

Of Arms and Men: Arms and Armor at the Metropolitan, 1912-2012

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Of Arms and Men

Arms and Armor at the Metropolitan, 1912 – 2012

The collecting of historical arms and armor began in Europe in the late eighteenth century. It reflected the growing interest in the history, culture, and artifacts of the Middle Ages known as the Gothic Revival. By the early 1800s, taste for the “Gothick” had become widespread and profoundly influenced contemporary architecture, interior design, and the decorative arts. Novels like Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe* romanticized a lost age of chivalry—epitomized by the knight in shining armor—and helped make the Gothic Revival part of Europe’s popular culture. The fashion inspired the refurbishing of ancestral homes and the building of new ones in Gothic style. Medieval trappings implied the antiquity of the house and the nobility of its owner, and aristocracy, gentry, and nouveaux riches alike had their new baronial halls furnished by “curiosity” dealers with stained glass, tapestries, period-style furniture, and panoplies of arms. Arms and armor became an accepted part of the Romantic interior.

The supply of genuine armor and weapons from medieval and later times was especially abundant in the early nineteenth century, when the Napoleonic Wars displaced quantities of arms from castles and city arsenals throughout Europe. Many pieces eventually found their way to the art markets in London and Paris. The demand for antique arms reached fever pitch during the second quarter of the century, when specialized collections were assembled by aristocrats, antiquaries, and artists, and even national collections added to their holdings. By the second half of the century arms and armor were being sought not only by dedicated *amateurs d’armes* but also by collectors interested in a broad range of medieval and Renaissance works of art. “Gothic” armor (a collector’s term referring to any armor dating to the fourteenth or fifteenth century), simple and robust in form, utilitarian in purpose, and evocative of a romantically distant Middle Ages, was still the object of greatest desire for specialized collectors. At the same time, more highly embellished “parade” pieces from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, intended for princely representation and ostentatious display, appealed to collectors of the decorative arts as virtuoso examples of design and craftsmanship.

Inspired by European fashion, Americans also began collecting arms and armor, but later in the nineteenth century and on a more modest scale. Though Gothic Revival furniture and interiors enjoyed a certain vogue in mid-nineteenth-century America, specialized collections of antique arms were few in number and armories displayed in medieval-style settings exceptional. The armory created for New York socialite Oliver Hazard Perry Belmont in the late 1890s was probably unique. Belmont employed the architect Richard

Opposite: The Bloomberg Court in the Arms and Armor Galleries at the Metropolitan, 2012





1. Armory designed by Richard Morris Hunt in Belcourt, the home of Oliver Hazard Perry Belmont in Newport, Rhode Island, 1897



2. William H. Riggs, ca. 1910

Morris Hunt to create a huge Gothic-style baronial hall in Belcourt, his 50,000-square-foot summer “cottage” in Newport, Rhode Island, to showcase the armor collection he had lately acquired from the fashionable firm of Tiffany & Co. (fig. 1). Several of the armors were mounted on horse manikins covered with the skins of famous Belmont racehorses. By the end of the century armor decorated several other Newport houses and even the entrance hall of the New York mansion of Henry G. Marquand, the Metropolitan Museum’s second president.

The Metropolitan’s interest in arms and armor dates to its founding in 1870, long before the Department of Arms and Armor was established in October 1912. Two of the institution’s first trustees, William H. Riggs and Rutherford Stuyvesant (figs. 2 and 3), were dedicated armor collectors, and they created an awareness and appreciation of ancient arms and armor that was to have a profound influence on the Museum in the years that followed. Both men belonged to an early generation of Ameri-

can armor collectors, a rare breed at any time but especially so in those years.

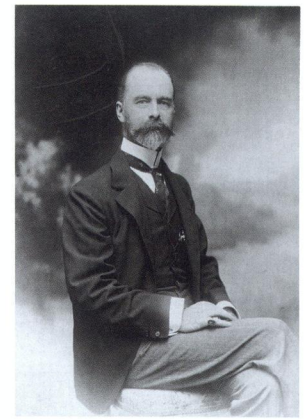
William H. Riggs (1837–1924), the son of a New York banker, spent most of his life in Europe. In the 1850s he attended preparatory school in Vevey, on the shores of Lake Geneva, where he counted among his classmates J. P. Morgan. From the late 1850s onward Riggs lived in Paris and dedicated his life to armor collecting. In 1870 his collection, though still in its infancy, already had such a glowing reputation that John Taylor Johnston, the Metropolitan Museum’s newly elected first president, asked him to consider donating it to the Museum. Hoping to sway Riggs in its favor, the Museum appointed him trustee and first vice president. Although he accepted the posts, Riggs had little confidence at the time in the longevity of a privately funded institution like the Metropolitan and declined to entrust it with his collection. He resigned from his duties at the Museum in 1874 and little was heard from him until 1904, when his collection, by then probably the largest in private hands, again attracted the Museum’s interest.

Rutherford Stuyvesant (1843–1909), wealthy descendant of Peter Stuyvesant, the famous peg-legged Dutch colonial governor of New York (then New Amsterdam), was also named a trustee of the Metropolitan in 1870. By the time he died in 1909, his armory, numbering about six hundred pieces, was probably the largest in the United States and contained many outstanding examples. Stuyvesant’s most important contribution as one of the longest-serving members of the Museum’s board was his advocacy of arms and armor as a popular and meaningful part of the permanent collection. In 1896 he urged the Museum to accept the gift of a small group of arms and armor formed by a local collector, John Stoneacre Ellis. Like most American armor collections of the period, Ellis’s had been assembled with more enthusiasm than expertise; it contained few objects of museum quality. Still, the Ellis collection was the Museum’s first acquisition of European arms, and for almost two decades it occupied a gallery of its own, with the arms arranged in decorative groupings in no particular order.

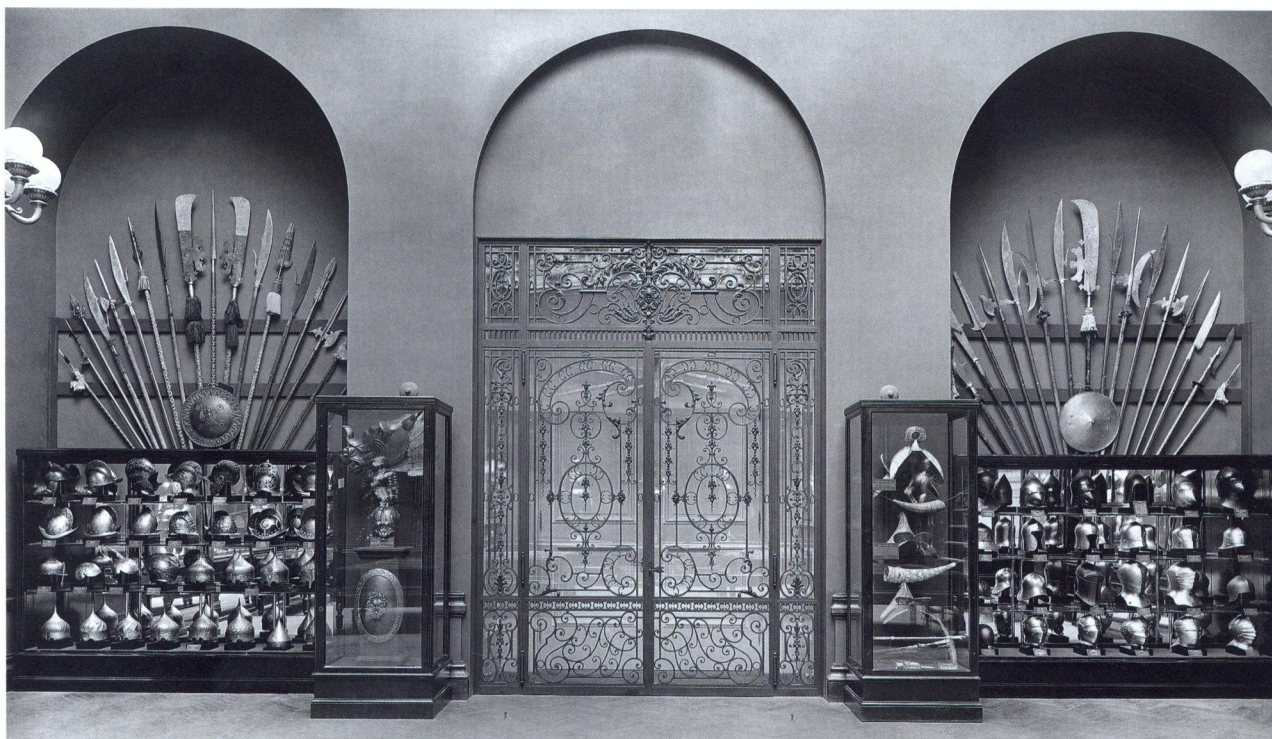
More significantly, in 1904 Stuyvesant championed the Museum's purchase of the Duc de Dino collection, the Metropolitan's first truly important acquisition of arms and armor. A minor member of the French aristocracy, Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord (1843–1917), duc de Dino, is remembered principally for his much-publicized marriages to two American heiresses, Elizabeth Curtis of Boston and Adele Sampson Stevens of New York, as well as for his armor collection. Formed in just fifteen years between 1885 and 1900, the collection comprised about five hundred items, the majority of European origin, and was considered by specialists the most important in private hands, perhaps the last of its kind. Documented in a deluxe illustrated catalogue, the collection was offered for sale in 1901. American millionaires like Rutherford Stuyvesant and J. P. Morgan were the targeted purchasers, but even the German emperor Wilhelm II showed an interest. Finally, in March 1904, Stuyvesant, who was a friend of Dino's, secured a firm offer to the Metropolitan, and within three weeks the purchase was approved. At \$250,000, the Dino collection was the Museum's most expensive single purchase up to that time. Remarkably, the collec-

tion was acquired sight unseen and without independent curatorial expertise, the trustees relying entirely on the published catalogue and Stuyvesant's recommendation. The gamble was worth it. The Dino collection provided the Museum with arms and armor of artistic merit and historical importance, including many pieces comparable to the finest examples in European national collections (see fig. 4). Morgan, Stuyvesant's fellow board member (and from November 1904 the Metropolitan's president), cabled his congratulations: "Wonderful collection, great acquisition for Museum, price exceedingly moderate."

The Dino collection contained a wide range of arms dating between 1400 and 1700, many of them associated with royal or aristocratic figures. Ironically, the works for which it was best known at the turn of the century, the complete armors, have in the light of modern scholarship proved to be either overly restored or outright fakes. Many of the individual pieces of armor and some of the finely decorated weapons, on the other hand, are outstanding. A fifteenth-century crossbow inlaid with delicately carved ivory plaques (fig. 5) bearing the arms of Count Ulrich V of Württemberg (1413–1480) and the date 1460 is one of the finest surviving medieval



3. Rutherford Stuyvesant, ca. 1900



4. Arms and armor from the Duc de Dino collection installed in the Metropolitan, 1907



5. Attributed to Heinrich Heid von Winterthur (German/Swiss, recorded 1453–60). Crossbow of Ulrich V, count of Württemberg, dated 1460. Horn, tendon, birch bark, wood, ivory, bone, antler, hemp, iron, copper alloy; l. 28¼ in. (71.8 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.36). The ivory panels are carved with figures, inscriptions, and the arms of Count Ulrich (1413–1480) and his third wife, Margaret of Savoy (1420–1479). Countess Margaret may have given this crossbow as a Christmas present to her husband, who was a passionate huntsman.



6. Foot-combat helm (great bascinet) of Sir Giles Capel. Possibly Flanders, ca. 1510–20. Steel, copper alloy; h. 17½ in. (44.5 cm), wt. 13 lb. 8 oz. (6.1 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.274)

examples. A helmet, or great bascinet (fig. 6), that belonged to Sir Giles Capel (1485–1556) of Rayne Hall, Essex, a prominent figure at Henry VIII's court, has a powerful sculptural presence. Probably made in Flanders about 1510–20, the helmet has a unique rounded visor pierced with 250 slots for sight and ventilation. Helmets of this massive size and distinctive type were intended for use in foot-combat, a sporting contest fought by two fully armored combatants armed with pollaxes, spears, or swords. This is very likely Sir Giles's "beste Helmett," which he instructed in his will was to be hung above his tomb.

A number of Dino pieces have a French royal provenance, among them an embossed shaffron (defense for a horse's head) dated 1539 and a damascened mace that were made for Henry II when he was dauphin, two fire-arms from the *cabinet d'armes* of Louis XIII (reigned 1610–43), and two ceremonial spears (partizans) carried by the guard of Louis XIV (reigned 1645–1715). The masterpiece of the collection is a French open-faced helmet, or burgonet (fig. 7), thought to have been made around 1550 for Henry II, who reigned from 1547 to 1559. The surfaces are exquisitely



7. Burgonet with buffe, probably of Henry II of France. France (probably Paris), ca. 1550. Steel, gold, copper alloy; h. 14 in. (35.6 cm), wt. 5 lb. 5 oz. (2.4 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, burgonet: Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.217), buffe: Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1922 (22.140)

embossed in low relief with classically inspired ornament: a Greek wave and honeysuckle frieze on the comb, battles between the Lapithae and Centaurs on either side of the bowl, and Medusa heads on the hinged cheekpieces. The burgonet appears to have been a diplomatic gift from the French court to Ferdinando I de' Medici, grand duke of Tuscany, around the time of his marriage in 1589 to a French princess, Christine of Lorraine. It is depicted fitted with the matching face-defense, or buffe, in a portrait of Ferdinando from 1590 in the Uffizi, Florence, and again in a portrait of Ferdinando's son Cosimo II that is now in the Metropolitan (fig. 8). The helmet and buffe were separated in the eighteenth century, but the buffe turned up in England in the late nineteenth century. After several failed attempts, the Museum finally acquired it at auction in 1922.

