

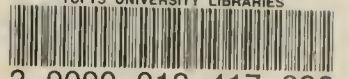
THE
HISTORY OF THE SPUR



... BY ...

CHARLES DE LACY LACY, M.A.

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THE HISTORY OF THE SPUR



The St. George's spur.
King's Coronation spur.
Actual size.

THE
HISTORY OF THE SPUR

. . BY . .

CHARLES DE LACY LACY, M.A.



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C. de L. L.

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INTRODUCTORY

IT may be reasonably assumed that it occurred to man at an early period of the world's history, as soon, indeed, as he had learned to make a horse carry him, that it would much benefit his position as an equestrian if he could fix some sort of goad to his foot wherewith he might urge on the animal to carry out his wishes, and at the same time leave both hands free for its guidance and for offensive or defensive purposes.

Having conceived this idea, the most obvious way of putting it into execution was to devise some sort of arrangement possessing arms which should embrace the heel, and which should have a sharp point projecting backwards, with which he might prick his horse's sides, and to bind this arrangement to his foot with a leathern thong—an arrangement found to be so admirably adapted to the purpose for which it was intended that it has existed unaltered to the present day; unaltered save in detail.

It is my intention to endeavour to trace these changes of detail—details of form, of size, or of ornament; changes sometimes brought about by alterations of armour, or of dress, or of shape of saddles, and sometimes apparently dictated by sheer caprice—to trace these various changes from the simplest form of short spike of the Roman period up to the enormous and elaborately ornamented implements of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and down again to the comparatively simple form of the present day.

Now these alterations, be it noted, were all made gradually. With spurs, as with nearly everything else, there has never been any violent dislocation of the gradual sequence of change. A certain form of spur would perhaps remain in use for a very long period, and then some individual would consider it an improvement to introduce some alteration of form of some particular part, say of the point, or of the sides, or of the neck, or of the method of attachment to the foot, all the other details remaining the same; and some of his neighbours would adopt the alteration and some would not; and then after a time some other detail would undergo a change.

And so the alterations were always gradual, some characteristics remaining the same for several hundred years. The greatest and most radical change that ever took place in the evolution of the spur was the substitution of the revolving rowel for the primitive goad-like spike or "pryck"; and it took a hundred years, as we shall see, to bring about this change completely. That is to say, it was rather more than a hundred years between the first introduction of the rowel and the final disappearance of the prick spur from the heels of our forefathers.

In the earliest times it is probable that spurs were looked upon, just as they are now, merely as useful appliances for encouraging a horse to carry out the wishes of his rider, and that when they were not employed for that purpose, they were laid aside, and no more thought of until the rider mounted his horse again. It was reserved for the Middle Ages to invest the spur with a romantic and emblematical value, which in a great measure led to its extreme elaboration during that period.

I am aware that some distinguished antiquarians consider this idea to be much exaggerated, and think that the spur, even in the Middle Ages, never had more than its practical value. In support of this idea Chaucer may be quoted, in his Prologue to the "Canterbury Tales," written about A.D. 1370—a period when the spur was beginning to be highly elaborated. Chaucer, when describing the pilgrims on their way to Canterbury, makes no mention of spurs when describing the knight. He therefore did not look upon the spur as the typical emblem of knighthood. But in describing the "Good Wyf" he says—

"Upon her amblere easily she sat,
A foot-mantel upon her hippes wide,
And on her feet a paire of spores sharpe."

And this is the only mention of spurs that Chaucer makes in describing the all sorts and conditions of men that composed the Canterbury pilgrims.

Still, one is reluctant to give up the idea that the spur was once looked upon as the emblem of knighthood, and the frequently used expression "to win his spurs," and the ceremonies observed as to the putting on the spurs at the investiture of a knight, and the cutting off the spurs on the occasion of a knight's degradation, all point to the idea that spurs once had a value beyond that of mere utility.

In an account of "How Knyghtis of ye Bathe shulde be mayd," written in the early part of the fifteenth century, "the squyers" are directed "to their (the knights') swerdis, and a payre of gilt sporis, hangynge upon the hyltis of the same sworde, and shall bear the sworde with the sporis before them."

Again, in "The Booke of Honor and Armes," printed in 1590, there is a chapter showing "the manner of making knyghts about the yere of our Lord 1020." In this it says, after administering certain oaths, "There came unto the knyght seven noble maidens, attyred in white, and girt his sword unto his side. That being done, foure knyghts, of the most honorable in that presence, put on his spurres."

Then as to the degradation of a knight, the same book says, "In the raigne of King Edward IV., it appeared a knight was degraded in this sort. First, after the publication of his offence, his gilt spurres were beaten from his heels, then his sword taken from him and broken. That being done, eurie peece of his armour was brused, beaten and caste aside." After all which disgraces he was beheaded.

"In like manner Andrew of Herkela, knight, and Earl of Cardrogh, was in this sort degraded."

This Andrew Harclay was Earl of Carlisle, and was discovered to have been in treasonable communication with the Scots. The account goes on to say: "He being apprehended was, by the king's command, brought before Sir Anthony Lucy, anno 1322, apparelled in all the robes of his estate, as an erle and a knight, and so led to the place of judgement. Being thither come, Sir Anthony Lucy said unto him these wordes—'First thou shalt lose the order of knighthood by which thou hadst all thine honor, and further all worship uppon thy bodie bee brought to nought.' These words pronounced, Sir Anthony Lucy commanded a knave to hewe the knight's spurres from his heeles, and after caused his sword to be broken ower his head.

That done he was despoiled of his furred tabard, of his hood, of his furred cotts, and of his girdle. Then Sir Anthony said unto him these wordes—'Andrew, now thou art no knight, but a knaue, and for thy treason the King doth will thou shalt be hanged.'"

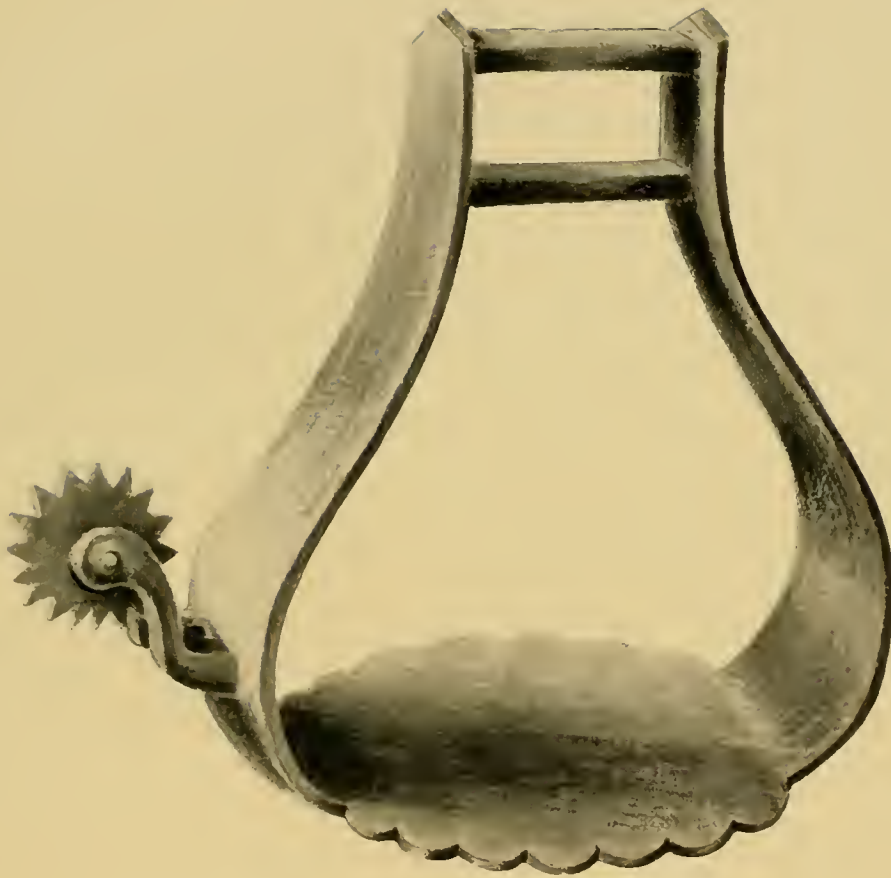
Also in several old documents there are references made to a knight's spurs being cut off by the king's master cook with his cleaver, on the occasion of his degradation. All these instances point to the spur having had at that time an emblematical value over and above that of mere utility.

But in very early times it is probable that no more than its practical value was given to the spur, and the early writers were very reticent upon the subject. There is no mention of spurs, so far as I am aware, made anywhere in the Bible. The ancient Egyptians, too, have left no evidence either in tombs, or on monuments, or carvings, that they used them. This absence of reference to spurs by the Egyptians and by biblical writers may possibly be accounted for by the fact that the Eastern nations generally have always preferred to attach their goad to the stirrup rather than to the foot. Numerous examples can be seen even at the present day of the inner corners of the broad foot-plate of the Eastern stirrup being prolonged into more or less of a point, which can easily be applied to the horse's side. In connection with this, an interesting survival can be seen in Southern Greece at the present day. In the neighbourhood of Pergos, near Olympia, I observed the natives riding with a small swan-necked rowel spur, with a neck about an inch in length, attached to the inner side of each stirrup, the stirrup

being of the usual European pattern. A few had merely a short iron point attached to the stirrup, but most of the specimens I observed on sale in the shops at Pergos were as shown in the illustration on Plate 2. This custom of attaching the spur to the stirrup, and not to the foot, I found to be universal all over the Peloponnesus—and it is also to be found in parts of Northern Greece. It is chiefly occasioned by the proper foot-gear of the old Greek national costume, now going rather out of fashion, being a slipper, with the heel cut away, much in the nature of an Eastern slipper, an arrangement which does not lend itself very well to the attachment of the spur to the foot. I believe, therefore, this fashion of having the spur upon the stirrup, in Greece, to be of Eastern origin, and to be an interesting remnant of Persian influence.

Homer, although in the *Iliad* he gives elaborate descriptions of arms and armour, does not mention spurs. But in those early days, although riding is frequently mentioned, the chariot was the principal means of locomotion in warfare, and hunting was generally conducted on foot. Xenophon, and other writers of his day, speak of spurs, using the word *μύωψ*, literally a horse-fly, or gad-fly. And many of these authors use the word in so doubtful a sense as to render it an open question whether the horse sprang forward on being pricked by his rider, or by a fly.

Theophrastus, however, a writer who flourished about 350 B.C., sets the matter at rest, in his "Character Sketches," by saying, when describing the man of petty ambitions, that he is the sort of man who would walk about "*ἐν τοῖς μύωψι*" (in his spurs); thus



Greek stirrup with spur attached.
Slightly reduced. Actual height $5\frac{1}{2}$ in.

showing that the *μύωψ* in question was a structure attached to the rider's feet, and not a fly. The fact that Theophrastus singles out the spurs as worthy of mention in his account of this personage seems to imply that they were somewhat of a novelty at that time, since the spurs of that period were very small, and could not have furnished a conspicuous feature in their wearer's equipment. I am inclined, however, to think that the novelty was in the spurs being made of metal, probably bronze, in keeping with the rest of the arms and armour of the time, and possibly having some attempt at ornament; for I feel certain that spurs of some kind had been in use long before that date. In all probability the original form of spur was merely a sharpened piece of wood, or bone, of which, of course, no traces would remain at the present time. Also some of the novelty may have lain in the fact that such a person as Theophrastus describes wore his spurs upon his heels, and not attached to his stirrups, a custom most prevalent in the East, as I have just previously mentioned, and which was more or less adopted by the Greeks alone amongst the nations of Europe.

