented on a statue of Louis XIV by Jean Warin in the Royal Apartments at Versailles. Weight of helmet 13 pounds 6 ounces; weight of shield 13 pounds 11 ounces. Rogers Fund, 1904