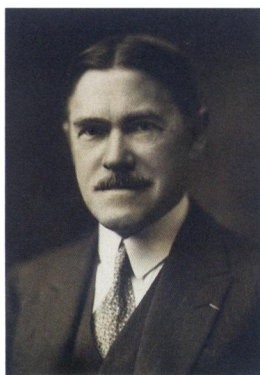
The Duc de Dino also assembled a small group of Islamic helmets and body armor that date to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Among them are ten "turban helmets," a



8. Justus Sustermans (Flemish, Antwerp 1597–1681 Florence). *Cosimo II de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany (1590–1621)*. Oil on canvas, 78 x 48 in. (198.1 x 121.9 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Bashford Dean, 1922 (22.150)



9. Turban helmet inscribed with the name of Sultan Ya'qub. Iran or Western Anatolia, ca. 1478–90. Steel, silver; h. 11½ in. (28.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.3.211)



10. Bashford Dean



11. Bashford Dean wearing an Italian infantry armor of about 1575 from his private collection, Riverdale, New York, ca. 1920

distinctive type taking its modern name from the bulbous shape of the bowl, which is often forged with spiral fluting that suggests the windings of a cloth turban. The engraved ornament, usually covered with silver, consists of foliate arabesques and Arabic inscriptions that refer to a ruler's honorific titles. The name of Sultan Ya'qub, ruler of the Ak-Koyunlu (White Sheep Turkmen) from 1478 to 1490, inscribed on one of them (fig. 9) documents the Turkman origin of the group.

The acquisition of the Dino collection not only brought the Museum a renowned collection of armor, the best in the United States, it also attracted the services of Bashford Dean (1867–1928; figs. 10–13). Dean was professor of vertebrate zoology at Columbia University and the first curator of fishes in the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology (later the Department of Ichthyology and Herpetology) at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. One of the world's experts on oyster culture, chimaeroids (primitive sharks), and armored fishes of the Devonian era, he was widely respected in the academic world as a brilliant scientist and inspired teacher. His textbook *Fishes Living and Fossil*, published in 1895, was written when he was only twenty-eight. He published 175 papers on the related subjects of zoology, biology, and paleontology, and his three-volume magnum opus, *The Bibliography of Fishes* (1916–23), became a standard reference and earned him the prestigious Daniel Giraud Elliot Medal awarded by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences. Dean was also passionately interested in arms and armor and by 1904 had assembled the beginnings of what would become one of the most important private collections in the United States. His acquaintances never failed to remark on his parallel interests in armored fish and medieval armor.

Dean was well educated, articulate, and passionate. He came from old Anglo-Dutch stock, and he was married to an heiress, Mary Alice Dyckman, whose Dutch ancestors farmed large tracts of land in northern Manhattan. (She and her sister donated Dyckman House to the City of New York in 1910, and it was subsequently restored under Dean's direction.) His family



12. Bashford Dean wearing one of his newly acquired armors, Japan, 1900

wealth thus allowed him to pursue his professional and private interests unabated.

Proud possessor of the Dino collection, the Museum now faced the dilemma of what to do with it. No one on the staff was qualified to deal with it. Alerted by an announcement of the purchase in April 1904, Dean volunteered for the job and attacked it with passion. He had the collection installed by the fall, and by the spring of 1905 he had authored an illustrated handbook that included a general introduction to European armor as well as a catalogue of the Dino and Ellis collections. The speed and professionalism with which he accomplished the work deeply impressed the Museum's administration and particularly its president, J. P. Morgan, who became one of his greatest admirers and supporters. In 1906 the Museum appointed Dean honorary (i.e., unpaid) curator of arms and armor. The armor collection was at the time part of the Department of Decorative Arts.



13. Armor of *gusoku* type. Japan, late Edo or early Meiji period, second half of 19th century. Iron, copper alloy, lacquer, textile, leather, hair; h. 69 in. (175 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1904 (04.4.2)

Even before his work on the Dino collection, Dean had established his credentials with the Museum. In 1903 he had organized an exhibition of Japanese arms and armor from his own collection and those of several other New Yorkers. While conducting scientific research in Japan in 1900, he had discovered the inherent power and beauty of the armor and weapons used until only recently by the samurai class. With characteristic focus and zeal he became knowledgeable on the subject and formed a collection of 125 pieces, at the time the most important in the United States. A photograph of Dean wearing one of his armors (figs. 12, 13)



attests to his newfound interest as well as his habit of getting to know his subject inside and out. Installed in a second-floor gallery on the north side of the Great Staircase, the 1903 exhibition was the Metropolitan's first devoted to Japanese art of any kind, and Dean's accompanying catalogue was its first publication on arms and armor. In 1904 Dean sold his collection to the Museum at cost so that the popular display became permanent. In 1905 he returned to Japan to continue his scientific work, and within a few months he had assembled a second, even more distinguished group of Japanese armor and related material, more than four hundred items. These too he lent to the Museum and finally donated in 1914.

Dean's Japanese holdings were particularly strong in armor, helmets, masks, and related accoutrements but noticeably weak in bladed weapons. (He confessed that he had no eye for them.) The most remarkable of his armors, and today one of the department's best-known works, is a fourteenth-century *yoroi* (fig. 14), a battle armor with a distinctive boxed skirt that is thought to have belonged to Ashikaga Takauji (1305–1358), founder of the Ashikaga shogunate. Though most of the original white silk lacing has been lost, the breastplate retains its covering of stenciled leather displaying an image of Fudō Myō-ō, a fierce Buddhist guardian figure. This is the only *yoroi* from the Kamakura period (1185–1333) outside Japan. Dean's Japanese arms and armor became the foundation of the Museum's renowned collection, which now comprises more than four thousand objects and is considered the most comprehensive outside Japan.

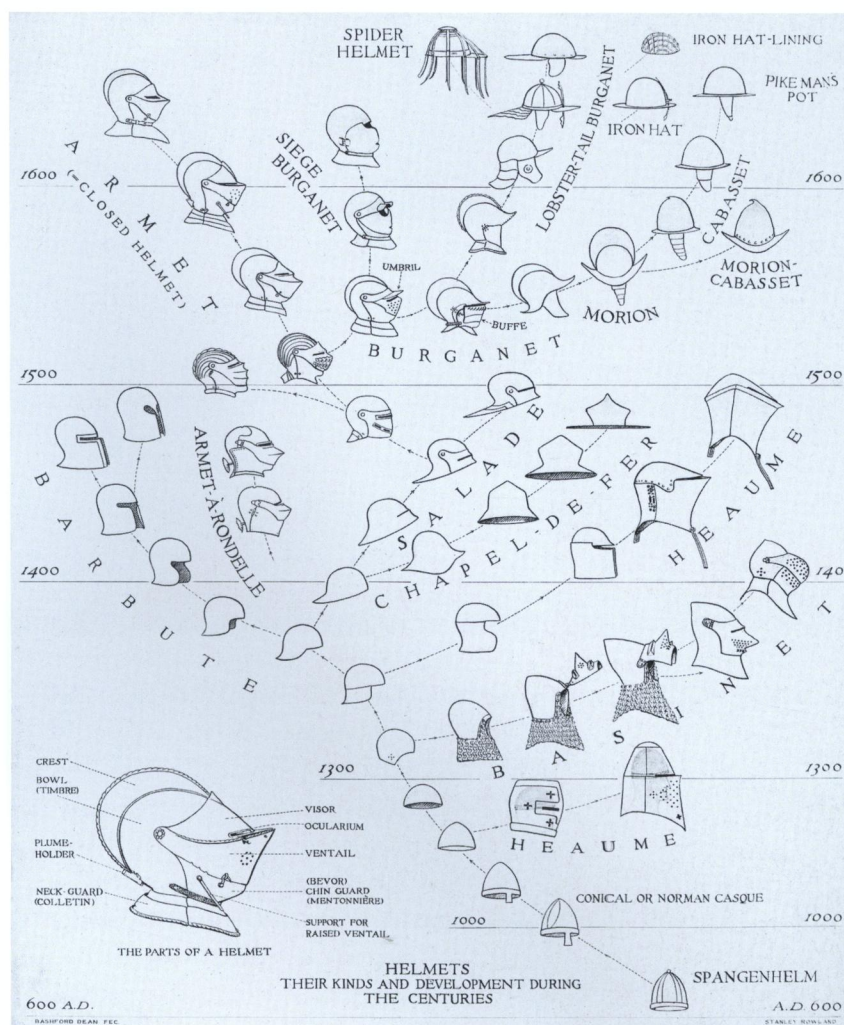
In his first years at the Metropolitan Dean focused less on acquisitions than on publicizing the Museum's collection and encouraging private collectors in the field. In 1905 he wrote to William Riggs: "I am sure that this is a missionary work, and I have the feeling that the general visitors are greatly interested

14. Armor (*yoroi*). Japan, early 14th century. Iron, leather, lacquer, silk, copper alloy, gold, pigments; h. 37½ in. (95.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Bashford Dean, 1914 (14.100.121a–e)

in the subject and want to know more about the character and history of the objects.” Dean recognized that arms and armor appealed to the public most obviously for their romantic association with medieval knights, but he also wanted to make museum audiences aware of their historical, technical, and artistic qualities. His public lectures at the Metropolitan were entertaining as well as informative. For one of them he employed an assistant dressed in armor to demonstrate the modest weight of a medieval harness and the relative ease of movement it afforded the wearer; in another the Museum’s armorer shaped a piece of steel into a basic helmet form to illustrate medieval armorers’ techniques; and in yet other presentations historical fencing techniques were re-created and firearms with matchlock, wheellock, and flintlock mechanisms were fired onstage to illustrate their technical workings. These early talks served as the inspiration for two educational films the Museum made in the 1920s.

Dean had strong opinions about how information should be presented in museum galleries: “Short labels irritate an intelligent reader by telling him that a spade is a spade, and a really long label . . . is avoided by nearly everyone.” He was convinced that visitors “like to see the reasons for things” and to understand the changes in form and style over time. Toward this end he devised a graphic solution, a series of printed “developmental charts” for armor, helmets, various weapons, spurs, stirrups, and buckles, to aid the public in understanding the evolution of the objects they saw in the galleries (fig. 15). Here Dean’s scientific background and experience as an educator were most obvious. His gallery installations also included a vitrine or two of nineteenth-century fakes, with explanatory labels pointing out the faults of their design, materials, or patinas. Among the exhibits were some of the curator’s own “mistakes.”

Dean developed close relationships with major arms and armor collectors worldwide, but especially those in the New York area, including Clarence Mackay, E. Hubert Litchfield, Ambrose Monell, Rutherford Stuyvesant,



George C. Stone, and C. O. von Kienbusch. He advised and encouraged them, recruited them as a support group for the department, and no doubt hoped that someday they might donate their best pieces to the Museum. In 1911 he organized a special loan exhibition at the Metropolitan that showcased for the first time European arms and armor from American private collections, including his own. The accompanying catalogue put European curators and collectors on notice that Americans were becoming serious about arms and armor, a development one German curator deemed “the American peril.” To further support and foster the interests of private collectors, in 1921 Dean founded the Armor and Arms Club, which is still active today.

The Metropolitan’s growing collection required the expert care of a traditionally trained armorer. In 1909 Dean found the ideal

15. “Helmets, Their Kinds and Development during the Centuries.” Educational chart devised by Bashford Dean and drawn by Stanley Rowland, 1915

16. Armorer Daniel Tachaux (left) and his assistant Jacob Merkert (right) working in the Armor Shop at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, ca. 1912



candidate, Daniel Tachaux of Paris (fig. 16), whom he characterized as “a wonderful artist in metal.” Tachaux brought with him to New York more than six hundred armorer’s tools, many a century or two old, which the Museum acquired in 1912. The anvils, stakes, hammers, shears, and other tools are still occasionally used in the department’s conservation workshop. In hiring Tachaux, Dean established a tradition of employing specialized armorers and conservators to restore and maintain the collection and to mount and install displays. The department today is one of only a few in the Museum with its own specialized conservation staff.

Tachaux’s skills were soon tested with the Museum’s acquisition in 1911 of two exceptionally rare English armors made in the workshops that Henry VIII established in 1515 at the Royal Palace at Greenwich, near London, to make armor for him and members of his court. Discovered in the attic of Holme Lacy, the country house of the Earl of Chesterfield in Herefordshire, the armors are now thought to have belonged to the earl’s ancestors Sir John Scudamore (1542–1623) and his son Sir James (1568–1619), both courtiers to Elizabeth I. A former soldier who was admired for his jousting prowess, James may have been Edmund Spenser’s inspiration in 1590 for Scudamour, a character in his epic poem *The Faerie Queene*.

The armors were incomplete and in terrible condition, which seems to have been the result of more than just neglect. An acquaintance of Dean’s who had spent several summers at Holme Lacy told him that he and the other children of the house had discovered the armors in a lumber room and rigged one of them up on a scarecrow in a wheat field, abandoning it there for more than a month. “Then we got the gardener to fetch it back and we used it for the wicked knight in fairy stories near the lake. Twice we drowned him . . . If I had not gotten the undergardener to fish him out . . . he would have been at the bottom of Holme Lacy Lake now, rusted quite away and not an adornment of the museum.” Each of the armors was missing key elements such as a helmet, breastplate, or gauntlets, and the surviving parts were deeply rusted. A photograph of the left arm defense (vambrace) of James Scudamore’s armor prior to restoration (fig. 17) attests to the challenge. Over a period of many months Tachaux cleaned and restored the pieces and fabricated replacement elements where necessary. For Sir John’s armor he made the helmet, left shoulder, and two gauntlets and for Sir James’s (fig. 18) the breastplate, backplate, and two gauntlets. The new elements are accurate in form, and their surfaces, including the etched and gilt ornament, are skillfully patinated so as to blend in with the genuine pieces.



17. Left arm defense (vambrace) of the armor of Sir James Scudamore, before restoration, 1912

18. Armor of Sir James Scudamore. England (Greenwich), ca. 1595–96. Steel, gold, copper alloy; h. 70¼ in. (178.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Frederick C. Hewitt Fund, 1911 (11.128.2)



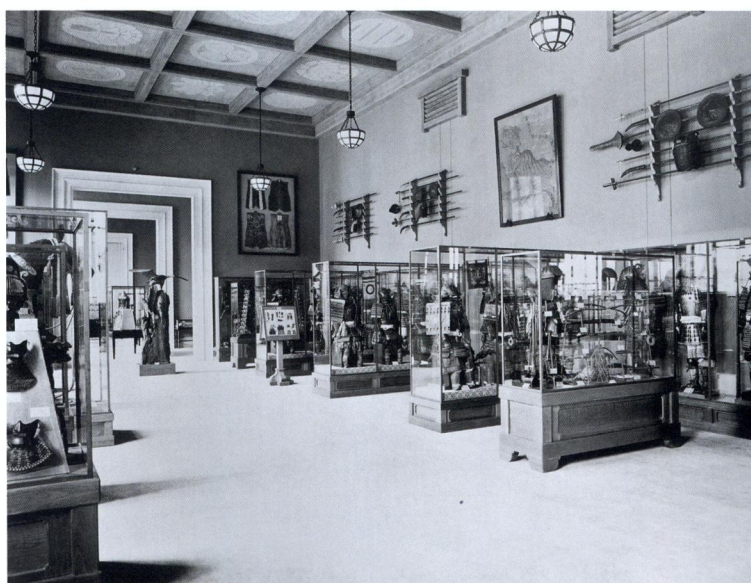
They were signed and dated by Tachaux and have always been clearly identified as restorations on the gallery labels.