Cicero, Livy, and other Latin writers mention spurs, using the words "calcar" and "ferata calce." But no traces of spurs, as far as I am aware, are to be found on Roman sculptures. Writers all along have been very reticent upon the subject. The earliest painters have, as a rule, shirked the spurs in their representations of battles, etc., or have, in their representations of scenes that have occurred long ago, introduced the spurs of their own period. There are numerous pictures by the old

masters of the fifteenth century, of the Crucifixion, and of the Adoration of the Magi, and other biblical subjects, with mounted figures introduced wearing the long, straight-necked spurs that were so universally worn about the middle of the fifteenth century. In rare cases the artist has attempted to represent a spur of a bygone period, but usually without much knowledge of the subject. For instance, on the great bronze doors at the west end of St. Peter's at Rome, there is a representation, in relief, on one of the lower panels, of the martyrdom of St. Paul. The artist has introduced a figure of a Roman soldier on horseback, looking on, who is wearing prick spurs, having curved sides and straight necks, presumably about four or five inches long. Here it is evident that the artist had not the faintest idea what a Roman spur was like, and so introduced a spur something like those of his own period, but not so large or so elaborate. On another panel in the same door there is a representation of a knight in full armour, wearing the long, straight-necked spurs, fully nine inches long, that were characteristic of the fifteenth century, and which were common in England from A.D. 1450 to 1470. Here was evidently the spur of the period at which the artist worked. And allowing for the fashions in Italy to have been a few years in advance of those in England, I judged the date of the doors to be from 1440 to 1450. I subsequently ascertained the date of the doors to be 1445.

The engravers of ancient brasses in our churches, although they have in numerous instances conscientiously introduced the spurs on mailed figures with a total disregard of perspective,

are not entirely to be trusted as accurate portrayers of the spurs they depict. Perhaps the most trustworthy source of information, other than the spurs themselves, is derived from effigies; since a man is more likely to make an accurate copy of a real spur when making an effigy, than the engraver of a brass, who suggests a spur with a few lines only. But effigies are not very numerous, and are so very frequently mutilated. And then in the case of the spurs themselves, how often are they found under conditions which only add to the difficulty of their identification. While those found in museums, attached to suits of armour, are generally open to suspicion; since it is the foot-pieces which so often are lost, and have been replaced by copies.

Dredged up from the beds of rivers, fished up from the depths of wells, turned up by the plough, or thrown up by the navy's shovel, and too often broken in the process—these are the ways in which spurs are most frequently discovered; rusted and corroded, and generally without one particle of evidence to show how long they have lain subjected to the deleterious influence of water or damp earth.

Consequently too little is known at the present day of this interesting subject, as is evinced by our seeing frequently in our museums and public collections of armour, spurs arranged upside down—a very common mistake with spurs of the seventeenth century; and where spurs are attached to suits of armour, they are often of quite a different period, are obvious forgeries, or are attached in a manner not in vogue at the period.

In the Musée d'Artillerie in Paris, where there is a fine

collection of armour, evidently but little attention has been given to spurs by the learned gentlemen who preside over the Museum. There is in that collection a prick spur described in the catalogue as belonging to the commencement of the fifteenth century, but which has every appearance of belonging to the twelfth century, if not earlier than that. It is an iron prick spur, with a very short point, no neck, and very long, straight sides, terminating in plates for the attachment of rivets. In the description given in the catalogue it says the spur "preserves the rivets by which it was attached to the solleret." In all probability the rivets in this case attached the spur to a leathern strap, for at the period of the straight-sided prick spur, with a short point, chain armour was worn, and plate armour, with the feet encased in sollerets, had yet to be invented.

The date of the fifteenth century is attributed to this spur presumably from the fact that it was found on the site of the battle of Agincourt. Now, men have died, and worms have eaten them in the parish of Agincourt, who did not live to see the famous battle which was fought there on the 25th of October, 1415, and such men may have left some of the more imperishable parts of their accoutrements for posterity to find. Of course it is conceivably possible, though hardly probable, that some man may have gone forth to battle that day, either for or against our good King Henry V., attired in his great-grandfather's spurs. He may have contended that the form of spur, with its curved sides and large revolving rowel, which had been in universal use for one hundred and twenty years or more, was all wrong, and that what was good enough for his

great-grandfather was good enough for him. Or he may have worn them for luck—or for many other reasons. But to say that a prick spur, and an early prick spur at that, belongs to the fifteenth century because it was found at Agincourt, when everything points to its being of a much earlier date, is misleading, to say the least of it, to the enquiring Frenchman who may seek to learn what manner of accoutrements his forefathers wore during the Middle Ages.

In our British Museum there are three spurs which are not exhibited to the public because of a doubt as to their age. They had been thought to have been Roman spurs, because they were found in the Roman stratum of London, having been dug up in Lothbury when the Bank of England was built. There need not have been any doubt as to their being Roman or not, had the learned and courteous gentlemen who preside over that department of the Museum given but a little of their attention to the subject. Two are pyramidal-pointed prick spurs, one with long, straight sides, and one with curved sides, and are of the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries. The third is broken, but is probably a rowel spur, with the rowel missing, and is, of course, of a later date still. Their presence in the Roman stratum of London was probably due to the fact that they were thrown down some hole or shallow well, and so were found some feet deeper than the surface upon which their wearers had habitually walked.

Again, in the admirable collection of armour brought together by Sir Richard Wallace, and now to be seen at Hertford House, there are several suits of armour of the

fifteenth century with "spurs attached," as is stated in the catalogue, but which, both as regards the spurs themselves and also as to their method of attachment, give grave cause for doubt as to their ever having been worn in the manner shown.

By the end of the fifteenth century, armour about reached its height as to weight and completeness, the man being entirely covered, and the horse almost as completely. Consequently the presence of the "flanchards," which formed a kind of valance round the horse's sides, combined with the shape of the saddle, necessitated that the rider's foot should be eight or ten inches, or even more, from his horse's side. This led to the introduction of very long-necked spurs; often the neck was nearly a foot long. These spurs, of which numbers exist at the present day—I know of twenty at least in London alone—were worn on the man's foot, and the long neck protruded through a slit in the back of the jambe, or leg-piece, so that when the owner took off his armour, which he must have been thankful to have done at the earliest opportunity after dismounting, he could still wear, and display, his spurs, which were often enriched with gold or silver inlay. Now, in the suits I speak of in the Wallace collection there are the slits at the back of the jambe, and spurs of doubtful appearance—at all events they are very unlike all the other specimens which are so frequently seen—protrude from these slits. But on investigation you find that the neck of the spur ends immediately inside the slit, in a T-shaped arrangement, which is rivetted to the jambe on the *inside*, thus doing away with any reason

for the slit. For when the spur was rivetted to the armour, which was very seldom—but of that more hereafter—it was rivetted to the jambe, or solleret, on the outside, and the armourer spared the trouble of making a meaningless slit. What probably happened in this case was this—the German philosopher, under whose care the suit once was, when it formed part of a German collection, and before it was purchased by Sir Richard Wallace, wishing to show spurs with the suit, was confronted with two difficulties. He had not got a spur with sides made to embrace a man's foot, and he had not got a man's foot inside the armour. So he proceeded to deal with it as his illustrious *confrère* did with the camel, and “evolved” the spur here shown. Very likely the authorities at Hertford House know quite well that these spurs are not genuine; if so, I think it a pity they do not say so.

Sir Samuel Meyrick, in his description of his fine collection of armour at Goodrich Court, and which is now, most of it, in the Wallace collection, makes many observations upon spurs, but they contain many inaccuracies. In the beautiful illustrations of this collection, engraved by Joseph Skelton, there is frequently depicted a complete suit of armour in the centre of the page, with the various pieces, drawn to a larger scale, arranged round the central figure. In several instances the jambe, or leg-piece, when represented separately, has a spur rivetted to it, while in the centre figure, representing the whole suit, the spur is shown buckled on with straps in the ordinary way. These cannot be both faithful representations of the same piece of armour.

Here, again, is an instance of an enthusiast, as regards armour, devoting but little of his attention to spurs.

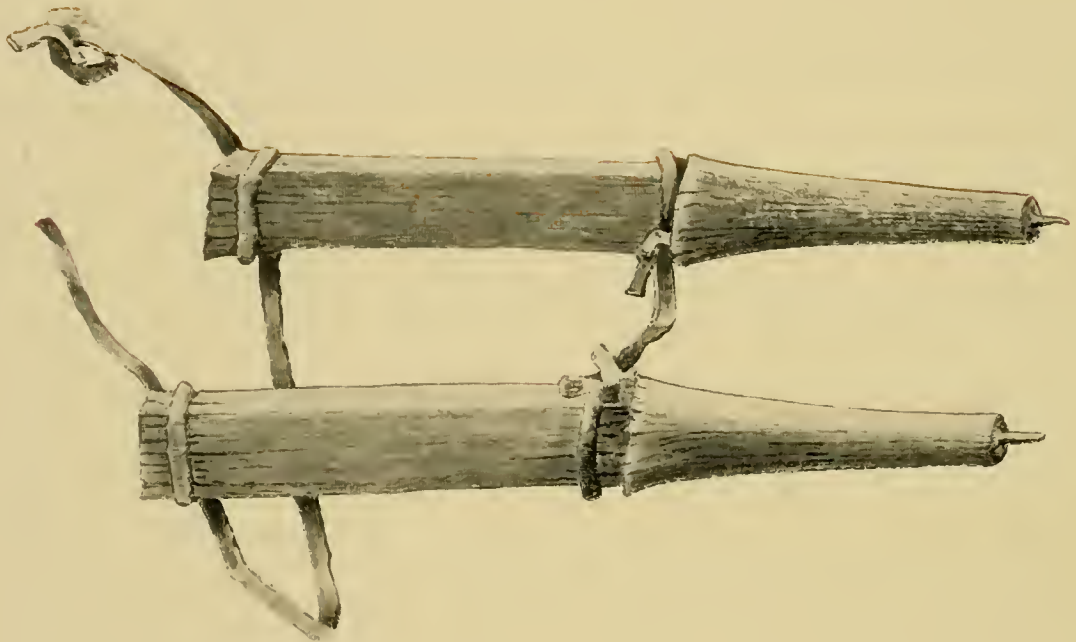
There is one curious fact which I may mention here before I begin any detailed description of ancient spurs, and which has been mentioned by James and by several other writers on the subject, but of which no satisfactory explanation has as yet been given.

It is an undoubted fact that in numerous instances where the graves of warriors, buried during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, have been explored, one spur only has been found upon the body, and that always on the left heel. This has been noticed in Switzerland, and more often in Northern Europe. One case only has been observed in this country, that of a knight of the Brougham family, one Udard de Broham, who, it is believed, went to the First Crusade, and died in the reign of Henry I., and was buried in Brougham Church, Westmorland. Some have thought that as the spur in these cases has always been found on the left heel, it was worn on that side in order to keep the horse up close to an adversary, who would usually be on the right side of the warrior in a single hand-to-hand combat. Others have thought it unlikely that knights ever rode with one spur only. In the third volume of the *Transactions of the Archæological Association* for the year 1847, Mr. A. Kirkman gives an account of a curious ivory carving which he believes to be of the period of Edward I. On this carving is represented, on one panel, the flight of a number of Saracens, and on the other panel a group of knights, all with one spur only, but that

not always on the left heel. This carving seems to show that it really was a custom for knights at that period to ride with one spur only, and it has been suggested that it was a custom observed among the Templars. This order took for its badge two men riding upon one horse—as illustrative of their poverty and humility—and it is contended that two men would not want four spurs between them for one unfortunate horse. The Templars certainly took for their badge two men riding upon one horse. But I am not aware that they ever actually carried out the practice in everyday life. Still, the badge may have suggested the idea of one spur. But the custom must have prevailed quite in the early period of the order only, for the practices which led to the suppression of the order in 1312 were by no means characteristic of either poverty or humility. On the effigies in the Temple Church of Knights Templar, and which range from 1144 to 1241, there is a spur on each foot in every case.

I am unable to throw any fresh light upon the matter, but I feel sure that our forefathers did not habitually ride with one spur like butcher-boys. The only suggestion I am able to make, other than that of its being a custom among the early Templars, is that, considering the very early period during which the custom of burying a warrior with one spur only was in vogue—a period when the facilities for making metal implements were in their infancy, and no metal objects with any pretensions to skill in workmanship were so easily come by as they were later—it is possible that when the head of the family died one of his spurs was kept by his relatives

as a memorial, or as a copy from which others might be made, and the other was buried with him in order that his remains might not be undistinguished by the mark of honour that the spur seems always to have conferred.



Patagonian.
Slightly reduced. Actual length 6 in.
United Service Museum, Whitehall.

ON THE PRICK SPUR

IT is probable that the earliest form of spur used by our remote ancestors was made of pieces of hard wood or bone, or possibly a combination of both, sharpened to a point, and bound to the foot by leathern thongs. But of these, naturally, no examples remain.

There is a form of wooden spur once, I believe, universally used in Patagonia, and even now to be found among the native tribes, who occupy much of their time in hunting, on horseback, some large running bird of the ostrich species, a pursuit which entails a good deal of galloping. I give an illustration of this form of spur on Plate 3. It is taken from a specimen in the possession of the United Service Institution at Whitehall. It consists of two pieces of hard wood, six inches long, connected together about the middle by a short piece of leather about two inches in length. This piece of leather is adjusted to the heel, and the two pieces of wood being placed one on each side of the foot, the front ends are then drawn towards each other by a leathern thong passed over the instep and under the sole and bound round the foot. This keeps the two pieces of wood in position with their hinder ends approaching each other behind the heel.

Into each of these ends, in this specimen, there is inserted a short iron point. There are several specimens of this form of spur in the British Museum, and which were also brought from Patagonia. They are very similar in every detail to the

one shown here, having the front parts of the pieces of wood cut rectangular, and the hinder parts rounded. Some of them have a wider piece of leather for the heel-piece than is here shown. I am not aware that this form of spur exists now in any part of the world except Patagonia, but I conceive it possible that some such form was once in universal use among the primitive races of Europe.

Zschille and Forrer give an illustration, in their work on spurs, of a precisely similar form of spur, calling it a "Feuerlanddischer Sporn," or a spur from Terra del Fuego. They also conjecture that something of this kind was the original form of spur amongst the earliest races, but allow that as no traces of them now remain, this supposition must always be problematical. They also suggest a stout forked twig from a tree, with a sharpened point, as being a very probable primitive form. And they give an illustration of a wooden spur of this kind taken from a representation of an Amazon on a Greek vase of about the fifth century B.C.

The earliest metal spurs that I have been able to find, or that have been described by others, were made of bronze, and date from about the third century B.C. They all present more or less the same characteristics—a very short, plain point, generally about half an inch in length, and never more than one inch, with short sides not projecting forwards on each side of the foot more than about two inches. The sides are generally round in section, though sometimes slightly flattened on the inside, and with a spread only just sufficient to embrace the bare heel. It is interesting to observe that the arrangement at the

ends of the sides for the attachment of the straps is, in these early spurs, of precisely the same form as that of the present day — a mushroom-shaped or button-like stud, on which the strap can be buttoned simply by making a slit in the leather. But before the commencement of the Christian era this stud disappeared, not to be resumed again for nearly 2,000 years, at all events not until the end of the seventeenth century. This disappearance is curious, as the arrangement is very simple, presents no great difficulty in the making, and is found at the present day to answer its purpose admirably. But the fact remains that from the Roman period of just before the Christian era, all through the Middle Ages, and down to the time of Charles II., this button-like stud is hardly ever met with, and it did not come into universal use till the time of George II.

In the museum attached to the Etruscan tombs of the Volumnii, near Perugia, there is a bronze spur, which was found either in the tombs themselves, or in the immediate neighbourhood, and of which an illustration is given on Plate 4, Fig. 1. This spur is in a perfect state of preservation, which points to its having lain in the tombs themselves; these are chambers hewn out of the solid rock, and were discovered in the year 1842, when the contents showed little or no signs of damp. The tombs contain numerous cinerary caskets of the Volumnii family, and date from 250 to 150 B.C. This spur presents all the characteristics of the early metal spurs: very short rounded sides, flattened on the inside, and not projecting forwards on each side of the foot more than two inches and a quarter, and with a slight spread only; consequently they were intended to

embrace either the bare heel or one clothed with a very close-fitting boot. The terminations of the sides are in the form of the button-like stud, circular in form and five-eighths of an inch in diameter, slightly convex on the outer surface and concave within. The heel-plate is about three-eighths of an inch from the upper edge to the lower, and there is an attempt at ornament in the form of two small rounded knobs, or bosses, on the upper and lower edges in the median line. The spike is round in section, and half an inch in length. The period in which these tombs were constructed is, of course, late Etruscan, and after that people had come under Roman influence. It would be interesting to ascertain if the Etruscans had used spurs when they were at the zenith of their power, from the eighth to the fifth century B.C., before they came under the influence of Rome, as that might have thrown some light on the origin of this mysterious race. But I could find no evidence of spurs in the Archæological Museum at Florence, where there are numerous bronze objects made by Etruscans at an early period—horses' bits, weapons, etc., but no spurs. I was not able to investigate all the Etruscan remains at such places as Orvieto, Chiusi, etc., but I think it probable that, had any spurs prior to the third century B.C. been in existence, they would have been found in the Etruscan Museum at Florence.

In the collection of Mr. Redfern, of Cambridge, there is a Roman spur, found, I believe, in Essex, and which is illustrated on Plate 4, Fig. 2. It is a bronze spur with short rounded sides, rather less than a quarter of an inch in thickness and having a spread of two and a half inches. The sides are

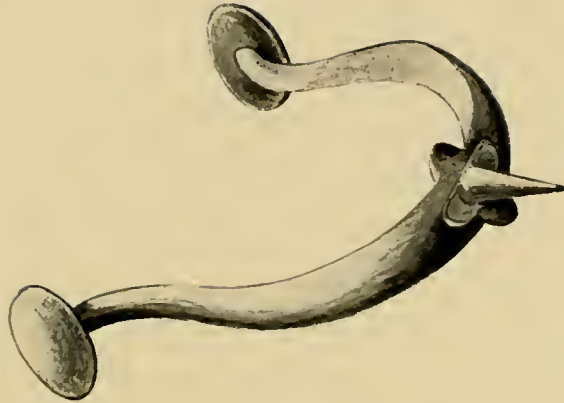


FIG. 1.

Etruscan, bronze. Second century B.C.

Found in the Etruscan tombs of the Volumnii, near Perugia.

Large circular studs $\frac{5}{8}$ in. diameter, slightly convex surface; spread $2\frac{3}{8}$ in.; heel-plate $\frac{3}{8}$ in., slightly rounded externally, flat inside; spike round in section, rather more than $\frac{1}{2}$ in. On upper and lower edge of heel-plate some attempt at ornament in two small rounded knobs.

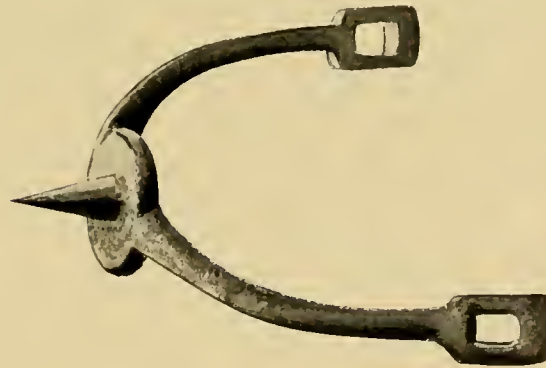


FIG. 2.

Roman spur, bronze. Probably 50 B.C.

Point $\frac{3}{8}$ in., round in section; heel-plate circular, 1 in. in diameter; sides 2 in.; spread $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.; sides rounded; terminals flattened, with quadrilateral perforation.

Mr. Reifern's Collection.

welded into a circular heel-plate one inch in diameter, from the centre of which projects a spike, round in section, and about five-eighths of an inch in length. The ends of the sides are beaten out to form an oblong about half an inch wide and rather more in length, and a square opening is cut in each. Here the button-shaped stud is absent, and I have not been fortunate enough to find a spur in England with this arrangement, though from the numerous examples given in Zschille and Forrer's work there appear to be several in German collections. The appearance and workmanship of Mr. Redfern's spur so much more resembles that of the Etruscan spur shown on the same plate than it does those Roman spurs—to be described presently—and which date from after the Christian era, that I am inclined to think that it was left behind by someone who accompanied Julius Cæsar in his invasion of Britain in 54 B.C. At any rate, if it belongs to the period of the second Roman invasion, it dates from quite the commencement of that period, and was probably an old-fashioned spur at that time.

In the National Museum at Rome there are several spurs of the reign of Tiberius, A.D. 14 to 37, all very much alike, and of which illustrations of two are given on Plate 5. They are made of bronze, and the sides are flat and very thin, much thinner than in the case of the two previously described. One has a plain rounded spike half an inch long, and the heel-plate quite thin, flat inside and out, and half an inch wide. The sides are gradually rounded towards their terminations, and are turned round outwards to form a loop through which the thong could pass; the spread is two and a half inches. The

other spur is much the same size. The sides are thin, and flat inside and out, half an inch wide at the heel and gradually narrowed without any rounding to three-sixteenths of an inch; the ends are beaten out to form an oblong with a square perforation cut in each; the point is five-eighths of an inch in length, and in this specimen shows some attempt at ornament.

In the British Museum there is an iron spur which was found by Dr. Behr while excavating some Teutonic graves in the Russian Baltic Province of Livonia, together with spear heads and other objects which are believed by him to be about the first or second century A.D. An illustration of this spur is shown on Plate 5, Fig. 3. The sides are thin and the heel-plate is rather more than three-quarters of an inch wide; the sides, keeping flat, are narrowed to half an inch or less and are then turned upwards to form a sort of hook, under which a strap could pass to bind the spur to the foot; the spike is quadrilateral and is one inch in length; the spread of the sides is slightly more than two and a half inches.

In few of these early spurs were the sides prolonged forwards to anything like the extent to which they were at a later period and to which they are now. Generally there was merely enough length and spread to embrace the bare heel. But this fashion began to change after the third century. Two very interesting spurs were found, in 1845, in the old Romano-British encampment on the top of Hod Hill, at Hanford, near Blandford, Dorset. Here there is an ancient British circular camp on the summit of the hill, overlooking the valley of the

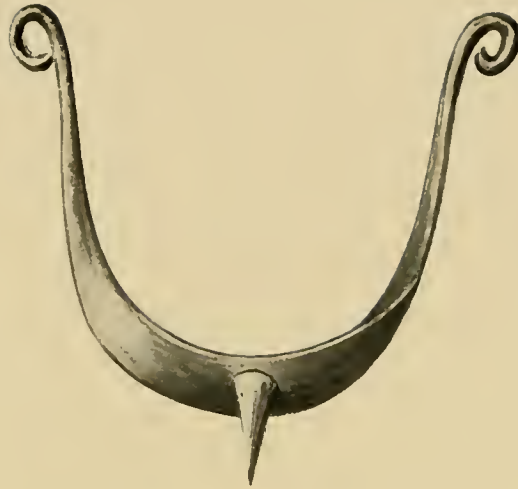


FIG. 1.

Bronze Spur of the time of Tiberius.

Several of very similar pattern.

Heel-plate very thin, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide, flat inside and out; spread $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.; sides gradually rounded and turned over into loop; spike round in section, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. long.

National Museum at Rome.