No sooner had Dean taken charge of the Dino collection in 1904 than he launched a decade-long campaign to secure the Riggs collection, by then the largest in private hands. Although Riggs had originally spurned the Metropolitan's overtures, the Dino purchase and especially the appointment of Morgan, his old school friend, as the Museum's president helped to change his mind. Dean and Stuyvesant visited Riggs in Paris in July of 1904, and with Morgan's support Dean continued to court the elderly collector, regularly visiting him, writing to him, and soliciting his advice.

Riggs spoke of a future donation but made no commitment, and Dean despaired of the success of his mission: "It is rather a difficult job," he lamented to Morgan in 1912, "requiring infinite patience and far more diplomacy than I am gifted with." That year the Museum took two decisive steps that tipped the scales: it created the Department of Arms and Armor, then one of only six curatorial departments, and appointed Dean as full-time curator. In the spring of 1913 Riggs returned to the United States for the first time since 1870 and on June 5, in Dean's home, he signed the deed of gift. That winter Dean spent six months in Riggs's cluttered and unheated town house in Paris cataloguing and packing the collection,



19. The court in the Arms and Armor Galleries, 1921



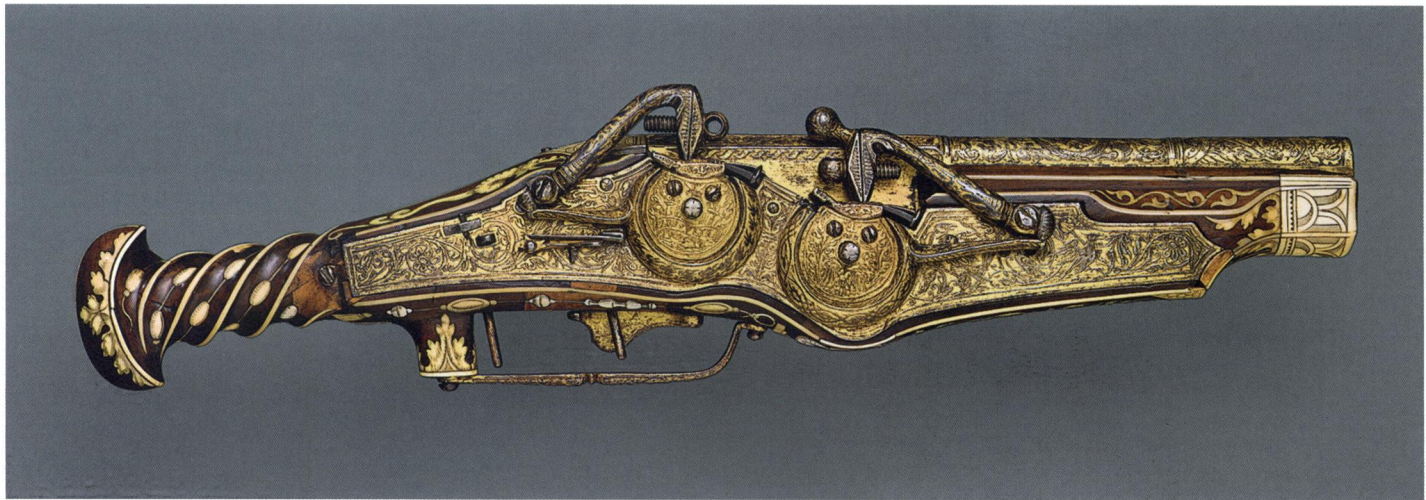
20. Gallery of Japanese Arms and Armor, 1915



21. Giovan Paolo Negrolì (Italian, Milan ca. 1513–1569). Breastplate from a parade armor, ca. 1540–45. Steel, h. 23 1/4 in. (59 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1855)

the extent of which surprised even Dean: “I found a pair of richly engraved Gothic spurs among a bundle of socks,” he wrote to the Museum’s director Edward Robinson. The curator and collector returned together to New York and installed the collection in a new suite of galleries specifically designed for arms and armor by the firm of McKim, Mead and White, the Museum’s architects, who incorporated a number of suggestions from Dean himself. (The galleries, now completely rebuilt, are currently occupied by the Department of Egyptian Art.)

The heart of the new galleries was a two-story colonnaded court covered with a skylight that provided a majestic setting for equestrian figures and complete armors in freestanding vitrines (fig. 19). The surrounding spaces housed vitrines filled with smaller pieces: helmets and other armor elements and weapons. The most highly decorated armors and weapons were displayed in a transverse gallery at the north end called the Hall of Princes. Two galleries along Fifth Avenue were devoted to Japanese arms and armor and had flat beamed ceilings painted in gold with the *mon* (heraldic emblems) of leading samurai families (fig. 20); a third held Islamic and Indian arms lent by George C. Stone. Dean added color and atmosphere with banners, tapestries, sculpture, coins and medals, manuscript cuttings, and paintings showing armor.



Formed over half a century, from 1860 to 1910, and comprising almost two thousand objects, the Riggs collection included nearly every type of European armor and weapon, ranging from elaborately embellished examples commissioned by the aristocracy to simple arms carried by common foot soldiers. It complemented the Dino collection with surprisingly little duplication. Among the armor that came to the Museum from Riggs is an embossed breastplate of about 1540–45 that is the only surviving piece signed by the Milanese armorer Giovan Paolo Negroli (fig. 21). The breastplate's steel surface is worked in high relief with a symmetrical design of acanthus foliage inhabited by birds and fantastic creatures intended to evoke classical Roman armor. A double-barreled wheellock pistol made for Emperor Charles V by the Munich watchmaker turned gunsmith Peter Peck in about 1540–45 (fig. 22) is an early and distinguished example of a handheld firearm and one of the earliest multishot weapons. The elegant pistol has a distinctive straight spirally carved grip, finely etched and gilt barrels and locks, and a wood stock inlaid with engraved staghorn depicting an aristocratic hunting scene. Etched on the wheel covers are the crowned double-headed imperial eagle and the emperor's personal device, the columns of Hercules with the motto "plus ultra" (more beyond).

Riggs's collection included more than four hundred staff weapons: halberds, glaives, and partizans. Among the finest is a partizan (fig. 23)



22. Peter Peck (German, Munich ca. 1500/1510–1596). Double-barreled wheellock pistol of Emperor Charles V, ca. 1540–45. Steel, gold, wood, staghorn, bone; l. 19 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (49.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.1425)

23. Designed by Jean Bérain the Elder (French; Saint-Mihiel, Meuse, 1637–1711 Paris). Partizan carried by the Gardes de la Manche of King Louis XIV of France (detail). France (Paris), 1679. Steel, gold, wood, textile; l. 86 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (220 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of William H. Riggs, 1913 (14.25.454)



24. Filippo Negroli (Italian, Milan ca. 1510–1579). Parade helmet (burgonet), dated 1543. Steel, gold, textile; h. 9½ in. (24.1 cm), wt. 4 lb. 2 oz. (1.9 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1720)

that belongs to a series of identical arms carried by the bodyguard of Louis XIV of France. Its head is pierced and chiseled with ornament that shows Mars (representing the Sun King) seated in a chariot and trampling a lion and an eagle (England and Austria) as Fame crowns him with laurel. Above them is a blazing sun, the royal emblem, surrounded by the king's motto, "nec pluribus impar" (not equaled by many). The ceremonial weapons were designed for a royal wedding in Paris in 1679 by Jean Bérain, who as *dessinateur de la chambre et du cabinet du roi* oversaw the creation of all designs for court events. To quote the account of the wedding in the Paris gazette *Mercure galant*, this partizan and its counterparts "surpass all other works in chiseled steel."

Within months of the opening of the new galleries Dean began a quest to acquire two splendid pieces of armor that were to be the triumphs of his career. The first was a Milanese parade helmet (burgonet) signed by Filippo Negroli and dated 1543 (fig. 24) that was owned at the time by the Metropolitan's president

J. P. Morgan. A Renaissance virtuoso, Filippo was the most innovative and celebrated Italian armorer of his generation, and this helmet is arguably his masterpiece. Stretched full-length atop its elegantly proportioned bowl, which is forged from a single plate of steel, is a mermaidlike figure in high relief, her tail splitting into scrolling acanthus tendrils inhabited by putti, her raised arms holding the locks of a grimacing gorgon. The helmet's blackened surface suggests a classical bronze. The sources of Filippo's ornament are ancient Roman, his interpretation purely Renaissance. This was the only piece of armor in Morgan's vast art collection, and it had cost him in 1907 the princely sum of £13,200 (about \$60,000), then a record for an armor purchase.

Dean coveted the helmet. In 1911 he included it in his exhibition of arms and armor from private collections, where it outclassed all other loans. In 1914, following the banker's death, his son J. P. (Jack) Morgan Jr. began to sell off parts of his father's collection to fulfill cash bequests and pay the state inheritance tax. The future home of the helmet was in doubt, and Dean began a campaign to secure it for the Museum. In 1916 he borrowed it again, this time exhibiting it near the Negroli breastplate already in the collection (fig. 21); he published an article about it in the Museum's *Bulletin*; he lobbied for the support of Morgan's librarian and curator, Bella da Costa Greene; and he kept his fingers crossed. Finally, in 1917, Jack Morgan included the helmet as part of his magnificent gift to the Metropolitan of approximately seven thousand objects. Dean was not exaggerating when he characterized it as "the most important object in our collection."

The second goal of Dean's quest, the so-called Genouilhac armor of 1527 (fig. 25), was declared by one expert "the finest suit of armor in the world." Once thought to have been made in France or Italy for Galiot de Genouilhac, grand master of artillery under Francis I of France, it is today recognized as the earliest dated armor made in the royal workshops at Greenwich, very likely for Henry VIII himself. It is the earliest surviving Greenwich garniture for field and tournament use and retains

a number of exchange or reinforcing pieces as well as the saddle, shaffron, and crinet for the horse. Etched and gilt overall, this is the most splendid of all Greenwich armors.

The armor had long been in France, probably having arrived there as a diplomatic gift in the sixteenth century. At the Exposition Rétrospective Militaire in Paris in 1889 it caught the attention of armor collectors and dealers from both sides of the Atlantic. Its then owner, the Duchesse d'Uzès, was reluctant to sell, but as World War I dragged on and conditions in France became ever bleaker, she changed her mind. Riggs, aged eighty, acted as the Museum's agent, his Old World diplomacy and charm winning over the duchess in 1917, after a "courtship" of sixteen months. He won out over the famous London dealer Joseph Duveen, agreeing to pay 375,000 francs (about \$66,000), until recently the largest sum paid by the Museum for any single armor. Riggs himself collected the armor from the d'Uzès home, the Château de Bonnelles, commandeering a Paris taxi to make the 100-mile trip. Given the dangers of U-boat activity in the Atlantic, the Museum decided to keep the armor in Paris for the duration of the war. It finally arrived in New York in 1919.

After the United States entered World War I in April 1917, Dean was called upon to advise the military on the design of helmets and body armor. The U.S. military recognized him as the nation's foremost authority on historical armor and the Metropolitan's collection as the best reference source for armor design. Commissioned as a major of ordnance, Dean was appointed chairman of the Helmets and Body Armor Unit. His principal task was to devise a distinctly American helmet that was as protective as the German version, as handsome as the French, and as easy to manufacture as the English, with a shape readily distinguishable in battle conditions from all three (see fig. 26). Dean recognized that the shallow saucer shape of the

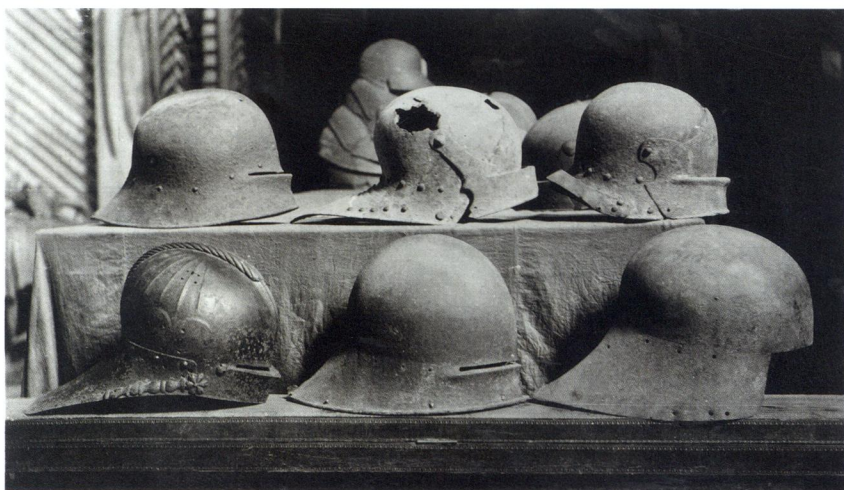


25. Armor for field and tournament, probably made for King Henry VIII of England (Greenwich), dated 1527. Steel, gold, copper alloy; h. 73 in. (185.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, William H. Riggs Gift and Rogers Fund, 1919 (19.131.1)



26. American experimental light armor, with breast- and back-plates, arm defenses, and helmet model no. 5. Bashford Dean, *Helmets and Body Armor in Modern Warfare* (New Haven and London, 1920), fig. 196B, p. 249

27. Helmets photographed by Bashford Dean in the Military Museum, Istanbul, 1920. The helmet in fig. 28 is at the bottom left.



ubiquitous British “tin hat” did not provide as much protection to the sides and back of the head as the heavier and deeper German helmet, which was modeled on the fifteenth-century sallet. Working with Tachaux, he devised a number of helmet prototypes in nonballistic metal, and a limited series of prototypes were produced in manganese steel and tested. Although they were rejected as being either too close to the German model or too difficult to produce, Dean’s designs possessed excellent lines and proper glancing surfaces. Dean also directed research on new lightweight body armor to protect the torso and arms, but none was put into production before the war’s end. His research is summarized in his 1920 book *Helmets and Body Armor in Modern Warfare*.