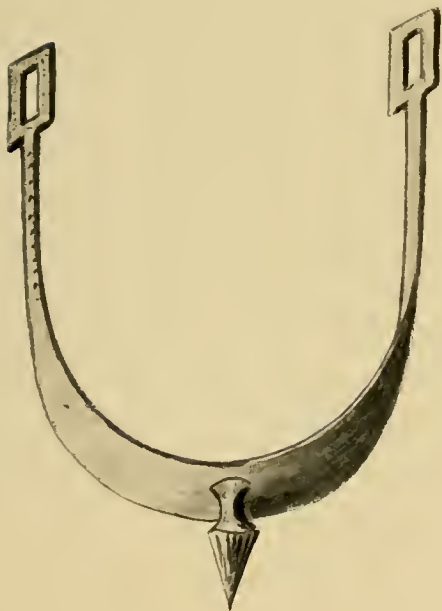


FIG. 2.

Bronze spur of the time of Tiberius.

Spread $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.; heel-plate very thin, flat both exterior and interior; flattened sides, narrowing to $\frac{3}{16}$ in.; terminations square with some ornamentation; spike $\frac{5}{8}$ in., with ornamentation.

National Museum at Rome.

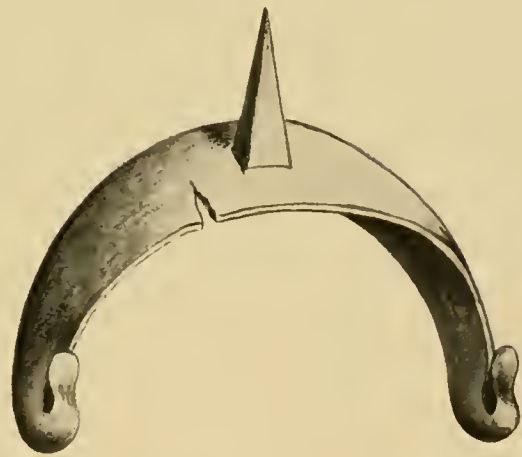


FIG. 3.

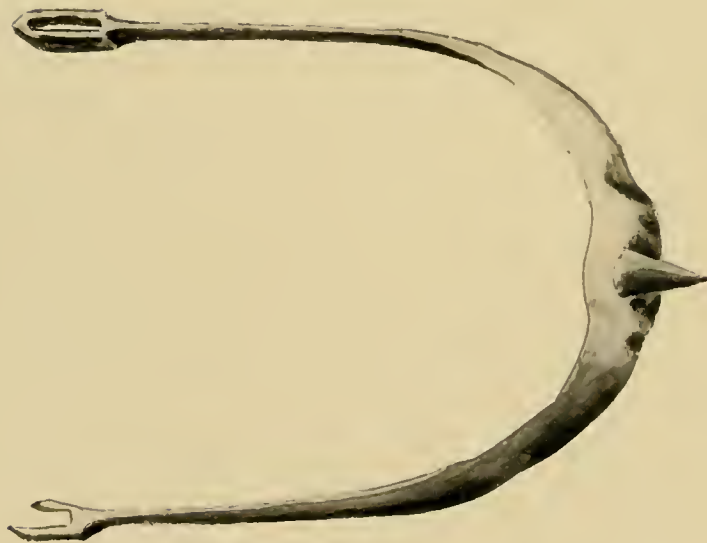
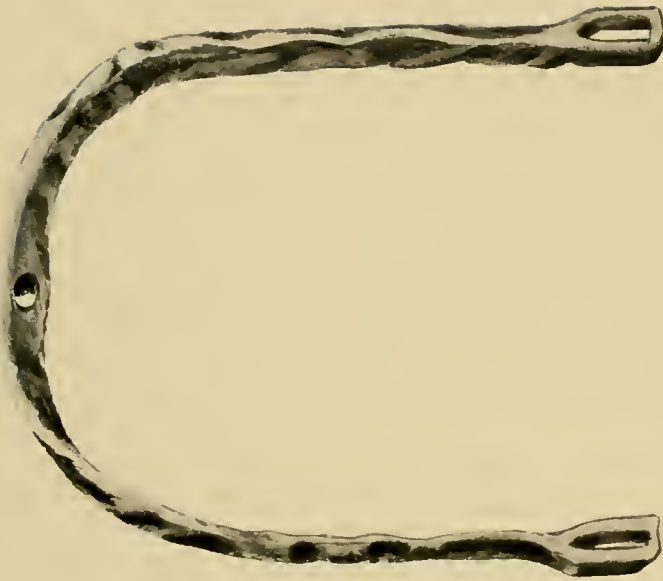
Spur found by Dr. Behr in the Russian Baltic Province of Livonia.

Probably third century.

Point 1 in., square in section; spread $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.; width of plate at heel $\frac{3}{4}$ in., tapering to $\frac{1}{2}$ in. at sides.

Actual size.

British Museum.



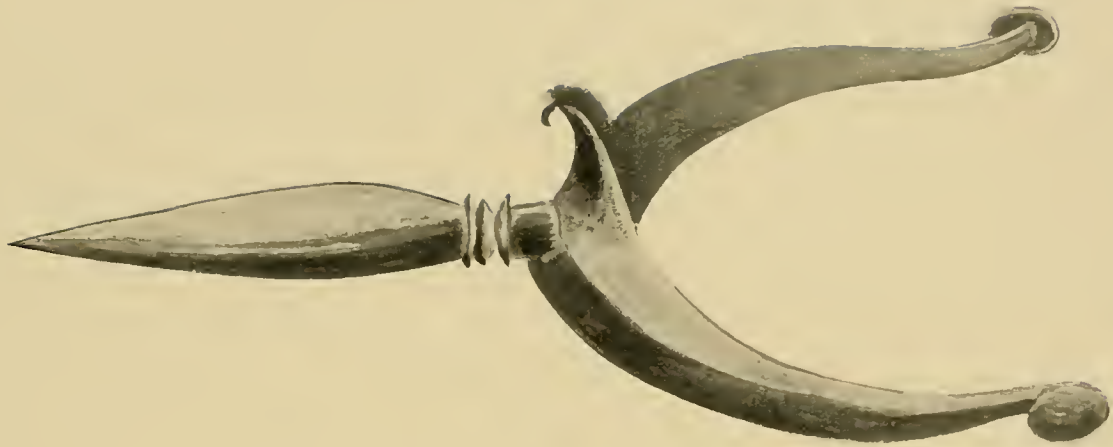
Roman spurs found at Hod Hill, Hanford, Blandford.
Spread of sides 3 in. ; length of sides $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. The spike is $\frac{3}{8}$ in. long, and sides from $\frac{1}{8}$ in. to $\frac{1}{16}$ in. thick. Probably late Roman.

Stour, which shows unmistakable evidence of having been altered and occupied by the Romans. Distinct traces remain of a smaller quadrilateral Roman camp within the more extensive British camp. The spurs, which are made of bronze, were found together with spear and javelin heads, fibulæ, and coins undoubtedly Roman. The coins are of the reign of Augustus, Agrippa, Germanicus, Nero, and Caligula. The sides of these spurs are longer than the sides usually were up to this period, being three and a half inches long, with a spread of three inches. They are about one-eighth of an inch thick and rather more than a quarter of an inch wide for the greater part of their length, and at the heel about half an inch wide. The sides are of oval section and the ends are beaten out, with an elongated rectangular perforation. There is no neck, and a short rounded spike five-eighths of an inch in length projects from the heel-plate. In one of them the spike is absent, and only the hole remains. The length of the sides of these spurs and the form of termination are so like those of the Norman period, that, had they not been found together with objects so undoubtedly Roman, they might well have been thought to have been of the eleventh century. The spike, however, is unlike the later period, and is typically Roman. These spurs are illustrated on Plate 6.

This form of primitive spur, with a short straight spike never exceeding an inch in length, and generally much less than that, continued in use, no doubt, for a long period—several hundred years, perhaps—and then, gradually, as the skill of artificers in metal improved, elaborations began, and

some forms of ornament were introduced. The first important change of form that we notice after the increase in the length of the sides is an elongation of the spike. I have not been able to find any specimens in England to illustrate this, but there are numerous examples in Zschille and Forrer's work. This change probably set in during the fifth or sixth century, and when once the fashion became established, the length of the spike went on increasing, fostered, no doubt, by a spirit of emulation among those who wished to be in the van of fashion, until the spike became a formidable weapon four or five inches long, with no guard to prevent it penetrating a horse's side to its full extent should the rider's foot be forced against his horse in the shock of combat. I give an illustration of this form of spur, taken from Zschille and Forrer's work, on Plate 7. It is probably about the fifth century.

This unduly long spike no doubt occasioned from time to time serious damage to horses, and led to the next change, which was the introduction of some sort of guard which should prevent any such undue penetration. This, at first, took the form of a short spike, seldom more than a quarter of an inch in length, inserted into the middle of the blunt end of the neck, which was in these cases from one to two inches long, round in section, and more or less in the form of a cone with the base directed backwards. The end of the neck was then cut cleanly off, leaving a flat, round surface at its end, and into the middle of this the sharp point was inserted. The spurs, which are of about the ninth and tenth centuries, had straight sides, usually rather slender, rounded on the outside surface



Taken from Zschille and Forrer.
Probably fifth century.
Actual size.



FIG. 1.
Tenth century.
Neck $1\frac{1}{4}$ in.; point $\frac{3}{16}$ in. Total length 6 in.
City of London Museum

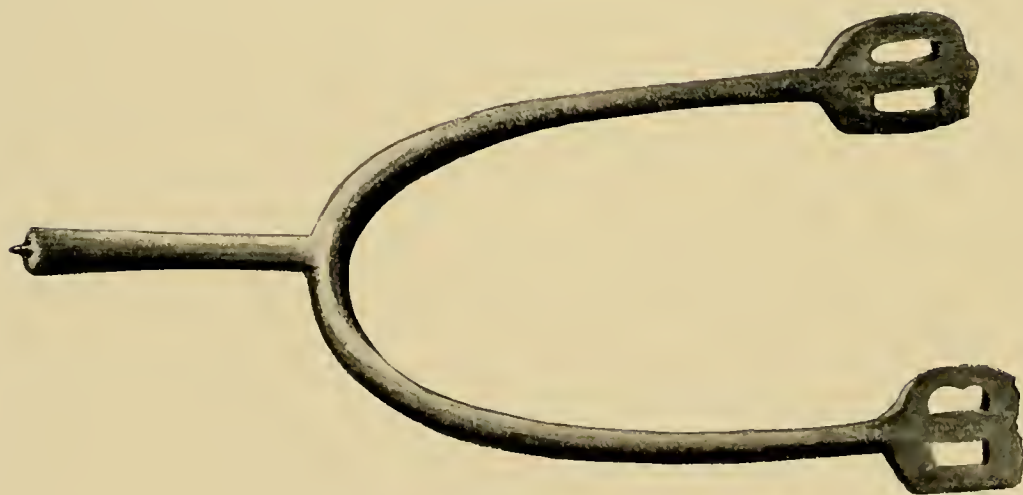


FIG. 2.
Teath century.
City of London Museum.

and flat on the inside, terminating in flat plates, to which the straps were secured by rivets. The sides at this period were usually prolonged forwards, so as to bring the ends well to the front of the foot, and enable one strap to pass round the foot, under the sole and over the instep. Frequently there was some attempt at ornament, either in the middle of the sides or in the neck, and occasionally they were inlaid with silver. These characteristics are shown in several of our illustrations, which are taken from spurs found in the City of London, and are preserved in the City of London Museum at the Guildhall, where there is the finest collection of ancient spurs in England.

One very early form of this kind of spur, perhaps the very earliest, had the buckle welded on to the end of one of the sides. One of these is preserved in the City of London Museum, and is shown on Plate 8, Fig. 1. Its dimensions are—total length six inches, neck one and a quarter inches, sides four and three-quarter inches. In the middle of each side there is a rough attempt at some form of twisted ornament, and at the end of one side a buckle is welded on, and is, in this specimen, in a fair state of preservation, considering that it must have lain a long time in the ground. The end of the other side, now broken, terminated probably in an oval loop. An exactly similar spur was dug up at Linton Heath, in Cambridgeshire, by Mr. Richard Neville, in 1854, when a large Anglo-Saxon burial-place was discovered, and was described in the *Archæological Journal* for that year. I believe this spur is now preserved at Audley End. Its measurements are very much the same as the one found in London, and here

illustrated, being—total length six and a quarter inches, neck one and a half inches, sides four and three-quarter inches. There is the same kind of ornament in the middle of the sides, and there is a buckle welded to the end of one of them. Indeed, to judge by the illustration in the *Archæological Journal*, but for some difference in the shape of the buckle, this spur found at Linton Heath might be the fellow of the London one. It was found in a grave together with weapons and other objects undoubtedly Anglo-Saxon, and although no exact date is suggested in the account of Mr. Neville's explorations in the *Archæological Journal*, the spur may be assumed to be at the end of the ninth or beginning of the tenth century.

The spur figured on the same plate is also taken from a spur in the City of London Museum. Here the neck is a little longer, and increases very slightly in thickness towards the end, into which a very small point is inserted. There is no attempt at ornament in this spur, and the sides are beaten out into plates, in which two narrow rectangular openings are cut for the attachment of separate straps for the sole and instep, this being the first time we have seen this arrangement for separate straps. This, no doubt, is a very early spur, and was found in Queen Victoria Street.

Another spur of the same kind, but probably of slightly later date, is figured on Plate 9, Fig. 1. This is also taken from a spur in the same Museum. Here there is more ornament, and superior workmanship, and the neck was inlaid with silver. The total length of this spur is six and three-quarter

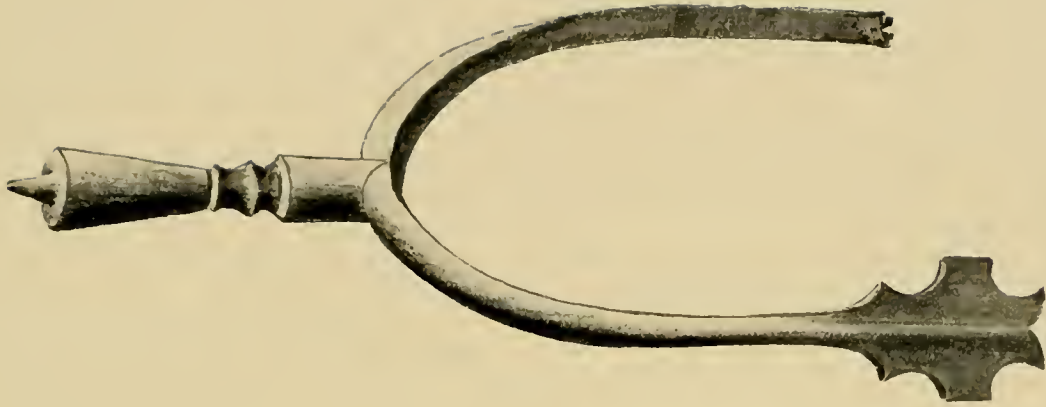


FIG. 1.

Prick spur, iron. Neck inlaid with silver. Sides terminating in a flat cross-shaped plate. Total length $6\frac{3}{4}$ in.

City of London Museum.



FIG. 2.

Brass. Total length 5 in. ; sides $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; neck and point $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. ; spread $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. Early eleventh century.

British Museum.

inches, and the side, which is preserved in its entirety, terminates in an ornamented cruciform plate, to which the strap was rivetted. The end of the other side is unfortunately broken off. Its date is probably the latter half of the tenth century or the beginning of the eleventh. Another spur having the inserted point is shown on the same plate, and is taken from a spur in the British Museum. It is of brass, but, I think, is a reproduction, though not perhaps of modern make. If it is the original spur, it has been marvellously preserved from the effects of damp and rust. Here the neck differs from any of the preceding in being partly cylindrical and partly hexagonal, the latter part increasing rapidly in thickness, so that the flat surface into which the point is inserted is an inch in diameter. The total length is five inches, the neck and point one and a quarter inches, the sides three and a half inches, with a spread of three and a half inches. The sides terminate in small rectangular plates, to which the straps were rivetted.

The next arrangement of the prick spur that was devised for the prevention of any undue penetration was the "ball and spike" form.

A very interesting pair of spurs of this form are in the possession of H. G. Radford, Esq. They were found, I believe, at Lyme Regis, and are in a wonderfully good state of preservation. They are iron spurs, gilt, and a great deal of the gilding still remains. The sides are very slender, and slightly curved, triangular in section, being flat on the inside. They end in small rounded knobs, from the inside of which project small, irregular hexagonal plates for the attachment of

the strap. The fashion of attaching the strap to the inside of the sides seems to have prevailed about the twelfth century. The necks are a little more than an inch and a half long, quadrilateral in section, and slightly curved downwards. The ball is somewhat oval, being three-quarters of an inch long and five-eighths of an inch thick, and from it springs a short, sharp spike half an inch in length. The surface of the ball shows marks of the hammer, as do the knobs at the terminations of the sides, and is covered with spots of gold, and the neck shows considerable remains of gilding. The date of these spurs is, no doubt, the latter part of the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth. An illustration is given on Plate 10, Fig. 1.

The illustration given on Plate 10, Fig. 2, is taken from a pair of brass spurs in the collection in the Armoury at the Tower of London, but which are evidently of modern make. The present custodian of the Tower Armoury knows nothing as to their history, or when or why they were made, but it can only be presumed that they were copied from some ancient spur. They have curved sides, an arrangement which did not come into universal use till the middle of the twelfth century, by which time the cone-shaped, or pyramidal-shaped, point was the usual form of spur. But the curved sides were seen before 1140, so there is nothing impossible in the conjunction of curved sides with the ball and spike. The sides terminate in plates which I should say were peculiar to this pair only. The plates appear to have been arranged so that the sole strap was rivetted to the plate, while the instep strap was attached by the modern button, a form



FIG. 1.
Eleventh and twelfth centuries.
Total length 6 in.
Actual size.



FIG. 2.
Pair of brass spurs, modern
make.
Spike 1 in. ; ball $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
Total length 6 in.
Tower of London.



of attachment which might have existed in the original spur, from which this one may have been copied, but which I do not think was at all probable. The prick part, which is perhaps more likely to have been accurately copied, as the ends of the original may have been broken off, consists of a short neck connecting a slightly flattened ball to the heel-plate. The ball is about an inch in diameter, and has a conical spike projecting from it about an inch in length.

There are in the City of London Museum two fragments of ball-and-spike spurs, showing in each case a straight neck of nearly two inches in length, terminating in a round ball from which a spike three-quarters of an inch long protruded. The balls in both cases are slightly ornamented, but there is nothing remaining of the sides to show whether they were curved or straight. The spurs on the figures in the Bayeux tapestries are, I think, intended to be of the ball-and-spike form. They have straight sides, and a straight neck, and the ball is roughly indicated by a short stitch crossing the neck at right angles and close to the point. I presume that the ball is intended to be portrayed by this cross-stitch. At any rate, it gives no suggestion either of the inserted point or of the cone-shaped head.

To judge by seals and memorial brasses, spurs of this kind had little or no neck, and the ball was attached close to the round of the heel. The sides were usually straight. An incised slab to the memory of Sir John de Bitton, who died in 1227, represents a ball and spike apparently attached to the foot by a leathern strap, without any metal sides at all. This is not impossible, but I hardly think likely to have

been the case. As a rule, the most trustworthy evidence afforded by brasses *was* by the sides; that is, whether they were curved or straight, and by the method of attachment of the straps, whether they passed through a loop or were rivetted to a plate, while the goad part cannot always be taken for granted, since it was the part furthest away from the artist, and either an attempt at perspective or the entire absence of it might in either case cause some distortion. In the brasses to Sir John d'Abernon, 1277, and Sir Roger de Trumpington, 1280, the spurs are represented in both cases as long wavy spikes without any guard whatever. (See page 52.) In these particular cases I do not think the artist faithfully represented on the brass the spur he was supposed to copy, for the elongated and unguarded spike had been given up for several hundred years before that date. But in each case the sides are represented as being curved, which is in accordance with the evidence afforded by such spurs of the thirteenth century as are in existence at the present day. In the case of rowel spurs the evidence afforded by brasses is, possibly, more trustworthy. An artist is more likely to suggest correctly the number of points in the rowel of the spur he was copying than he would be in the case of the prick spur, which, after all, only ends in a point, to record exactly any modifications of that point.

On the effigies on the tombs both of Henry I. and Richard I. the ball-and-spike form appears, and with curved sides, thus bringing us down to A.D. 1200, by which time the depressed sides, curving under the ankle-bone, had well come

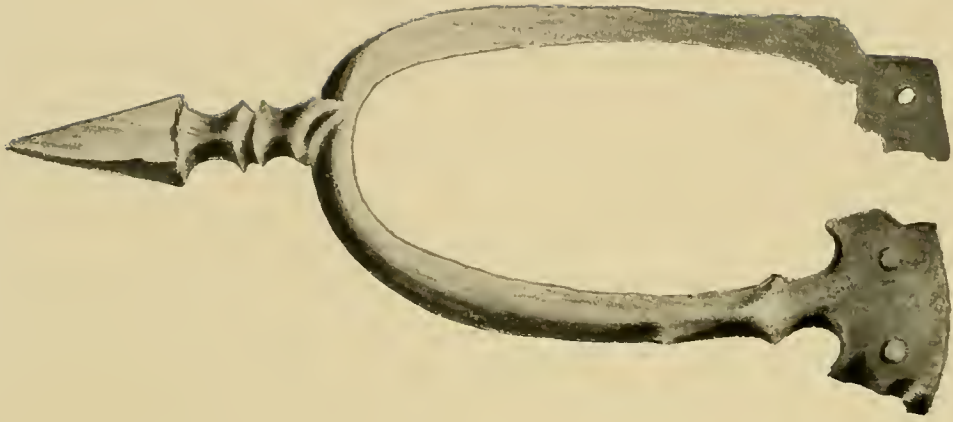


FIG. 1.
Eleventh century.
Actual size.
City of London Museum.



FIG. 2.
Bronze spur, dug up in
Lothbury. Actual size.
Eleventh and twelfth centuries.
British Museum.

into universal use. From such evidence as one has to go upon I am inclined to think that the ball-and-spike was the second form of what may be called protected goads, and succeeded the inserted point. But probably soon after the adoption of the ball-and-spike form the cone-shaped, or more properly the pyramidal-shaped point, since the point was seldom round in section, was introduced. Certainly the two forms went on together, though there is evidence to show that the pyramidal-shaped point lasted the longer.

The earliest form of the pyramidal-shaped prick spur that I have seen is preserved in the City of London Museum, and is illustrated on Plate II, Fig. 1. It is an iron spur with straight sides, terminating in a rather large rectangular plate, to which the straps were attached by two rivets. The neck is about an inch in length, and has much the same rude form of ornament as have the ninth and tenth century spurs, with inserted points. The four-sided pyramidal-shaped point is also about an inch in length. Another early specimen of this form of spur, but probably a little later than the one just described, is shown on the same plate. The illustration is taken from a spur in the British Museum, and which was found in the City of London, having been dug up in Lothbury at the time the Bank of England was built.