The decade of the 1920s was one of the busiest in the department’s history and in terms of acquisitions one of its most successful. The long war had devastated and destabilized Europe economically and politically. Museums, particularly in Germany and Austria, short of operating funds, were forced to sell duplicates from their collections. Old aristocratic families also put their heirlooms up for sale. Europe was selling, America buying. Wealthy American collectors acquired works of outstanding quality the likes of which had never before crossed the Atlantic. Leading dealers and collectors competed for paintings, sculptures, tapestries, and arms and armor. Prices rose to all-time highs. The major competitors for armor were Clarence

Mackay, William Randolph Hearst, and Bashford Dean, both for his personal collection and for the Metropolitan Museum, the only American institution buying armor at the time.

The war over, Dean planned a five-month reconnaissance trip to Europe to scout out acquisitions for the Museum. In October 1919 he announced his intentions to Museum President Robert de Forest: “I am going abroad firm in the faith that some wonderful things will turn up, opportunities which have not been had since Napoleon’s time.” The journey took him to England and across Europe. According to his travel diaries, he visited 48 cities, 649 dealers, and 60 private collections. He uncovered a wealth of rare and unusual pieces, many of which he eventually purchased.

One of Dean’s most exciting discoveries was a vast hoard of European armor in the Military Museum in Istanbul (see fig. 27). The museum incorporated the former Ottoman arsenal, which had been housed in the Byzantine church of Hagia Eirene since the fall of Constantinople in 1453. The arsenal contained thousands of Mamluk, Persian, and Ottoman armors and weapons, the largest and most important (and still mostly unstudied) collection of its kind in the world, as well as a quantity of European armor previously unknown in the West. Dean spent five days studying and photographing the European pieces and succeeded in persuading the museum authorities to let him purchase five rusty European helmets, each a rare or unusual example of its type. The most important of these was a *Rennhut* (fig. 28), a special type of tournament helmet worn in the German *Rennen*, or joust of war, fought with pointed (rather than blunt) lances. Datable to about 1525, the helmet is attributable to the distinguished armorer Kolman Helmschmid of Augsburg and its etched ornament to Daniel Hopfer of Augsburg, one of the first artists to use etching for making prints. The decoration includes the monogram *ML*, which Dean speculated might refer to Moritz of Leipzig (Duke Moritz of Saxony, 1521–1553)

but which subsequent research has identified as the monogram of King Louis II of Hungary and Bohemia and his wife, Mary of Habsburg. The nineteen-year-old king was killed when he fell from his horse as he retreated from the catastrophic Battle of Mohács in 1526, when more than ten thousand Hungarian troops fell against the army of Süleyman the Magnificent. It seems likely that after they captured Buda, the Hungarian capital, the Ottoman victors seized this helmet along with other royal possessions and carried it back to Istanbul. Despite his misidentification of the monogram, Dean's instincts about the helmet's historical and artistic significance were prescient.

A number of Dean's best acquisitions came from German museums, where works of non-German origin were particularly singled out for disposal. In 1923 he purchased for the Metropolitan the remarkable "lion helmet" (fig. 29), possibly the earliest surviving Italian parade helmet *all'antica* (in the antique style), which had recently been sold by the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg. The lion, formed of gilt copper and fitted over a steel helmet bowl (a sallet), undoubtedly alludes to Hercules, the classical hero and demigod who slew the Nemean lion and wore his pelt as a trophy. Dean rightly called it "one of the most extraordinary helmets in the world" and confessed in a letter to Riggs that he nearly fell from his chair when it was brought into his office.

Dean also acquired a complete early seventeenth-century French armor of heavy cavalry (cuirassier) type (fig. 30) that had come from the Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt. The splendid armor may well have been a gift from the court of Henry IV (reigned 1589–1610) to the landgraves of Hesse. Although it was meant to be used in battle, its surfaces are richly etched and gilt overall, and the helmet retains portions of its brilliant yellow silk lining. The Metropolitan also has a matching shaffron (for the horse's head), and the saddle from the ensemble is in the Musée de l'Armée, Paris.

The Historisches Museum in Dresden, which incorporated the dynastic armory of



28. Attributed to Kolman Helmschmid (German, Augsburg 1471–1532). Tournament helmet (*Rennhut*) of King Louis II of Hungary and Bohemia, ca. 1525. Steel, gold, copper alloy; h. 12 in. (30.5 cm), wt. 9 lb. (4.1 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander McMillan Welch, 1929 (29.153.1)



29. Sallet in the form of a lion's head. Italy, ca. 1475–80. Steel, copper alloy, gold, glass, textile, paint; h. 11 3/4 in. (29.8 cm), wt. 8 lb. 4 oz. (3.7 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1923 (23.141)



30. Cuirassier armor. France, ca. 1600–1610. Steel, gold, leather, textile; h. including modern boots 71½ in. (181.6 cm), wt. 77 lb. 11 oz. (35 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1927 (27.177.1)

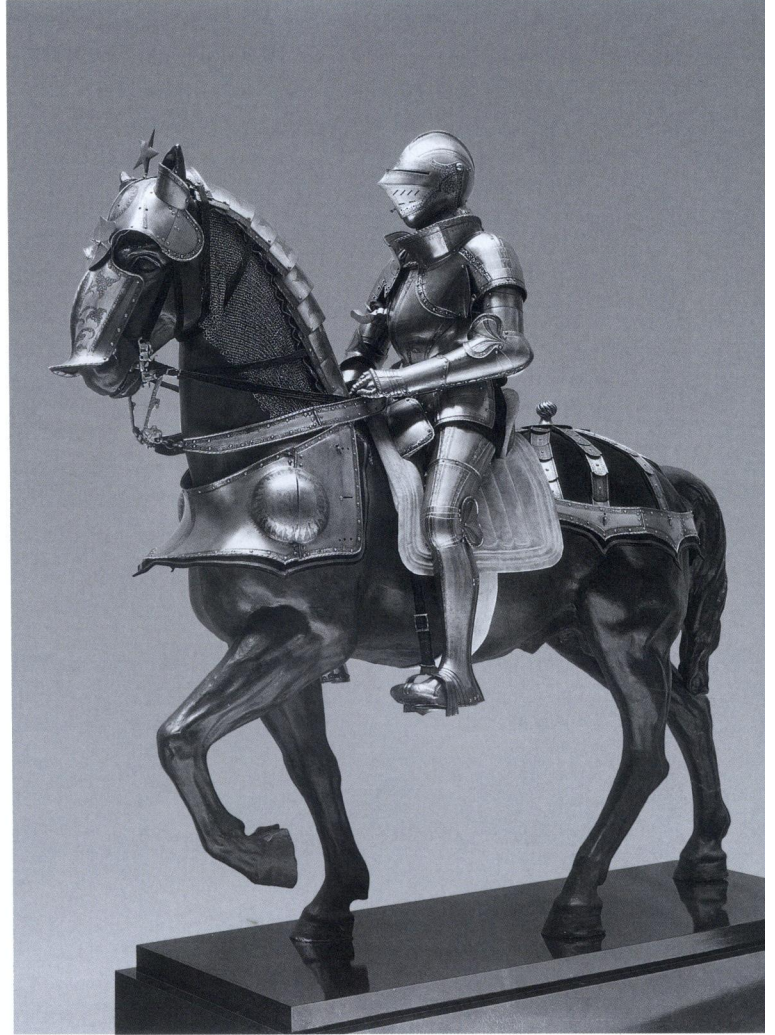
the prince-electors of Saxony, also disposed of quantities of arms and armor after World War I. The Saxon armory, one of the largest and most impressive in Europe, was especially rich in sixteenth-century tournament equipment and extravagantly embellished swords and firearms

of the Baroque period. Most of the “duplicates” sold by the Dresden museum passed into American collections. The Metropolitan’s purchases included two tilt armors from a large series made by local armorers for the Saxon court in the last third of the sixteenth century and one of a set of twelve armors of matching design ordered by Princess Sophie of Brandenburg as a Christmas present for her husband, Prince-Elector Christian I, in 1591 (fig. 31). The armors were intended to be worn by the prince and his courtiers in foot-combat at the barriers, a match between contestants armed with spears or swords and separated by a waist-high barrier, which explains why the armors have no leg defenses. The series was made by Anton Peffenhauser, the leading armorer of Augsburg and a favorite of the Saxon rulers. The clean lines and crisp details of the hammered steel and the tasteful decoration of large etched and gilt foliate scrolls on a blued ground make these some of the most elegant and eye-catching armors from the late sixteenth century. The Museum’s example was acquired in 1927 as a gift of Trustee Henry Walters, who fell under Dean’s spell and began to buy armor and weapons for his own collection, now in the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore.

Dean placed great value on horse armors, or bards, as important historical objects and essential elements of his gallery installations. “We need horse armor, striking and of rich quality, in our galleries,” he wrote to the Museum’s director in 1920. “It gives a dignity, importance, and popular interest yielded by no other armor.” Complete bards, however, were exceedingly rare, and Dean despaired of even acquiring one. Yet only a year later he succeeded in purchasing two in Vienna. These had been saved from the armory of the counts Collalto, whose castle of San Salvatore, near Treviso in northern Italy, was destroyed by enemy artillery fire in 1918. Both are Italian: the first is etched with wide bands of trophies and is probably Milanese, from about 1560 (see the horse at the left on page 5); the second is covered completely with exuberant foliage, classical warriors, putti, and fantastic creatures and was manufactured in Brescia about 1580–90.



31. Anton Peffenhauser (German, Augsburg 1525–1603). Foot-combat armor, 1591. Steel, gold, copper alloy, leather; h. 38 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (98.2 cm), wt. 46 lb. 3 oz. (21 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Henry Walters, 1927 (27.206)



32. Wolfgang Grosschedel (German, active Landshut 1517–62). Armor for man (ca. 1535–40) and horse (dated 1554). Steel, copper alloy, leather; wt. of man's armor 55 lb. (25 kg), of horse armor 66 lb. (30 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1923 (23.261)

In 1923 Dean acquired a third bard, which came with an associated armor for a man as well (fig. 32). Dating to around 1535–40, the man's armor is struck with the mark of Landshut and the mark of Wolfgang Grosschedel, the leading armorer in that Bavarian town. The etched ornament of the horse armor includes the date 1554; the armor is unmarked but the decoration is comparable to that found on several armors Grosschedel made around that time. The arms on the shaffron are those of the barons of Freyberg, officials in the court of the dukes of Bavaria in the sixteenth century whose armory in Hohenaschau Castle was dispersed in 1861. Dean purchased the armor for man and horse



33. The armor shown in fig. 32 as it was photographed by Bashford Dean in 1923 in Schloss Petersburg, the castle of Count Eugen Czernin in Bohemia



34. Giovan Paolo Negroli. Close-helmet, ca. 1540–45. Steel, gold; h. 10¾ in. (27.3 cm), wt. 6 lb. 8 oz. (3 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Rogers Fund and George D. Pratt Gift, 1926 (26.53)

from Count Eugen Czernin of Bohemia, whose Baroque castle, Schloss Petersburg, he had visited many times before finally persuading its owner to sell. The armor had been displayed in the castle mounted in traditional fashion on a wooden horse. The horse, however, was destroyed in a fire, so that, as Dean explained,

in the end the armor on its manikin was propped up in a great basket and hidden away: in fact, I was told that it saw the light of day only when I happened to visit the castle. Under such a condition the armor became known as the “knight of the clothes-basket”—a splendid but dejected creature who was dragged from his dark closet, with crippled back, shaking its helmet in silent reproach for captivity and neglect [fig. 33]. Indeed, a figure so pathetic, fallen from highest estate, had, I believe, a great effect upon the chivalrous mind of its owner, who

pictured it taken from its “dungeon,” carefully mounted cap-à-pie upon a charger in the middle of the gallery of a great museum, there to receive yearly the homage of a million people!

By the mid-1920s the flood of first-quality armors coming onto the market taxed the Museum’s already generous allowance to the department. But Dean was extraordinarily resourceful and imaginative in raising needed funds. In one unusual arrangement, Dean and Trustee George D. Pratt organized the sale of the armor collection owned by Henry G. Keasbey, a wealthy American then living in England. They guaranteed Keasbey a certain return from the sale at auction in New York. If the realized amount fell below the guarantee, Pratt and Dean would make up the difference; if, however, the income exceeded the guarantee, the surplus would go to the Metropolitan for arms and armor purchases in Pratt’s name. The Keasbey auctions in 1924 and 1925, a total of 600 lots, netted the Museum the handsome sum of \$75,000. Over the next two years the funds underwrote, completely or in part, the purchases of several outstanding pieces: the two Saxon tilt armors from Dresden, a fluted “Maximilian” armor of unusually large proportions dating to about 1530, parts of a late fifteenth-century German “Gothic” armor thought to come from a tomb, and a richly embossed and gilt close-helmet attributed to Giovan Paolo Negroli (fig. 34).

Dean was unrelenting when pursuing objects he considered essential for the department’s collection. This was especially the case with a rare group of seven late fifteenth-century German shields painted with the arms of the Behaim family of Nuremberg. When he presented them for purchase in 1924 the trustees rejected them because of their poor condition, heavy overpainting, and dark, almost illegible imagery. Dean did not give up. He bought the shields from the dealer with his own funds and undertook to have them restored at his own expense, with the intent of later offering them to the Museum at the dealer’s original price. During restoration traces of earlier painting

were discovered beneath the Behaim arms. At that point there was no way of examining the underpainting without destroying the top layer of paint, so it was decided to merely clean and touch up the surfaces. The “improved” shields were presented to the Museum again in 1925, and this time they were purchased. Sixty years later, when the Behaim shields were X-rayed as part of what had then become standard procedure, it was revealed that all seven of them had multiple layers of painting, each with different designs. The shields had obviously had long working lives. In the 1980s they were restored again. This time the crudely painted Behaim arms on the uppermost layer, which probably dated to the nineteenth century, were considered expendable, and it was decided to uncover the earlier paintings. The most remarkable revelation was a fifteenth-century painting of a woman in a stylish green dress supporting a shield bearing the arms of the Franconian family of Gottesmann (figs. 35, 36).