This is one of the spurs which had been thought to have been Roman, since it was discovered reposing in the Roman stratum of London. It is of bronze, and has straight sides about four inches long, rather slender, and rounded on the outside and flat on the inside, with the ends slightly widened out and

perforated with two small circular apertures, to which the upper and lower straps were attached by means of hooks. This is about the first time we have seen this method of attachment by means of hooks. It became universal later on. There is a short, straight neck, round in section, and about an inch long; from this springs a four-sided point, also about an inch in length. The total length of this spur is five and three-quarter inches, with a spread of the sides of little more than three inches, just about enough to embrace a heel covered with chain-mail. Both this spur and the preceding one I imagine, from their straight sides, to belong to the early part of the twelfth century.

On Plate 12 are figured three spurs taken from the effigies of the Knights Templar in the Temple Church, London. They are interesting as showing how little the fashion of spurs altered, at all events among the Templars, in a hundred years. The earliest is on the effigy of the Earl of Essex, A.D. 1144. It has depressed sides, curving under the ankle-bone, and prolonged forwards so as to bring the ends well to the front of the foot. The sides end in a loop, through which one strap passes over the instep and under the sole. There is a very short neck connecting the heel-plate with a four-sided pyramidal point. The total length is about seven inches. The second one is from the effigy of the Earl of Pembroke, A.D. 1219, and is very similar to the first in size and in other respects. There appears here to be no neck at all, and the six-sided point is attached directly to the heel-plate. The third illustration is taken from the effigy of Baron de Ros, A.D. 1241, and is also



A.D. 1144. Earl of Essex.
Spike 2 in. Total length 7 in.



A.D. 1219. Earl of Pembroke.
Spike $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. Total length 7 in.



A.D. 1241. Baron de Ros.
About half-size.



FIG. 1.

Thirteenth century.

Spike 1 in. ; neck 1 in., oval section ; sides 4 in., flat inside, rounded outside ; spread $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. Total length 6 in.

In all these the plate for the strap is on the inside of the side.

City of London Museum.

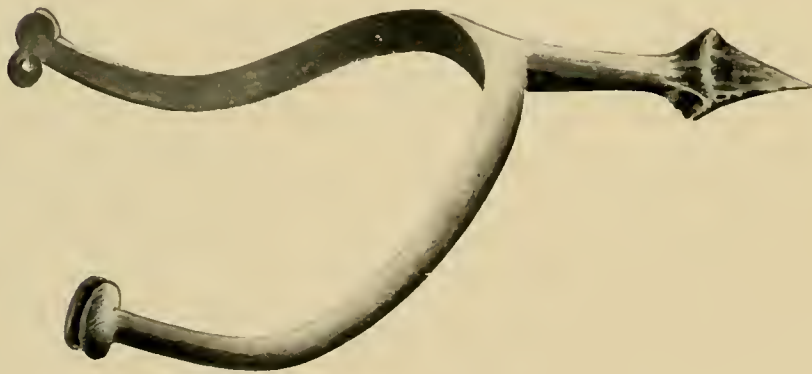


FIG. 2.

Thirteenth century.

Spike $\frac{3}{4}$ in. ; neck 1 in. ; sides 3 in. ; spread $3\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Total length $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

City of London Museum.



FIG. 1.

Thirteenth century.

Spike $\frac{3}{4}$ in. ; neck 1 in. ; sides 3 in. ; spread $2\frac{5}{8}$ in.
Total length 5 in.

City of London Museum.



FIG. 2.

Thirteenth century.

Spike $\frac{3}{4}$ in. ; neck 1 in. ; sides $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; spread $3\frac{1}{4}$ in.
Total length 5 in.

With studs on the inside of termination of sides.

City of London Museum.

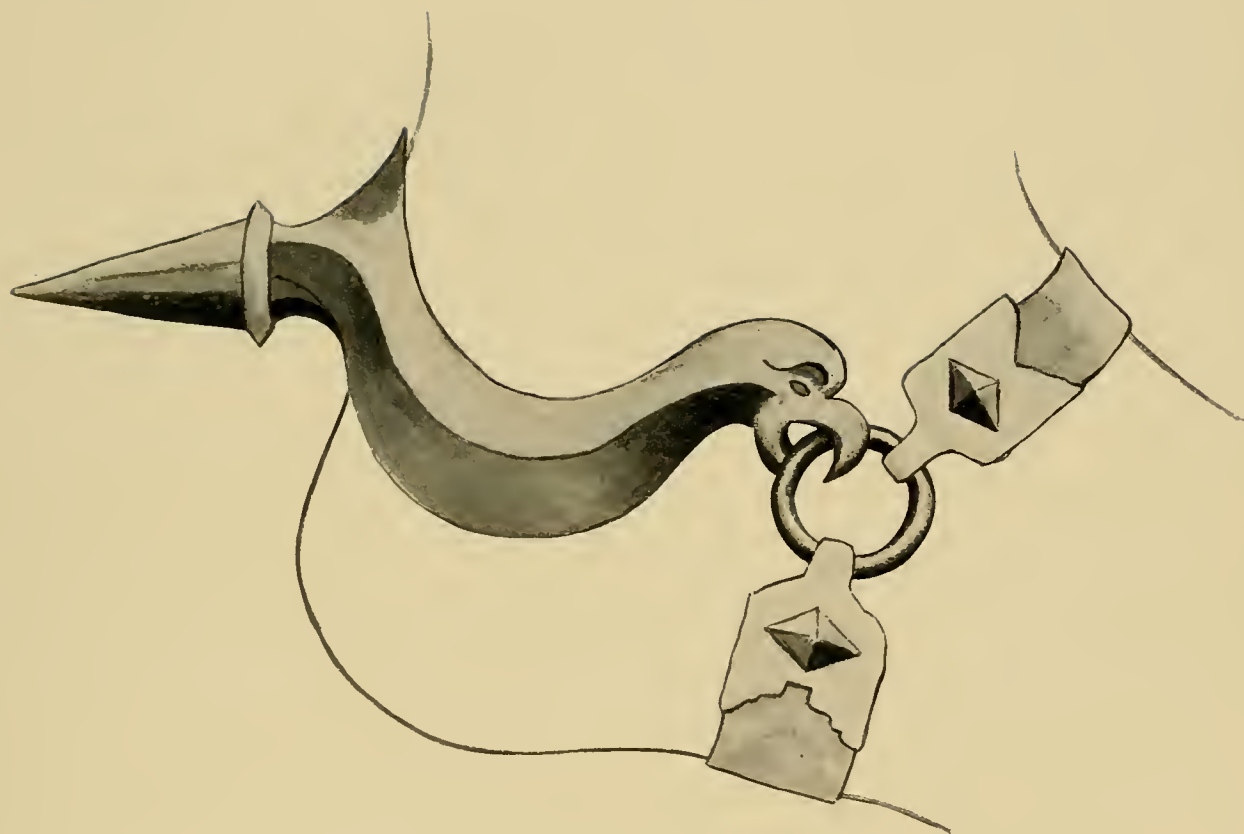
very similar to the others, with a four-sided point attached directly to the heel-plate. Thus in a hundred years the general characteristics of the spurs on these effigies changed not at all.

The illustrations shown on Plates 13 and 14 are taken from spurs in the City of London Museum. In these there is no crest, by which is meant an enlargement of, or structure placed upon, the upper part of the heel-plate in the centre, just above the part from which the neck springs, a feature which was highly elaborated in spurs of a later period. The sides are invariably depressed, and curve under the ankle-bone, generally in one long gradual curve. The sides are rather slender, rounded on the outside and flattened on the inside. In each of these four specimens the plate at the ends of the sides to which the straps were fastened is on the inside of the arm. Each has a straight neck, rather more than an inch in length, and directed downwards. One of the spurs has a neck oval in section, in another the neck is quadrilateral, the other two are round.

They have all four-sided pyramidal-shaped points about an inch in length. These spurs all date from about the middle of the thirteenth century. The second figure on Plate 14 shows a difference in the curve of the sides. Here we have an early instance of a peculiar curve which became common enough in the fourteenth century. The curve does not commence immediately at the heel, as in the former illustrations, but the heel-plate passes round the back of the foot horizontally and then dips down suddenly with a sharp curve to get

under the ankle-bone. The other spur, on the same plate, shows an attempt at the same curve, but in a modified form. In several of these spurs there are remnants of the straps rivetted on to the plates at the ends of the sides.

The illustration on Plate 15 shows the foot of the alabaster effigy of John of Eltham, son of Edward II., in Westminster Abbey, dated 1334. It is interesting as being the latest recorded instance of a prick spur. It has a fanciful termination of the curved sides into a bird's beak holding a ring, to which the sole and instep straps were attached by means of hooks. The point much resembles those on the tombs in the Temple Church previously described.



From tomb in Westminster Abbey of John of
Eltham, son of Edward II., A.D. 1334.
Actual size.

ON THE ROWEL SPUR

THE transition period, between the first appearance of the rowel spur and the final disappearance of the prick spur, lasted a long time—about one hundred years.

The earliest example known of a rowel spur in this country is to be found on the second seal of Henry III., A.D. 1240. The first seal of Henry III. represents the king wearing a prick spur, and on the second seal he has a well-defined rowel spur of six points. Nothing is known as to who invented the rowel spur, or who introduced it into this country. Presumably it came here from abroad, since the continental armourers, especially the Germans, were always ahead of ours during the Middle Ages. Henry III. married, in 1236, Eleanor of Provence, who came to England with a large retinue of French nobles, who for the most part married and settled in England. Most probably one of these introduced the rowel spur. In 1238 there came over from France Simon de Montfort, the son of a French Count de Montfort and the Dowager Countess of Leicester. Simon claimed the Earldom of Leicester in right of his mother, and married Eleanor, sister of Henry III., and at once began to take a very leading part in English affairs. He is a very likely person to have introduced the new-fashioned rowel spur to the notice of his brother-in-law, the king; and its appearance on the new seal in the following year lends additional possibility to this supposition. It is true that there is in existence a seal of

Simon de Montfort on which he is depicted as hunting and blowing a horn, and wearing prick spurs. The exact date of this seal I do not know, but presumably it is of later date than his arrival in England. This, however, does not conclusively prove anything. The engraver of the seal, in the absence of special instructions, merely drew in his design the form of spur he had been accustomed to see upon the heels of his patrons, which, at that transitional period, were for the most part prick spurs. He may or he may not have seen rowel spurs. But what is certain is that the engraver of the second seal of Henry III., in 1240, must have seen rowel spurs worn by someone, and most probably by his royal patron.

Zschille and Forrer are unable to throw any light upon the actual date of the introduction of the rowel spur or its place of origin. But as they lay no claim that Germany was the land of its birthplace, my supposition that the French were the originators of this form of spur is, in a measure, strengthened.

The new fashion does not seem to have caught on very readily, for I cannot find another example of a rowel spur until 1285, at which date a brass set up in St. Bride's Church, in Glamorganshire, to the memory of Sir John Boteler, depicts that knight wearing rowel spurs of eight points, with very short necks. Indeed, on the brass the neck is left out altogether, but there must have been the length of the rowel box to have allowed the spur to revolve.

Probably after this date the rowel spur came into more



FIG. 1.

Early fourteenth century. Edward I. and II. Actual size.
 Neck $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; rowel $1\frac{3}{8}$ in. ; sides $3\frac{3}{8}$ in. ; spread $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. Total length $5\frac{1}{2}$ in.
City of London Museum.



FIG. 2.

Early fourteenth century. A.D. 1310 to 1350. Edward II. and III.
 Actual size.
 Neck $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; rowel $1\frac{3}{8}$ in. ; sides $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; spread $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. Total length $5\frac{1}{4}$ in.
City of London Museum.