During the 1920s the Museum also received some exceptional gifts. In 1923 Giulia Morosini donated a small group of jeweled Turkish edged weapons in memory of her father, Giovanni, one of the first American arms collectors. Among them was a saber reputedly made in 1876 for the investiture of Sultan Murad V that was perhaps the last important Turkish weapon of state (fig. 37). The glittering sword, mounted in gold, jade, precious stones, and pearls, is a tribute to the Ottoman jeweler’s art. Only recently, while the sword was being cleaned, it was discovered that beneath the uppermost emerald on the scabbard was a hidden compartment containing a gold coin of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent (reigned 1520–66), one of the greatest Ottoman rulers. The coin surely had dynastic significance and perhaps even talismanic value for Murad. It seems to have brought the sultan no luck, however, as he was deposed after ruling only ninety-three days and spent the rest of his life in prison.

In 1926 the Parisian collector Jean Jacques Reubell donated to the Metropolitan a group of more than 360 European small-swords,



35–36. Horseman’s shield. German, ca. 1450–75. Wood, leather, linen, gesso, paint, iron; 22 x 16 in. (56 x 40.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Florence Blumenthal, 1925 (25.26.1). Left: the shield in 1985, before it was restored and while it was still painted with the arms of Behaim of Nuremberg. Above: the shield after restoration, which revealed the original fifteenth-century decoration, including the arms of Gottesmann, painted on a silvered ground beneath the later painting. The German inscription on the banderole at the left translates as “Take me as I am, thou false world.”



37. Saber probably made for the investiture of Sultan Murad V in 1876, with detail (below) showing the hidden compartment in the scabbard containing a gold coin of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent. Turkey (probably Istanbul), ca. 1876. Steel, gold, gilt copper alloy, nephrite (jade), emeralds, diamonds, pearls; l. in scabbard 39 3/4 in. (101 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Giulia P. Morosini, in memory of her father, Giovanni P. Morosini, 1923 (23.232.2)



hunting swords, and daggers. The small-swords, dating from 1650 to 1800, were especially welcome, as they filled a significant gap in the collection. Small-swords are a late form of rapier, a civilian sidearm, and often functioned more as fashion accessories than as weapons of self-defense. Made of gold, silver, tortoiseshell, hardstone, porcelain, or enamel and exquisitely worked with Rococo or Neoclassical ornament (see fig. 38), their hilts are comparable in material and craftsmanship to the snuffboxes and canes carried by courtiers and gentlemen of the day.

One of Dean's most quixotic undertakings in that busy decade was the excavation in 1926 of the Crusader castle of Montfort (fig. 39), in the British mandate of Palestine (near present-day Akko, Israel). Weapons and armor dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are rare, and few have any direct association with the Crusades. Dean hoped to discover examples of armor in the Holy Land that had once "bristled with castles, swarmed with crusaders." Montfort Castle was a promising site. It had been French property until 1220, when it was sold to the Teutonic Knights, who rebuilt

38. Jan Nieuwland (Dutch; active Amsterdam 1747, died before 1807). Small-sword in Rococo style with Meissen porcelain grip (detail), ca. 1760. Silver, porcelain, steel, gold; l. 34 7/8 in. (88.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Jean Jacques Reubell, in memory of his mother, Julia C. Coster, and of his wife, Adeline E. Post, both of New York City, 1926 (26.145.343)



it and made it their principal stronghold in the region. In 1271 the castle fell to the army of Barsbay, Mamluk sultan of Egypt. Stripped of its contents and dismantled by the Mamluks, it had been abandoned for centuries when Dean, with the Museum's blessing, organized an excavation funded by several wealthy friends.

The fieldwork at the castle yielded a wide variety of material: exquisitely carved stone capitals and corbels from the vaultings of the great hall, delicately incised stone matrices used as molds for creating relief ornament in plaster or leather, hundreds of ceramic and glass sherds that included painted grisaille glass fragments from a window, and a fragment of a painted icon that remains the only Byzantine painting ever discovered at a Crusader site. The arms and armor finds, on the other hand, were disappointing: massive stone balls for a trebuchet (siege weapon), a few flattened iron fragments thought to come from helmets, spear and arrow heads, bone "nuts" for several crossbows, and small clumps of mail from a Crusader's hauberk, or mail shirt (fig. 40). Dean admitted that his "costly gamble" in search of Crusader armor was a "dismal failure." Still, the project was successful in that it provided important information on the layout and structure of the castle and some of its once splendid furnishings. Today Montfort is again attracting scholars' attention, and the site has been reopened for new excavations.

In the 1920s the Metropolitan also began to explore filmmaking as part of its educational program. The departments of Egyptian Art and Arms and Armor, still two of the Museum's most popular areas, were the subjects of its first cinematic endeavors. Two arms and armor films, the first of their kind, were released in 1924: *A Visit to the Armor Galleries* focused on European armor, and *Firearms of Our Forefathers* illustrated the workings of European firearms. In preparation for this new undertaking Dean sought the advice of Hollywood professionals D. W. Griffith and John Barrymore. Once the scripts were complete Dean left most of the actual work to his young assistant curators, Stephen V. Grancsay and



39. The ruins of Montfort Castle, near Akko, Israel, 1926

Thomas T. Hoopes, who also appear in the films. Still occasionally shown at the Museum, *A Visit to the Armor Galleries* includes memorable scenes: a Gothic armor steps out of its vitrine to answer visitors' questions about the collection, a seesaw with a small child on one end and a medieval mail shirt on the other demonstrates the relatively modest weight of armor, and a fully armored knight on horseback gallops through Central Park, with Belvedere Castle (the park's weather station) rising picturesquely in the background (fig. 41). When actor Douglas Fairbanks Sr. viewed the film at the Metropolitan, he pronounced it "bully."

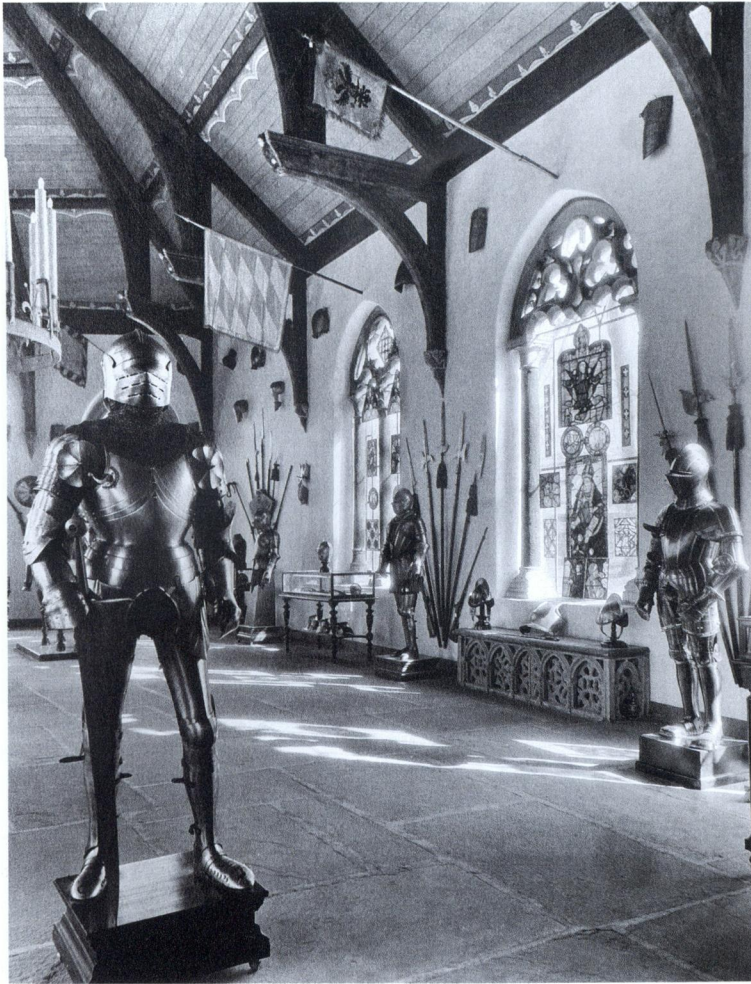
Dean had been a collector of European armor since childhood. After a brief and very successful flirtation with Japanese armor, he returned to his first love. His purchases grew in quantity and quality in the 1920s, filling Wave



40. Fragment of mail, before 1271. From Montfort Castle. Iron, 2 x 2 3/4 in. (5.1 x 7 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Clarence Mackay, Archer M. Huntington, Stephen H. P. Pell, and Bashford Dean, 1928 (28.99.37)



41. Scene of a "knight" riding in Central Park, from the film *A Visit to the Armor Galleries*, 1924



42. Armor hall in Wave Hill, the home of Bashford Dean in Riverdale, New York, as completed and installed in 1930

43. Armor composed of pieces from Chalcis, Euboea, Greece. Italian, ca. 1400–1460 and later. Steel, copper alloy, textile, leather; h. 66½ in. (168.9 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Gift of Helen Fahnestock Hubbard, in memory of her father, Harris C. Fahnestock, 1929 (29.154.3)

Hill, his early nineteenth-century house overlooking the Hudson in Riverdale, New York. Dean was uncommonly resourceful in raising funds to support his expensive hobby. He regularly bought entire collections in Europe, kept a few of the best pieces for himself, and sold the rest at auction in New York, at which the Metropolitan, several of its trustees, and Dean's fellow collectors in the Armor and Arms Club were enthusiastic buyers. He organized and catalogued six auctions at the American Art Association between 1919 and 1928, most of the lots coming from his collection. As a result, the market for antique arms in New York came to rival that of London.

In late 1927, shortly after he turned sixty, Dean announced his retirement. The trustees reluctantly accepted his resignation and in recognition of his devoted service to the Museum elected him a trustee. Dean was especially anxious to get on with the building of a Gothic-style



armor hall at Wave Hill to house his collection (fig. 42). He even contemplated the possibility of turning Wave Hill into a Museum annex for armor studies, but that dream was short-lived. He died unexpectedly on December 6, 1928.

The Museum's board adopted a resolution that acknowledged Dean's many contributions:

“There was not a nook or corner of Europe or Asia which escaped his search for additions to his department. He seems to have known the location of every potentially purchasable piece of armor in existence and he never forgot it. He was indefatigable in pursuit. He never lost the trail. After years of effort he usually succeeded in obtaining the desired object, sometimes by purchase and not infrequently by gift. If the Museum itself did not have the needed money, he would persuade some of his friends to supply it. He was a generous donor himself, far beyond the amount of his salary. The Museum’s collection of armor is really his monument.” There can be no doubt that Dean was the most energetic, original, and farsighted museum curator in his field.

Dean bequeathed to the Museum a quarter of his estate, most of which was arms and armor. Generous gifts from his family and friends, including a number of trustees, made it possible for the Metropolitan to acquire almost half the collection, more than eight hundred objects, henceforth designated as the Bashford Dean Memorial Collection. The major works were installed in a gallery bearing the curator’s name.

The Dean collection includes some works rightly deemed masterpieces and other less decorative or less well preserved armor that is nevertheless important for its historical or typological value. The last category includes several hundred elements of armor from Chalcis, the Venetian fortress of Negroponte, on the Greek island of Euboea, which was captured and destroyed by the Turks in 1470. Discovered around 1840, this unique hoard, consisting of body armor (brigandine plates for the torso and arm and leg defenses) and more than one hundred helmets dating to the fifteenth century, was transferred to the Ethnographical Museum (now the National Historical Museum) in Athens. From there in the 1920s Dean acquired by exchange the majority of the body armor and a selection of helmets. The group includes helmet types unrecorded elsewhere, which suggests that they may be of local manufacture. Dean later used some of the Chalcis pieces to make composite “Gothic”



44. Tournament helmet (*Stechhelm*). Germany (probably Nuremberg), ca. 1500. Steel, copper alloy; h. 17¾ in. (45 cm), wt. 17 lb. 14 oz. (8.1 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Gift of Edward S. Harkness, 1929 (29.156.67a)

armor to represent types of fifteenth-century harnesses that no longer exist (fig. 43).

A highlight of the Dean collection is a *Stechhelm* (fig. 44), a massive helmet worn in the *Gesteck*, a joust fought with blunted lances. Fully equipped jousters wearing helmets of identical form appear in a mid-seventeenth-century manuscript Dean acquired for the department in 1922 (fig. 45), a *Turnierbuch* (Tournament Book) illustrated with watercolors recording tournaments and parades held in Nuremberg between 1446 and 1640. Though unmarked, Dean’s helmet is probably of Nuremberg manufacture and may originally

45. Two jousters armed for the *Gesteck* (joust of peace) at the *Gesellenstechen* (Bachelors’ Joust) of 1561 in Nuremberg. *Turnierbuch* (Tournament Book), pl. 70 (manuscript page 100). Germany (Nuremberg), mid-17th century. Watercolor on paper, 9⅞ x 13⅞ in. (25 x 34.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1922 (22.229)



46. Attributed to Anton Peffenhauser. Armor of Johann Wilhelm, duke of Saxe-Weimar, ca. 1565. Steel, gold, copper alloy, leather, textile; h. 69 in. (175.3 cm), wt. 61 lb. (27.7 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Gift of Helen Fahnestock Hubbard, in memory of her father, Harris C. Fahnestock, 1929 (29.155.2)



have been among the equipment kept by the city for use by young patrician jousters like those recorded in the tournament book.

The finest complete armor in Dean's collection was undoubtedly that of Johann Wilhelm (1530–1573), duke of Saxe-Weimar, which he acquired from the Hohenzollern collection at Burg Rheinstein (fig. 46). Dating to about 1565, it was originally part of a large garniture of armor with multiple pieces that allowed it to be used both in the field and in tournament contests on horseback and on foot. In pristine condition, the armor is etched with vertical bands with a striking abstract design of gilt and blackened S-shaped ornament. It is stamped with the pinecone-shaped mark of Augsburg and is attributed to Anton Peffenhauser, the city's most renowned armorer (see also fig. 31); the decoration is ascribed to the distinguished Augsburg armorer-etcher Jörg Sorg the Younger.

Dean collected few firearms, but he was particularly proud of an early wheellock gun with an ivory-veneered stock that he had acquired from the Prince of Liechtenstein's collection in 1926 (fig. 47). The steel barrel and lock are damascened in gold and silver, and the stock is covered with ivory plaques carved in relief with scenes from classical mythology, including the story of Perseus. The exotic and precious materials and the

47. Wheellock gun of Philippe de Croy, duke of Aerschott and prince of Chimay, with detail of the carved decoration on the cheek side of the stock. Flanders, ca. 1555. Steel, gold, silver, ivory, wood; l. 42 1/8 in. (107 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Gift of Mrs. Bashford Dean, 1929 (29.151.1)





48. Kunz Lochner (German, Nuremberg ca. 1510–1567). Horse armor of Johann Ernst, duke of Saxony in Coburg, mounted with an associated armor, also by Lochner, both dated 1548. Steel, copper alloy, leather. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, horse armor: Rogers Fund, 1932 (32.69); man's armor: Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, Gift of Mrs. Bashford Dean, 1929 (29.151.2)



49. Kunz Lochner. Field armor, probably of Archduke Ferdinand I of Austria (1503–1564), dated 1549. Steel, copper alloy, leather; h. 67 in. (170.2 cm), wt. 52 lb. 14 oz. (24 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Rogers Fund and George D. Pratt Gift, 1933 (33.164)

exquisite workmanship suggest that the gun was created as an objet d'art. The buttplate bears the arms and initials of the gun's owner, Philippe de Croy (1521–1595), duke of Aerschott and prince of Chimay, a Flemish nobleman in Habsburg service.

Dean's mantle passed smoothly to his longtime assistant Stephen V. Grancsay. Grancsay had joined the department directly out of high school in 1914, acting as Dean's secretary as he was preparing the Riggs collection for display. Ambitious, intelligent, and largely self-taught,

Grancsay quickly demonstrated his abilities. By the 1920s, despite Grancsay's youth, Dean was entrusting him with department affairs during his own long absences abroad and also sent him to Europe to attend to Museum business. Grancsay took charge of the department upon Dean's retirement and was promoted to full curator in 1929. Following Dean's death in 1928, Grancsay appraised the curator's private collection, selecting from it the objects most desirable for the Museum and arranging them in the newly designated Bashford Dean Memorial



50. Armory in Harbor Hill, Clarence Mackay's house in Roslyn, Long Island, ca. 1930



51. Armory in William Randolph Hearst's three-story penthouse apartment in the Clarendon, 137 Riverside Drive, New York, ca. 1929

Gallery. In 1933 he published a scholarly catalogue of some two hundred of Dean's most important pieces.

In the first years of Grancsay's tenure, despite the stock market crash in October 1929 and the onset of the Depression, the department continued to make important acquisitions. The Museum purchased two armors from Erbach Castle near Frankfurt, whose armory, assembled at the end of the eighteenth century, was one of the earliest manifestations of the Gothic Revival in Germany. One is a horse armor, or *bard*, made by the distinguished Nuremberg armorer Kunz Lochner for Johann Ernst, duke of Saxony in Coburg (fig. 48). The *peytrel*, or breastplate, prominently displays the embossed and etched initials and motto of the owner and the date 1548. Renaissance ornament consisting of foliate scrolls and fantastic creatures covers the rest of the *bard*. This spectacular armor was likely made for Johann Ernst's entry into Augsburg in 1548 to attend the summit conference of German princes called by Emperor Charles V.

The other armor from Erbach Castle, dated just a year later (fig. 49), is also attributed to Lochner. A field armor, it is etched with a Madonna and Child on the breastplate, Saints Peter and Paul and emblems of the Order of the Golden Fleece on the backplate, and double-headed imperial eagles surmounted by a king's crown on the toe-caps. The iconography of the decoration and the armor's slim shape suggest

that it may have been made for Archduke Ferdinand I of Austria in his role as elected Roman King, the designated heir of his elder brother Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, whom he succeeded in 1558.

In 1931 Grancsay organized at the Metropolitan an exhibition of more than 250 pieces of arms and armor from American private collections. The most important loans came from Clarence Mackay, who was then a Metropolitan trustee. In 1933 Grancsay organized a similar exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum that represented the holdings of a different set of private lenders, most notably William Randolph Hearst. The two exhibitions documented the high-water mark in American collecting of arms and armor. Within only a few years many of the best collections, including those of Mackay and Hearst, had been dispersed.

Clarence Mackay (1874–1938) inherited his father's mining interests in Nevada and also expanded the system of cable and telegraph companies his father had controlled. (The Mackay System was bought in 1928 by International Telephone and Telegraph.) His palatial residence, Harbor Hill in Roslyn, Long Island, was filled with a select group of Old Master paintings, Renaissance sculpture and furniture, and arguably the premier collection of European arms and armor in America. He collected arms and armor as works of art and displayed his holdings with pomp and pride in the great hall of Harbor Hill (fig. 50).

William Randolph Hearst (1863–1951), who owned the largest newspaper enterprise in the United States, was one of the best-known and most flamboyant public figures of his time. A voracious collector of works of art, he particularly liked armor and ultimately formed the largest private collection of its kind in modern times. It was exhibited in his Manhattan apartment in a triple-height gallery atop his penthouse (fig. 51) and in a medieval castle, Saint Donat's, in Wales, which he rarely visited. Hundreds of other pieces, many of them unseen by their owner, were carefully catalogued and photographed and then stored in warehouses. Hearst was the only major American collector with whom Dean never established a close rapport, with the result that Hearst became Dean's, and also the Museum's, most aggressive competitor.

The most significant additions to the department's holdings in the 1930s came from Mackay and Hearst, both of whom were hard hit by the economic downturn. In 1932 Mackay was forced to raise cash by selling portions of his art collection at prices well below those he had paid. In October the Museum bought seven of his masterpieces: two Renaissance paintings (by Raphael and Mantegna), a late fourteenth-century French tapestry depicting King Arthur, and four of the finest objects from his armory. These included two Greenwich armors dating to the 1580s, those of George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland, and Henry Herbert, 2nd Earl of Pembroke; an Italian armor of distinctive anime (splinted) construction thought to have been made about 1550 for Anne de Montmorency, constable of France; and a rapier dating to about 1600 with an iron hilt exquisitely chiseled with scenes from the Old Testament and inscribed with the name of the distinguished general Ambrogio Spinola. The Cumberland armor (fig. 52), with its richly blued and gilt surfaces covered with Tudor roses, fleurs-de-lis, and *Es* for Queen Elizabeth I, is the best preserved and most complete Greenwich armor known. The so-called Montmorency armor (fig. 53) has recently been identified as having in fact belonged to Henry VIII of England, who probably acquired it at the time of his last



52. Armor of George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland. England (Greenwich), ca. 1586. Steel, copper alloy, gold, textile; h. 69½ in. (176.5 cm), wt. 60 lb. (27.2 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Munsey Fund, 1932 (32.130.6). The etched, blued, and gilt decoration on the breastplate incorporates the initial of Queen Elizabeth I, the Tudor rose, and the fleur-de-lis of France.



53. Armor of Henry VIII of England. Italy (probably Milan), ca. 1544. Steel, copper alloy, gold, leather, textile; h. with modern boots 72½ in. (184.2 cm), wt. 50 lb. 8 oz. (22.9 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1932 (32.130.7a-l)



54. Armor of Henry II of France. France (Paris), ca. 1550–55. Steel, copper alloy, gold, silver, textile; h. 74 in. (188 cm), wt. 53 lb. 4 oz. (24.2 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1939 (39.121a-n)

campaign in the field, the siege of Boulogne in 1544. That Mackay had to part with such treasures seemed unimaginable; that the Museum was able to fund the purchase in the worst years of the Depression was miraculous.

After Mackay's death in 1938 the remainder of his collection was put up for sale. Grancsay especially coveted Mackay's favorite armor, the superbly embossed and damascened harness of Henry II (fig. 54, and see inside covers), one of the most elaborate and complete French parade armors in existence. Mackay had purchased the armor in 1929 for the then extraordinary sum of \$137,500. After hard negotiations, the Museum acquired it for a fraction of that price. The armor's surfaces are covered with dense foliate scrolls inhabited by human figures and a variety of fabulous creatures that derive from the Italian grotesque. At the center of the breastplate is a Roman warrior receiving a tribute of arms, and on the shoulders Apollo is depicted chasing the nymph Daphne. The crescent moon, one of the badges of Henry II, appears in several places. Twenty pen and ink drawings for this armor are preserved. The design for the breastplate is attributed to the famous painter Jean Cousin the Elder, the others to either the goldsmith and printmaker Étienne Delaune or the painter Baptiste Pellerin. The beautiful armor forms the centerpiece of the department's remarkable holdings of French Renaissance parade armor, which also include not only the helmet of Henry II but also the monarch's shield (see fig. 7 and cover illustration).

Grancsay wanted additional pieces from Mackay's collection, but Museum funds were limited, so he took matters into his own hands, cashed in his life savings, and bought 500 pieces at almost giveaway prices. Among them was an exceptionally fine Italian helmet, called an armet, from about 1440 that is signed by the armorer, Lionardo (fig. 55). In 1942, following the outbreak of World War II, Grancsay sold the entire group to the Museum at his cost. (The Museum later acknowledged his personal sacrifice when it designated the group as a gift from him.)



In the late 1930s, owing to the dramatically depressed prices, the Museum acquired half a dozen important objects from the Hearst collection as well. One of these is the cuirass from a German field armor of about 1510–20 (fig. 56) etched at the top of the breastplate with large, beautifully rendered figures of the Madonna and Child and Saints George and Christopher and at the top of the backplate with Saint Anne with the infants Mary and Christ, Saint James the Greater, and Saint Sebastian. (The figure of Saint Sebastian was copied from a woodcut by Hans Baldung Grien of about 1505.) Sacred imagery reflected the wearer's piety and faith and was also thought to have protective value. The ornament along the edges, incorporating harpies, putti, and grotesques of classical inspiration, may be the work of the Augsburg etcher Daniel Hopfer. Perhaps no other armor in the Museum's collection demonstrates so vividly the close relationship between etched armor decoration and etching as a printmaking technique.

In 1935 the size and scope of the department's collection was dramatically expanded with the bequest of more than four thousand objects from George C. Stone (1859–1935). A mining engineer and distinguished metallurgist, Stone was a passionate collector who focused on non-European arms, mostly from

55. Armet. Italy (probably Milan), ca. 1440. Stamped with the armorer's mark: *Lionardo*. Steel, copper alloy; h. 10 ³/₈ in. (26.3 cm), wt. 9 lb. 4 oz. (4.2 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Stephen V. Grancsay, 1942 (42.50.2). This armet, a cavalryman's helmet with hinged cheek pieces and a pivoting visor, is one of the earliest complete examples. Similar armets appear in the famous quattrocento battle paintings of Pisanello and Uccello.



56. Breastplate and gorget from a field armor, with detail of the backplate. Germany (probably Augsburg), ca. 1510–20. Steel, h. 41½ in. (105.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Marshall Field, 1938 (38.143b–d)

China, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, India, and the Islamic Middle East, areas not well represented in the Metropolitan's collection in the thirties. (Indeed, since 1915 loans from Stone's collection had made up the department's display of Indian and Islamic arms.) Stone collected arms principally according to culture and type; artistic merit was of secondary importance. He used the pieces in his collection to illustrate his ambitious and pioneering book, *A Glossary of the Construction, Decoration and Use of Arms and Armor in All Countries and in All Times* (1934), which is still in use today.

Three works suggest the range and eclectic nature of the Stone collection. The hefty, gently curved blade of a sixteenth-century Ottoman saber of princely quality (fig. 57) is covered with Qur'anic inscriptions that refer to the Old Testament figure of King Solomon. The decorative technique is unusual in that the background has been chiseled away and filled with gold, so that the inscriptions are in dark steel flush with the gold surface. The iron guard is chiseled in relief with gilt foliate ornament and was originally set with rubies. (The grip is a nineteenth-century replacement.) The quality of the workmanship and the references to Solomon in the inscriptions suggest that the sword was contemporary with and perhaps even made for the Ottoman sultan Süleyman the Magnificent (reigned 1520–66). Stone owned a rare group of swords and daggers from the Tanjore armory in southern India. Dating mostly from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Tanjore arms are distinctive for their elaborate sculptured hilts of pierced and chiseled iron, sometimes silvered or gilt and decorated with Hindu gods, demons, and mythic animals. The most spectacular is a dagger (*katar*) whose guard of sculpted iron takes the form of the peacock Paravāni, steed of the revered Hindu god of war Subrahmanya (fig. 58). Also from Stone's collection is a Korean armor, possibly of the eighteenth century, fashioned from thirty layers of hemp cloth that served to absorb or deflect the blow of a sword (fig. 59). The armor's protective properties are enhanced with stenciled Buddhist and Taoist symbols.



Throughout the 1930s plans were afoot to build new arms and armor galleries closer to the displays of medieval and Renaissance art so as to give these complementary collections greater coherence. For the first time space was to be designed specifically for the armor collection, in this case in a suitable medieval style. The galleries were to be relocated to the Museum's original central building, which had been designed by Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey

Mould and opened in 1880. The old structure was to be completely rebuilt, with the adjoining wings developed for medieval and Renaissance galleries.

The new armor galleries, which opened to the public in January 1939, comprised a stately double-height Romanesque central court with single-story side aisles running east to west and a transverse gallery at the west end (fig. 60). The vaulted court was articulated by

57. Saber. Turkey, ca. 1550. Steel, gold, ruby, wood, fish skin; l. 37⁷/₈ in. (96.2 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of George C. Stone, 1935 (36.25.1297)



58. Dagger (*katar*) (detail of guard in the form of the peacock Paravāni). India (Tanjore), possibly early 17th century. Steel, l. 21⁷/₈ in. (55.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of George C. Stone, 1935 (36.25.1009)



59. Armor with Buddhist and Taoist symbols. Korea, possibly 18th century. Hemp, copper alloy, iron; h. 47³/₄ in. (121.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of George C. Stone, 1935 (36.25.10a-c)



60. The new Armor Hall in the Museum's central building, 1939

tall rectangular piers supporting round arches, with leaded clerestories providing natural light; the side aisles had flat beamed ceilings. Grancsay considered the plain but dignified style particularly appropriate to the display of the department's richly ornamented and varied collection. The installation, which involved moving more than one thousand objects and one hundred vitrines from the old galleries, retained many of the key elements of the ear-

lier installation, including the equestrian figures, panoplies, and banners. The new galleries housed just the European arms; the Japanese and Islamic collections remained in their former location.