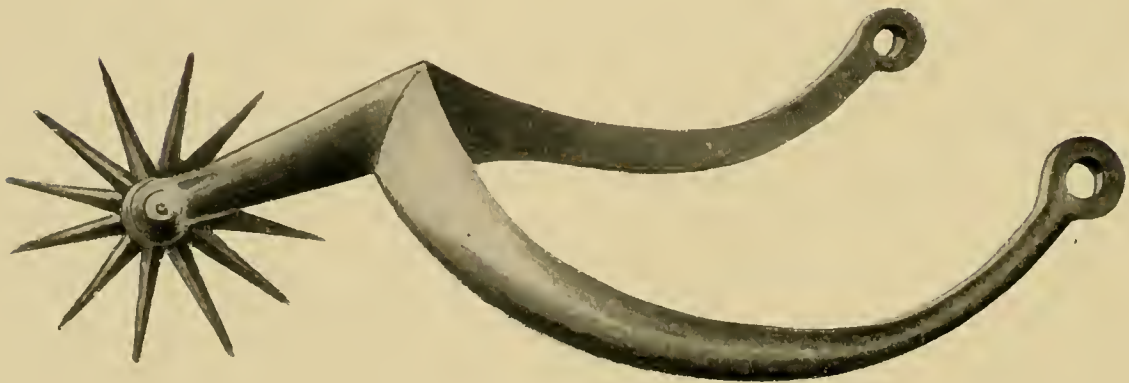


FIG. 3.

First half of the fourteenth century. A.D. 1300 to 1350. Edward I., II. and III.
 Actual size.
City of London Museum.

universal use, but the prick spur still went on, as we see on the alabaster figure of John of Eltham, in 1334, as before mentioned. Also, on the brass in Elsyng Church, Norfolk, to Sir Hugh Hastings, in 1347, Sir Hugh is represented wearing rowel spurs, and some other figures on the brass wearing prick spurs. This brass represents the end of the transition period, and is, I think, the very last appearance of the prick spur; and after this the rowel came into universal use.

The principal characteristics of the early rowel spurs during the first half of the fourteenth century were strongly depressed sides, passing under the ankle-bone, terminating in two circular perforations, though sometimes only in one, for the attachment of straps by means of hooks rivetted to the straps.

At first there was no crest, or development on the top of the heel-plate. They had a straight, short neck, seldom more than two inches in length, and generally only sufficient to give room for the rowel to revolve, and with plain star rowels of sometimes six and sometimes eight points, and generally from one and a half inches to two inches in diameter. Several specimens of these early rowel spurs are to be found in the City of London Museum. Illustrations are given on Plate 16, Figs. 1, 2 and 3. The spread of these spurs are all much the same, two and a half inches to three inches, not more than to allow them to embrace a heel clad in close-fitting chain-mail. The rowels of this period are described as "star" when the points were divided right up to the centre, "rose" when the points were divided for only a part of the

diameter of the rowel, and "foliated" when the points were of some other fanciful pattern. This kind of spur went on without any great alteration until the end of the fourteenth century.

The illustration on Plate 17, Fig. 1, shows a spur very similar to a pair worn by Edward, the Black Prince, and which are now hanging over his tomb in Canterbury Cathedral, and gives all these characteristics in a somewhat exaggerated form. By this time, as we see in this spur, and in several specimens preserved in the City of London Museum, the artificers began to elaborate a crest on the top of the heel-plate. This elaboration was sometimes merely a drawing up of the upper edge of the heel-plate into a point, and sometimes elaborating it into a cruciform, or some other form of ornament. An illustration of this is given on Plate 17, Fig. 2.

About this time there appears on numerous brasses in various parts of England, curious curved lines, or flourishes, over the spur, so definitely and distinctly engraved as to lead many antiquarians to suppose that it represented some sort of structure. A brass in Great Berkhamsted Church, Hertfordshire, to Sir John Raven, A.D. 1360, and another in Drayton Beauchamp Church, Bucks., to Sir Thomas Cheyne, in 1368, both show a complete circle round the rowel, and were, no doubt, the work of the same engraver.

Another, of which we give an illustration on Plate 18, Fig. 1, is taken from a brass in Thruxton Church, Hampshire, to the memory of Sir John Lysle, who died in 1407. Here the line has every appearance of being a solid circular structure



FIG. 1.
Richard II., A.D. 1377.
Similar to the Black Prince's spurs in Canterbury Cathedral.
Actual size.

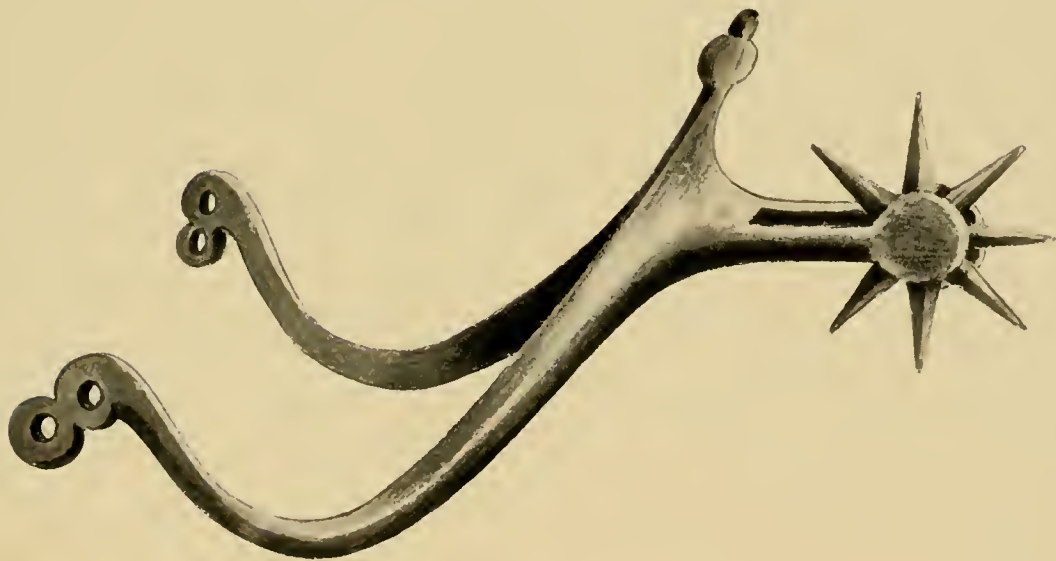


FIG. 2.
A.D. 1370 to 1410. Actual size.
Neck 1 in. ; rowel $1\frac{3}{8}$ in. ; sides $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. Crest 1 in. from neck.
City of London Museum.

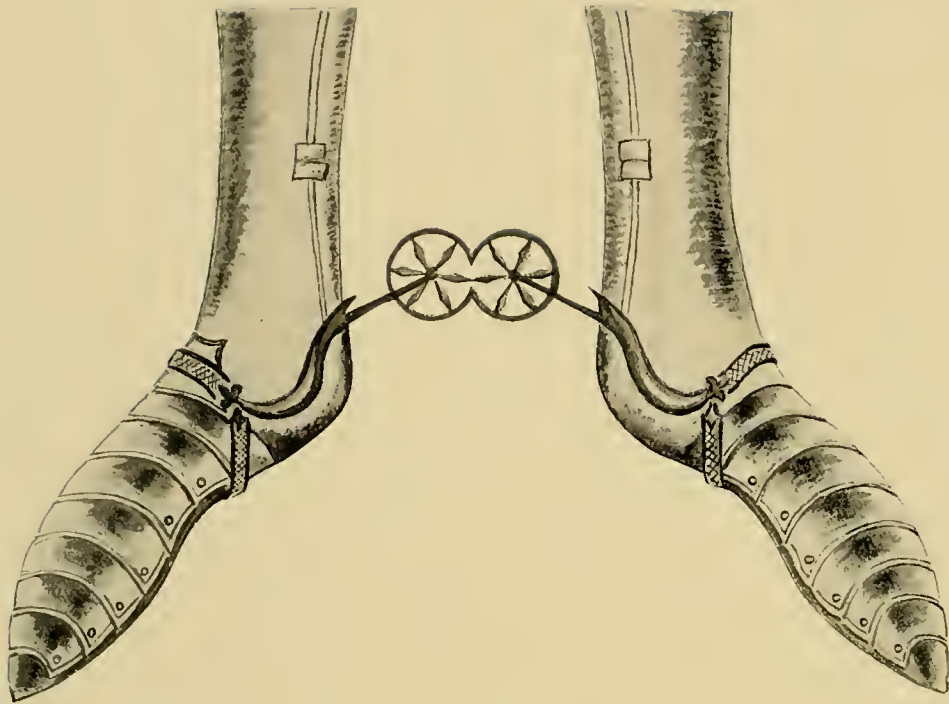


FIG. 1.

From the brass of Sir John Lysle, A.D. 1407.
Showing complete ring round rowel.
Thruxton Church, Hampshire.

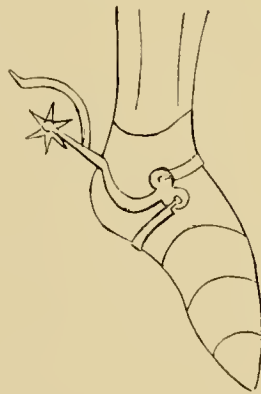


FIG. 2.

From the brass of
Sir Henry Gray.
Showing the flourish engraved
over the spur, and which was
thought to represent some structure.
*In Kettingham Church, Norfolk,
circa 1492.*

attached to the neck of the spur, but it could not possibly have actually been so. Other brasses showing this peculiarity are those of Sir Thomas Brownfleet, in Wymington Church, Bedfordshire, A.D. 1430; Sir John Drayton, 1425, in Dorchester Abbey, Oxfordshire; Roger Elmbrygge, 1435, in Beddington Church, Surrey; and to a knight of the Cuttes family, 1440, in Arkesden Church, Essex. These, though in different parts of England, are, from their dates, very possibly by the same hand. At a somewhat later period a brass to the memory of Sir Henry Gray, in Kettingham Church, Norfolk, who died in 1492, has a curved line springing from the neck of the spur, and projecting over the upper part of the rowel. This is shown on Plate 18, Fig. 2.

In writing of this brass, Sir Samuel Meyrick, in his *Critical Examination of Arms and Armour*, says—"His spurs are very curious, being furnished with a thin piece of steel, placed on the neck, which rises over the rowel. This probably bends by pressure, and yet prevents the points of the rowel from penetrating deeply, while at other times it keeps it clear from getting entangled." In this case, as our illustration shows, the curved line looks exactly as if it were some structure springing from the upper part of the neck of the spur, and it is quite excusable that Sir Samuel Meyrick should have been deceived by it. But it is perfectly clear, with the additional evidence afforded by other brasses, where a similar line is detached, and does not appear to spring from any part of the spur, that these lines were merely intended as flourishes or ornaments to relieve the plain surface of the brass. Very

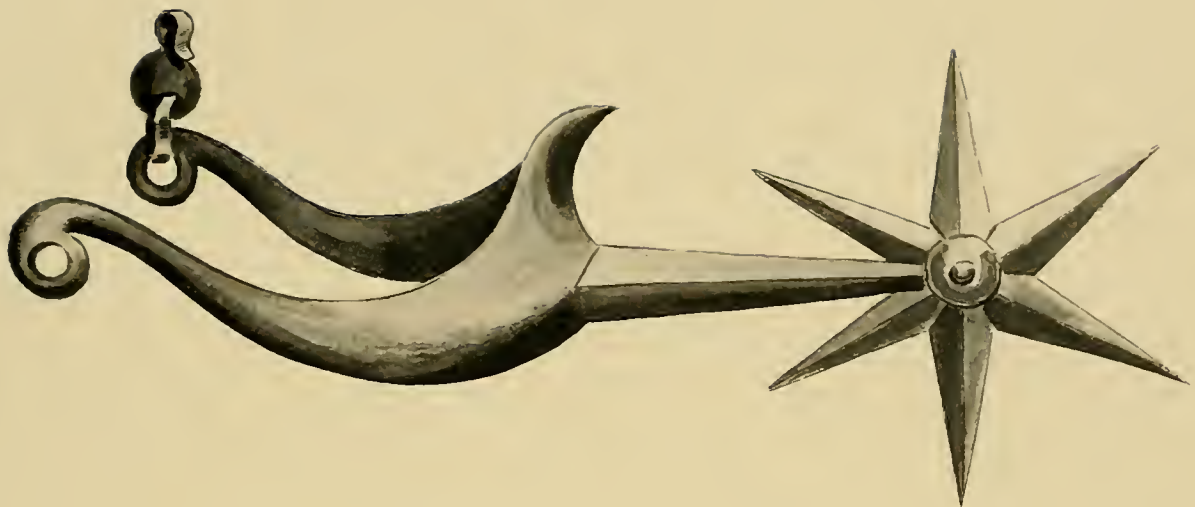
similar lines occur on the brasses of Sir John Curson, in Bedlaugh Church, Norfolk, dated 1471, and of Robert Bomsted, in Sotterby Church, 1479. All these are very much alike, and are possibly the work of the same engraver.