World War II affected the department as it did the entire Museum. Beginning in February 1942, fearing possible German air raids, the Museum moved a number of its principal works to Whitmarsh Hall in rural Pennsylvania. (The collections returned to New York two years later.) About a hundred of the department's most important objects, including the Negroli helmet, the Cumberland armor, and the armor of Henry II (figs. 24, 52, 54) were crated and stored. Most of the Arms and Armor staff either served in the military or volunteered for civilian war-related work. Assistant Curator Anita Reinhard oversaw the daily business of the department and in the evenings, as a volunteer for the Roberts Commission, pored over maps, guides, and art history texts so as to identify for the American military key monuments in Europe to be avoided by Allied bombing. As had Dean, Grancsay served as an advisor to the U.S. Army's Ordnance Department (fig. 61). His work focused on the design of protective headgear and body armor for airmen, including the development of the flak jacket, which was modeled on the medieval brigandine, a jacket lined with overlapping steel plates. Grancsay worked with the department's armorer, Leonard Heinrich (fig. 62), a German-born hammerman brought up in the same Old World tradition as his predecessor, Daniel Tachaux. Grancsay patented several of his own designs

61. Stephen V. Grancsay with experimental helmets in the Metropolitan Museum Armor Shop, 1945



62. Leonard Heinrich forging an aluminum helmet prototype in the Armor Shop, 1945



for helmet straps and webbing and in November 1945 received the War Department's Certificate of Appreciation, its highest civilian award.

The war years directed the department's focus to American arms, an area of the collection that was then, and still is, under-represented. In 1942 Grancsay organized the first-ever museum exhibition of Colt revolvers. The majority of the firearms were borrowed from John E. Parsons, one of the earliest and most knowledgeable Colt collectors. (Parsons later gave the Museum many of his best examples; see fig. 63.) In 1945 the Museum published Grancsay's *American Engraved Powder Horns*, a study based on the collection of J. H. Grenville Gilbert, which had been given to the Museum in 1937. In 1947 the department hosted a groundbreaking exhibition of Kentucky rifles and other early American firearms dating from the colonial period to the early nineteenth century.

In 1943 the Museum's new director, Francis Henry Taylor, declared that in his opinion the Arms and Armor Department had "perhaps the most definitive and complete collection in the Museum; one of the most impressive and popular exhibitions for the general public [and] also one of the world's most complete and magnificent armories." The director's warm praise was tempered, however, by his conclusion that "the future development of the department lies . . . in the field of interpretation and research. . . . Certainly this department, which over too long a period had the lion's share of purchase funds, must be content for



63. Samuel Colt (American, 1814–1862). Number 5 Holster Pistol, serial number 940. Paterson, New Jersey, ca. 1840. Steel, silver, mother-of-pearl; l. 14 in. (35.5 cm), caliber .40. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of John E. Parsons, 1957 (57.166.1). Intended for promotional display or presentation, this early Colt revolver has blued, engraved, and silver-inlaid steel surfaces and mother-of-pearl grips.

many years to come to rest on its well-gilded laurels and permit the strengthening of other more pressing branches of the collection." Limited between 1945 and 1970 to an annual appropriation of just \$2,000, departmental acquisitions, once a flood, slowed to a trickle.

Despite the meager funds, Grancsay still managed to secure some remarkable pieces. In 1947 he acquired an exquisite pair of wheellock pistols made in Brescia by Giovanni Antonio Cavacciolo in about 1640 (fig. 64). Brescian firearms were prized throughout Europe for their long, thin barrels, deeply chiseled iron locks, and stocks inlaid with lacelike mounts of cut and pierced iron. Cavacciolo's firearms were highly esteemed, and examples of his work were presented by the Venetian Republic as gifts to Louis XIII of France and the king of Persia. In 1948 Grancsay purchased a hunting sword (fig. 65) made in 1825 by the Viennese court jewelers Pioté & Köchert for Count Hoyos-Sprinzenstein, whose arms are on the scabbard locket. The precious and fragile materials used in its decoration and the carved hardstone grip and enameled gold mounts indicate

64. Pair of wheellock pistols. Locks and chiseled iron mounts by Giovanni Antonio Cavacciolo, barrels by Lazarino Cominazzo. Italy (Brescia), ca. 1640. Steel, wood; l. of each 22¾ in. (57.8 cm), caliber .495 and .485. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1947 (47.110.1, 2)



that this sword was intended solely as an opulent costume accessory.

In its early years the Metropolitan had anticipated that its long-serving trustee Rutherford Stuyvesant would donate his collection of arms and armor. But Stuyvesant's premature death in 1909 left the fate of the collection in the hands of his heirs. Finally, between 1949 and 1954, the collector's son Alan gave or bequeathed to the Museum seventy-five of the best pieces, among them a handsome fluted German armor of Nuremberg manufacture from the early sixteenth century (fig. 66). The armor is unusual in that its breastplate is constructed of two plates, the lower one rising to a decoratively pierced finial, a rare evocation of late Gothic taste on an early Renaissance armor. Also from Stuyvesant's collection is an English basket-hilted broadsword dating to about 1610 (fig. 67) that is one of the finest examples of its type. The high-relief silver incrustation on

the gilt-iron guard and pommel was a particularly popular decorative technique in early seventeenth-century England for sword and dagger hilts, spurs, buckles, and related iron accoutrements.

Throughout its history the Arms and Armor Department has regularly been consulted by historians and theatrical costumers regarding the armor and equipment of medieval knights. Bashford Dean provided some tips on the subject to Cosmopolitan Productions, owned by William Randolph Hearst, for their 1922 silent film *When Knighthood Was in Flower*, which starred Hearst's glamorous companion Marion Davies. For *Joan of Arc* (RKO, 1948), starring Ingrid Bergman, the warrior saint's armor was designed and fabricated by the Museum's armorer Leonard Heinrich. Bergman visited Heinrich's Princeton home for the initial measurements (taken by Mrs. Heinrich) and the final fitting (fig. 68). Made from aluminum, the armor weighed a comfortable nineteen pounds, only a third of the weight of an authentic armor of the period. Modeled on historical sources, Heinrich's armor was one of the most accurate ever to appear on the silver screen. In the autumn of 1948, after the film's release, the department exhibited the Bergman armor together with an approximately comparable one from the Museum's permanent collection (fig. 43).

In 1950, as part of a comprehensive reorganization of Museum spaces, the Arms and Armor Galleries were turned over to the Department of Medieval Art (they are now the Medieval Sculpture Hall), and most of the collection was put into storage. In order to keep the collection in the public eye, the department organized a series of exhibitions in cities throughout the country, each accompanied by a concise but scholarly catalogue written by Grancsay that promoted the Metropolitan Museum and the subject of arms and armor to a nationwide audience. One of the exhibitions was devoted exclusively to equestrian equipment (shaffrons, saddles, bits, spurs, and stirrups); hosted in 1955 by the Speed Museum in Louisville, home of the Kentucky Derby, it was probably the first of its kind.

65. Pioté & Köchert, Vienna (founded 1825). Hunting sword (detail), 1825. Gold, enamel, agate, steel, wood, leather; l. 27 in. (68.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1948 (48.26a, b)



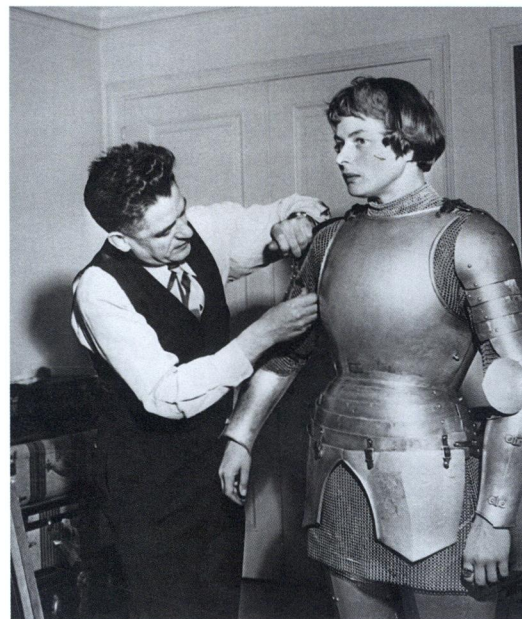


66. Field armor. Germany (Nuremberg), ca. 1520. Steel, copper alloy; h. 69 in. (175.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Alan Rutherford Stuyvesant, 1949 (49.163.1a-s)

In 1956 the department was at last assigned permanent space on the first floor of the Pierpont Morgan Wing, its present home. Designed in the early 1900s by the firm of McKim, Mead and White in its distinctive Beaux-Arts style, the wing comprises twenty-five galleries on two floors, centered on a long, double-story hall with a barrel-vaulted ceiling soaring sixty-seven feet high that is lit by ten large semicircular clerestories. The central court was installed in



67. Broadsword associated with Sir William Twysden of Roydon Hall, Kent (detail of basket hilt). England, ca. 1610. Steel, silver, gold, wood, fish skin, copper alloy; l. 39 3/8 in. (100 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Alan Rutherford Stuyvesant, 1949 (49.163.6)



68. Leonard Heinrich, Metropolitan Museum armorer, fitting Ingrid Bergman with a custom-made aluminum armor for her role as Joan of Arc, 1948

1956 very much as the old galleries had been arranged, with equestrian figures in the center, panoplies on the walls, and colorful banners overhead (fig. 69). Tapestries, paintings, sculpture, and stained glass, some from the arms and armor collection and some lent by other departments, were integrated into the displays in the side galleries. In 1958 a selection of Asian and Islamic material was installed in two new galleries connected to the Morgan Wing, uniting the



69. Central court in the Arms and Armor Galleries in the Pierpont Morgan Wing, 1956

70. Israel Schuech (German, active Dresden 1590–1610). Rapier, dated 1606 (detail). Copper alloy, gold, enamel, glass, shell cameo, wood, steel; l. 48 in. (122 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1970 (1970.77)



European and non-European collections for the first time in twenty years.

Stephen Grancsay retired in 1964 after fifty years' service, a Museum record at the time. For half a century he was the doyen of American arms and armor studies. The Metropolitan's armor holdings had doubled during his curatorship. Like Dean, he approached his subject with expertise and a missionary's zeal, becoming the principal spokesman for arms and armor in the United States and reaching large audiences through popular and scholarly publications and lectures, university courses, and radio and television appearances. Grancsay was succeeded by Randolph Bullock, who was head of the department for only three years before retiring in 1968 after forty years at the Museum. In 1964 armorer Leonard Heinrich retired, also after forty years, and he was followed in 1972 by armorer Harvey Murton, who had started his career working for Dean at his home in Riverdale in 1922. It was the end of an era: the staff selected and trained by Dean had maintained his traditions and legacy for four decades.

Bullock's successor in 1968 was Helmut Nickel, a native of Dresden who had been hired in 1960. The department's first trained art historian, Nickel belonged to a new generation of curators with advanced university degrees. His 1958 PhD dissertation was on the medieval European horseman's shield and even included a developmental chart inspired by Bashford Dean's example. Nickel had a vast knowledge of many diverse subjects, including Precolumbian culture and the American West, in addition to medieval history, art, and heraldry. He was also a skilled draftsman and a professional cartoonist. (Among the several cartoon series he authored and illustrated during his university years in Berlin was one based

on the German novelist Karl May's tales of the American Wild West.) But Nickel wore his learning lightly. His easy, informal manner, humor, and popular approach to communicating his vast knowledge made him a much sought-after speaker, a favorite among the

Museum's educators. He regularly participated in the medieval festival held each summer at the Cloisters, where he advised the amateur joustiers on proper tournament etiquette. And like Dean and Grancsay before him, Nickel taught at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, giving courses on arms, armor, and heraldry.

In the 1970s, no doubt inspired by the Metropolitan's new director, Thomas Hoving, who encouraged bold, attention-getting acquisitions, the department once again began to compete for major pieces on the art market. Nickel acquired three stellar works in quick succession. In March 1970 he purchased at Sotheby's in London a spectacular jeweled rapier signed by the Dresden sword cutler Israel Schuech and dated 1606 (fig. 70) that he remembered seeing as a boy in the Historisches Museum in Dresden. The colorful gilt-bronze hilt, originally enameled, is covered with late Renaissance strapwork and figural ornament and set with pearls and colored stones. It was likely the personal sidearm of Christian II of Saxony and is truly a piece of masculine jewelry. In July of the same year Nickel followed up on his recent success with the purchase at Christie's in London of a cased garniture of silver-mounted Napoleonic firearms of Neoclassical style (fig. 71) made in about 1800 in the arms factory at Versailles under the direction of Nicolas Noël Boutet, the enterprise's self-styled *directeur-artiste*. Lavishly embellished weapons like these, covered with cast and engraved silver in the cur-

rent Empire taste, were ordered by Napoléon as gifts for heads of state, political allies, and his own generals.

The most spectacular of Nickel's purchases, made at Sotheby's in 1972, was a flintlock gun made for Louis XIII of France in about 1620 by Pierre Le Bourgeois of Lisieux (fig. 72). Graceful in form and tasteful in its restrained decoration, the weapon had achieved legendary status among arms collectors and historians as perhaps the earliest known example of the flintlock mechanism, a revolutionary ignition system that remained in use for the next two hundred years.

When I was appointed department head following Nickel's retirement in 1988 the Arms and Armor Galleries were looking their age: essentially unchanged since 1956, the displays and their labels were out of date, and three of the ten Morgan Wing galleries were closed. Plans were therefore made for a thorough refurbishment of the spaces and a complete reinstallation of the collection. Leadership of the ambitious project was assumed by Museum Director Philippe de Montebello and Arthur Ochs "Punch" Sulzberger, who was then chairman of the Metropolitan's Board of Trustees. The project gave the curators a long-overdue opportunity to reassess the department's holdings, leading to the retirement of many well-known pieces that in the light of modern research and conservation criteria no longer met museum standards. All but one of six restored and composed Gothic armors,

71. Nicolas Noël Boutet (French, Paris 1761–1833 Versailles). Cased garniture of flintlock firearms: rifled carbine, pair of holster pistols, and cleaning and loading accessories, hallmarked for 1798–1809. Steel, wood, silver, textile; case 46½ x 16 in. (118 x 40.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1970 (1970.179.1a–q)





72. Pierre Le Bourgeois (French, Lisiaux, died 1627). Flintlock gun of Louis XIII of France (detail), ca. 1620. Steel, wood, gold, silver, copper alloy, mother-of-pearl, bone; l. 55¼ in. (140.4 cm), caliber .59. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund and Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1972 (1972.223)

long familiar to gallery visitors, were removed. Nickel designed new banners for the central court that displayed the arms of the legendary Knights of the Round Table, evoking the medieval romances that inspired the age of chivalry. For the first time in decades, the installation incorporated contiguous galleries of European as well as Japanese, Islamic, and North American arms, affording a more representative display of the department's encyclopedic holdings. The ten newly installed galleries opened to the public in October 1991.

Since the 1990s Punch Sulzberger's increasing interest and involvement in the department and his generous support of its activities have been transformative. He established an endowment for acquisitions, endowed a curatorial chair, and provided funding for additional staff, conservation projects, and publications. Not a collector himself, he nevertheless adopted the Department of Arms and Armor early on as his special interest at the Metropolitan. In 1968, when he became a trustee and benefactor, he also volunteered to chair the department's Visiting Committee, an advisory and support group of collectors and friends. Having grown up across the street from the Metropolitan and remembering his own youthful fascination with the "knights" in the Armor Hall, Sulzberger felt that the arms and armor collection was one of the Museum's great treasures and an attraction for young visitors who might become regular museumgoers. "Arms and Armor," he was willing to bet, "has introduced more small boys to the wonders of our Museum than any other part of the collection. Just think about it. Real

people in their right minds used to get into this stuff and clank around the countryside looking for a friendly joust or an elusive dragon. On top of that, its items are of spectacular beauty and awe-inspiring craftsmanship."

With the enthusiastic support of Punch Sulzberger and members of the Visiting Committee, the pace of acquisitions increased dramatically. The department's holdings grew significantly as the curators built on existing strengths, filled gaps, and extended the collection into new and hitherto unexplored areas. The guiding principle has been the pursuit of excellence in works of innovative design, superb craftsmanship, impeccable condition, and historical significance that best reflect their period and culture.

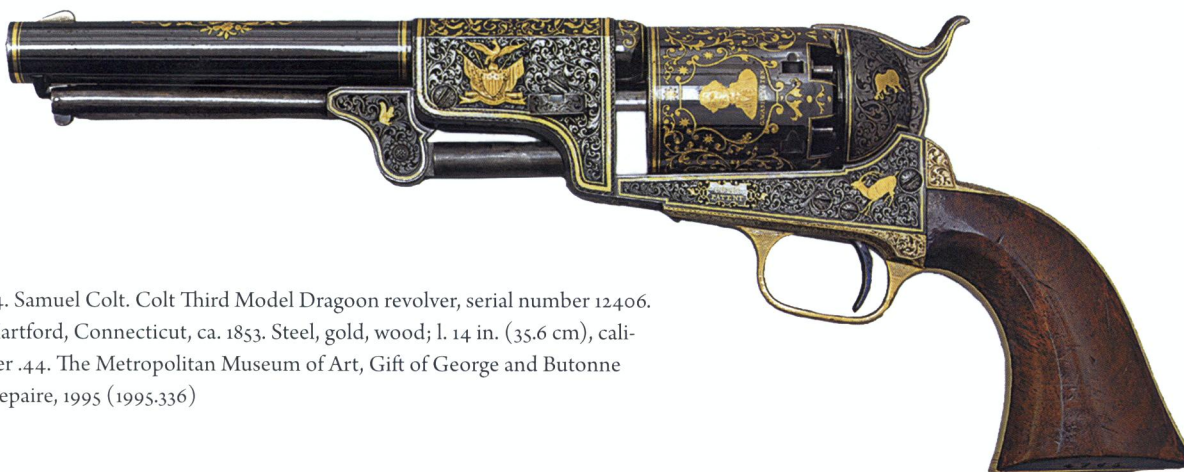
In 1989 the department purchased an armor made in Paris in 1712 for the five-year-old Infante Luis, prince of Asturias, son of Philip V of Spain (fig. 73). The armor's blued steel surfaces are decorated with gilt heraldic appliqués in the form of the fleur-de-lis of France, the lions of León, and the castle towers of Castille, representing the new arms of Spain under the Bourbon dynasty. Children's armors are always fascinating to museum visitors, the small size of the harness indicating the early age at which the sons of noblemen and knights learned to ride and bear arms. This armor is extraordinarily significant as it is probably the last royal parade armor made in Europe. A rare documented work for which the patron, maker, and date are known, it is also in excellent condition, preserving its original red satin lining and velvet-covered straps.

The department's collection of American arms has always been small, principally because most weapons made in the United States were sturdy, practical, and unadorned, intended for hunting and self-defense. In recent years the American holdings have grown significantly in quality if not in number. The gift in 1995 of an extraordinary gold-inlaid Colt revolver (fig. 74) brought to the Metropolitan one of the most beautiful and sought-after of all American firearms. Given by George and Butonne Repaire in recognition of the Museum's unique role in presenting arms and armor as works of art, the large Dragoon model revolver was manufactured at Samuel Colt's Hartford, Connecticut, factory, and hand engraved by Colt's team of German-born craftsmen. The steel surfaces are covered with dense foliate scrolls and inlaid with flush and raised gold designs that include a portrait of George Washington, a Native American, and the arms of the United States. The pistol is one of a pair. Colt presented its mate to Czar Nicholas I of Russia in 1854, the year the Crimean War broke out.

In 2009 the Museum purchased the gold-hilted sword the U.S. Congress bestowed on Major General John E. Wool in 1854 in belated recognition of his heroism in the Mexican War of 1846–48 (fig. 75). Among the finest and most original presentation swords of its period, it incorporates the American eagle as the pommel, an ear of corn as the grip, and



73. Armor of Infante Luis, prince of Asturias. France (Paris). Signed and dated on the backplate: "Drouar Ordinaire du Roy aux Heaume à Paris 1712" (Drouar armorer in ordinary to the king at the sign of the helm in Paris 1712), referring to the royal armorer Jean Drouart (died by 1715). Steel, gold, copper alloy, textile, cotton, paper; h. 28 in. (71 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Armand Hammer, Occidental Petroleum Corporation Gift, 1989 (1989.3)



74. Samuel Colt. Colt Third Model Dragoon revolver, serial number 12406. Hartford, Connecticut, ca. 1853. Steel, gold, wood; l. 14 in. (35.6 cm), caliber .44. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of George and Butonne Repaire, 1995 (1995.336)

75. Congressional presentation sword of Major General John E. Wool (detail). United States (possibly Baltimore), dated 1854. Steel, gold, gilt brass, diamonds, rubies, wood, silver, textile; l. in scabbard 39¼ in. (99.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger and Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Goelet Gifts, 2009 (2009.8a–c)



76. Smith & Wesson, Springfield, Massachusetts (founded 1852), manufacturer; Tiffany & Co., New York City (founded 1837), decorator. Top: double-action revolver, serial number 70002, with grips of hammered silver with repoussé lizards, 1883; bottom: single-action revolver, serial number 17156, with grips of Japanese-style laminated metal imitating woodgrain pattern (*mokume*), ca. 1889–90. Steel, partly nickel-plated laminated metal, silver; l. 8 in. (20.4 cm) and 7½ in. (18.1 cm), caliber .38 and .32. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Gerald Klaz, M.D., Trustee—The Gerald Klaz Trust, 2003 (2003.546.2, 1)



a cactus branch entwined with snakes (for Mexico) as the crossguard. The department's American holdings were extended into the late nineteenth century with the gift of several deluxe Smith & Wesson revolvers fitted with grips of silver and mixed metals that were designed and crafted by Tiffany & Co., New York's preeminent jewelers and silversmiths (see fig. 76).

With the Museum's increasing focus on Islamic art in recent years, the department has been fortunate to acquire several rare Ottoman and Mughal arms. An Ottoman short sword, or *yatagan*, made about 1530 at the court of Süleyman the Magnificent (fig. 77) has a gold-mounted ivory grip and high-relief gold decoration on the watered steel blade that are almost identical to those on Süleyman's personal *yatagan* (now in the Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul), which is signed by court jeweler Ahmed Tekelü and dated 1526. The exquisite gold-damascened steel plates on a Mughal plate-and-mail shirt (fig. 78) are covered with Qur'anic verse. Inscriptions inside the plates include the date 1632/33 and suggest to scholars that this shirt may have been a gift to the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan. The sturdy double-riveted iron rings of mail are stamped with inscriptions giving the ninety-nine names of God.

The department's collection of Japanese arms and armor also continues to grow. The foundation established by Dean a century ago has expanded considerably with the addition of more than three thousand swords and decorative sword fittings given or bequeathed by dedicated collectors like Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, George C. Stone, and Howard Mansfield. The rich holdings have been enhanced as well with purchases and gifts like a distinguished Edo-period armor (fig. 79) that was one of the prized possessions of Dr. Frederick M. Pederson, a friend of Dean's who formed his collection under the curator's watchful eye.

In addition to several smaller thematic shows drawn from the permanent collection, since 1998 the Department of Arms and Armor has mounted three major exhibitions, each noteworthy for its innovative approach,



original scholarship, and handsome display. “Heroic Armor of the Italian Renaissance: Filippo Negroli and His Contemporaries” (1998–99), which *Apollo* deemed the “exhibition of the year,” explored the Renaissance revival of classical armor and the work of the innovative Negroli family of Milanese armorers (see figs. 21, 24, 34). “Warriors of

the Himalayas: Rediscovering the Arms and Armor of Tibet” (2006) was the first-ever study and survey of Himalayan arms and highlighted the wealth of Tibetan, Mongolian, and Central Asian objects the department has acquired in recent years (see fig. 80). And “Art of the Samurai: Japanese Arms and Armor, 1156–1868” (2009–10) presented a survey of

77. Attributed to Ahmed Tekelü. Short sword (*yatagan*). Turkey (Istanbul), ca. 1530. Steel, gold, ivory, turquoise, pearl, ruby; l. 23 ³/₈ in. (59.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, 1993 (1993.14)



78. Shirt of mail and plate. India and Iran, plates dated A.H. 1042 (1632/33). Iron, steel, gold, leather; h. 31 in. (78.8 cm), wt. 23 lb. 10 oz. (10.7 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Gift, 2008 (2008.245)



79. Bamen Tomotsugu (Japanese, active 18th century). Armor of *gusoku* type. Edo period (1615–1868), 18th century. Lacquered iron and leather, *shakudō*, silver, silk, horsehair, ivory; h. as mounted (seated) 58 ⁵/₈ in. (148.8 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Etsuko O. Morris and John H. Morris Jr., in memory of Dr. Frederick M. Pederson, 2001 (2001.642)

80. Helmet with Tibetan Buddhist inscriptions and imagery. Mongolia, 15th–17th century. Iron, gold; h. 7 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (19.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Gift of William H. Riggs, by exchange, 1999 (1999.120)



the subject, using objects drawn exclusively from museums, shrines, temples, and private collections in Japan.

The celebration of the centennial of the Arms and Armor Department in 2012 provides a fitting occasion to recount the history of the Museum's renowned collection and to remem-

ber the curators, collectors, and benefactors who shaped it. In honor of the anniversary the galleries in the Pierpont Morgan Wing are being upgraded and the displays rearranged to accommodate important recent acquisitions that reflect the Museum's unique commitment to presenting beautiful, fine-quality arms in an art historical context. Among these is the department's latest masterpiece, a silver-mounted Viennese sporting gun made about 1670 for Empress Margarita Teresa, wife of Leopold I of Austria. Also part of the commemoration is a yearlong exhibition paying tribute to the department's founding curator, Bashford Dean. Dean's legacy endures today. His ability to balance the scholarly with the popular in his approach to gallery displays and publications serves as a model for a modern generation of curators charged with presenting and interpreting this venerable collection to an increasingly diverse and international audience in a world of fast-changing technology.

This brief history of the Department of Arms and Armor at the Metropolitan is based on documents preserved in the department's files, including its "Log," a three-volume diary recording departmental activities between 1906 and 1952, and in the Museum's Archives. Much of the department's history has been chronicled by its curators in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (MMAB), with more recent in-depth studies of individual objects published in the *Metropolitan Museum Journal* (MMJ). The title *Of Arms and Men* alludes to the opening of Virgil's *Aeneid*: "Of arms and the man I sing." Sources of quotations: Page 7: cable of April 18, 1904 (MMA Archives). Pages 12–13: letter of March 27, 1905 (A&A files). Page 13: Dean, "An Explanatory Label for Helmets," MMAB 10 (1915), p. 173. Page 14: letter of June 8, 1909 (MMA Archives); quoted by Dean to the Countess of Chesterfield, letter of June 29, 1915 (A&A files). Page 15: letter of December 14, 1912 (Morgan Library & Museum Archives). Page 16: letter of November 30, 1913 (MMA Archives). Page 18: *Mercure galant*, October 1679, pt. 2, pp. 215–16; letter of January 26, 1918 (Morgan Library & Museum Archives); quoted in Dean, "Gilded and Engraved Armor for Man and Horse," MMAB 14 (1919), p. 210. Page 20: letter of October 28, 1919 (MMA Archives). Page 21: letter of December 21, 1922 (A&A files). Page 24: Dean, "Armor for Horse and Man," MMAB 19 (1924), p. 39. Page 26: Dean, "A Crusader's Fortress (Montfort) in Palestine," MMAB 22 (1922), pt. 2, p. 5. Page 27: *New York Herald Tribune*, September 19, 1927; A&A Log, vol. 2, p. 158 (June 19, 1928). Page 29: "In Memory of Bashford Dean, 1867–1928," MMAB 24 (1929), p. 5. Page 39: Taylor, "Where Is the Metropolitan Museum Going? A Report by the Director to the Trustees," January 1943, p. 38 (MMA Archives). Page 44: *Newsletter of the Fund for the Met* 7 (Spring 2002), p. 1. Page 47: "Exhibition of the Year," *Apollo*, December 1998, pp. 12–16.