The spur principally in fashion during the early part of the fifteenth century is shown on Plate 19, and is characteristic of the Lancastrian period. It is taken from a spur in the British Museum. It does not differ much from the spurs of the previous century. There is a straight, rather short neck, a large star rowel, and a highly developed crest. The sides are not so sharply depressed as formerly, but still with a strong curve so as to fit under the ankle-bone, and terminating sometimes in one, but more often in two circular perforations for the attachment of the straps by hooks rivetted to the straps.

These were the spurs which were probably seen, more often than others, at the battle of Agincourt. Though it must be remembered that there was no "regulation" pattern in those days, and each knight wore what seemed to him best. Still, fashion was as powerful, no doubt, then as now, and men copied each other's arms and armour, and their spurs also.

Towards the middle of the fifteenth century we notice several changes to take place—an elongation of the neck and a diminution of the rowel, and, for a few years, an alteration of the shape and curve of the sides.

This last-mentioned change is shown in the illustrations on Plate 20, Figs. 1 and 2. One is a very ornate spur, and



The popular spur at the battle of Agincourt.
Actual size.



FIG. 1.

Taken from *Archeologia*, Vol. XI.

Actual size.

Found in 1792 on site of battle of Towton, near York (fought March 18th, 1461).

Slightly earlier than 1460; mid-fifteenth century.

Neck 2 in. ; sides $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; rowel $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. ; spread $3\frac{1}{4}$ in. Total length $5\frac{1}{2}$ in.

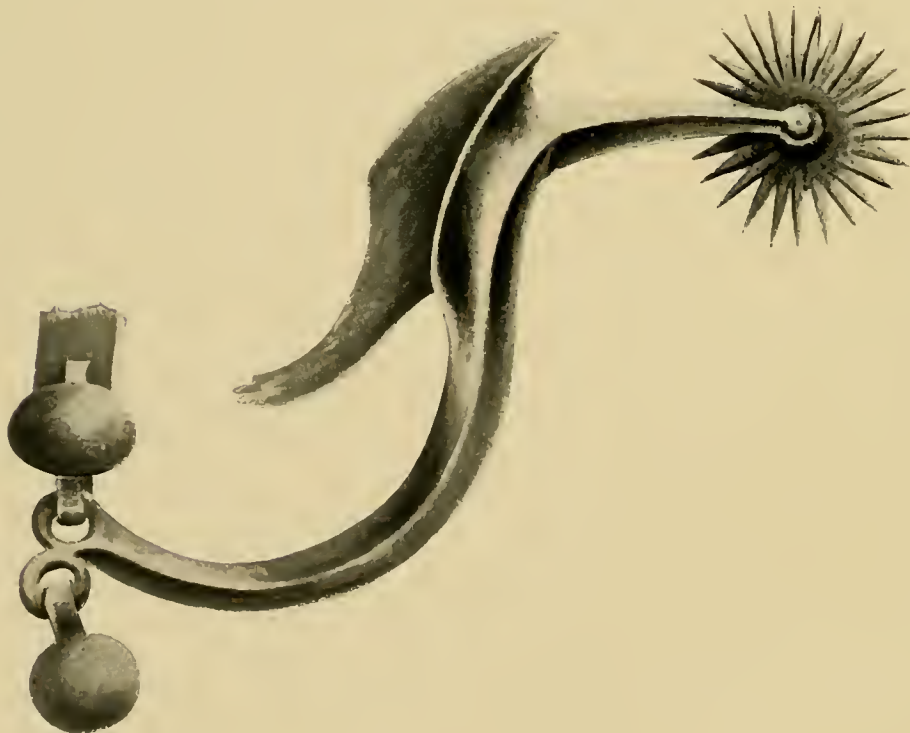


FIG. 2.

Edward III. - Richard II. Mid-fifteenth or latter half of fourteenth century, A.D. 1350 to 1400.

Actual size.

Disc rowel of twenty-nine points. Well-defined ridge and crest.

Neck $1\frac{3}{8}$ in. ; rowel $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. ; sides $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; spread $3\frac{1}{2}$ in.

City of London Museum.

the illustration is taken from a plate in *Archæologia*, Vol. XI. The spur was found in Yorkshire in the year 1792, on the site of the battle of Towton, near York, which was fought March 18th, 1461. But the spur is rather earlier than that date. The rowel is six-pointed and barely an inch in diameter, while the neck is over two inches, and so larger than was required for the rowel-box. The necks of the former spurs, it will be noticed, were split up for almost their whole length to admit of the passage of the large rowel. The sides have a kind of double curve. Round the back of the heel, for two inches on each side of the median line, the arms went horizontally, and then dipped down suddenly in a sharp curve. The neck and sides of this spur are elaborately chased and ornamented, the sides having a motto in raised letters, "En loial amour tout mon cœur." The sides end with the usual double perforation.

The other spur on this plate is of much the same period, perhaps a little earlier. It is in the City of London Museum. It shows the same peculiar curve of the sides, which end in the double rings; the neck is not so long as in the last, and the rowel, which is one and a quarter inches in diameter, has twenty-nine short points—a very unusual rowel for this period. The sides of both these spurs have a spread of three and a half inches, giving plenty of room for them to be buckled on outside the armour. We perceive, from the first introduction of plate armour, that the spread of the spur was enlarged so as to go round a foot encased in a solleret.

We next notice, about the middle of the fifteenth century,

a very considerable change to come about. The double curve of the sides did not last long, and soon disappeared, and the curve of the sides reverted to the earlier form. But the neck became enormously elongated. This was occasioned by the use of horse armour. The "flanchards," a sort of iron valance round the horse, together with the shape of the high perched saddle, necessitated that the rider's foot should be at a considerable distance from his horse's side; consequently this long neck was required to reach the animal. There are numerous specimens of these spurs now in existence. The British Museum, the Tower of London, the United Service Institution, and the City of London Museum, all have several specimens.

The long, straight neck is, in several instances, over ten inches in length, making the whole spur, from the points of the rowel to the ends of the sides, thirteen and even fourteen inches long. There is always a considerable crest to these spurs, and the sharply depressed sides were made to fit closely to the wearer's foot; for in all the specimens that I have seen the spread of the sides is less than three inches, and the great length of the neck gives to these spurs the appearance of the sides being exceedingly small. The spur, therefore, was strapped to the wearer's foot inside the armour, and the long neck protruded through a slit in the back of the jambe, or leg-piece, of the armour, of which endless examples exist in all our collections. This enabled the wearer, when he had removed his armour—which he must have been thankful to do at the earliest opportunity, for this was the period when armour was at its heaviest—to retain and show off his spurs,

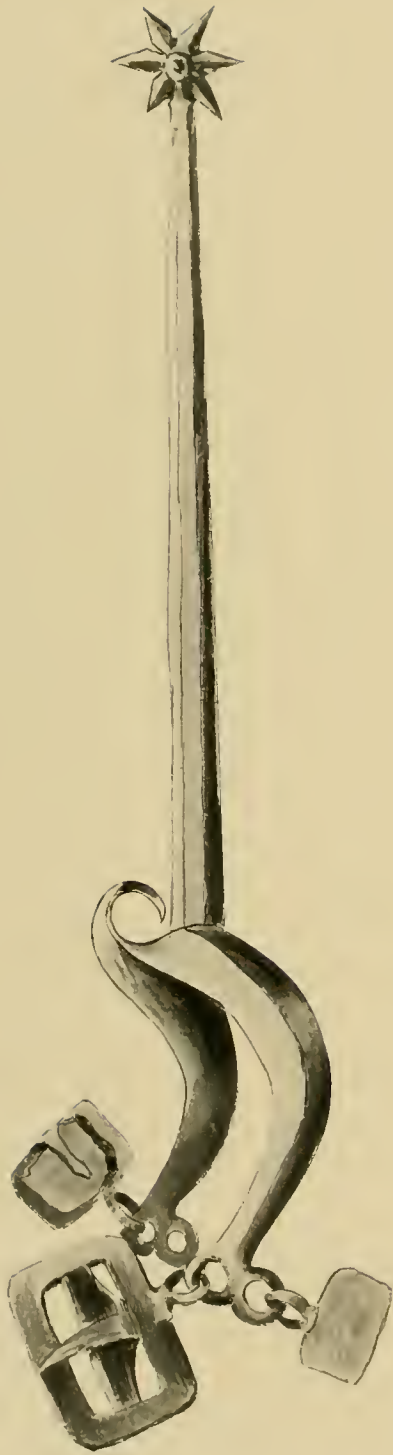


FIG. 1.
In the days of horse armour.
Half-size.
Neck 8 in. Total length 12 in.



FIG. 2.
Iron Spur. Latter half of fifteenth century.
Rather more than half-size.
Strongly marked crest. Two incised lines under crest, probably inlaid with silver.
Neck 10½ in., oval section; sides 3 in.; spread 2½ in. Total length 13 in.
Double perforation.
City of London Museum.

which were often beautifully ornamented with gold and silver inlay. Two illustrations of these spurs are given on Plate 21, Figs. 1 and 2. Both are from spurs in the City of London Museum. In one the neck is eight inches long and hexagonal in section, terminating in a rose rowel of six points less than an inch in diameter. There is a strongly marked crest showing incised lines, probably once containing inlay. There is a rectangular buckle rather more than one and a half inches wide, and two strap plates are attached, with portions of leather straps remaining. The other spur, of similar pattern, was found in Whitefriars. The neck is ten and a quarter inches long, and is oval in section. All the other details are very similar to the last. The total length of this spur is close on fourteen inches, and there are signs of its having been inlaid.

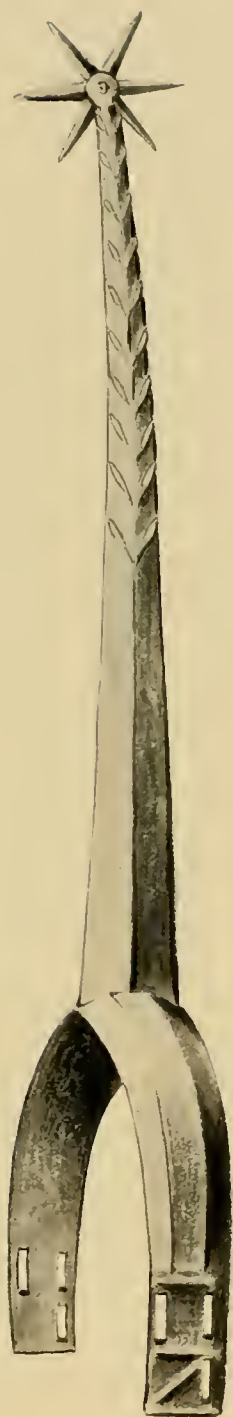
There is another form of long-necked spur, specimens of which are often met with in continental museums, but of which I have only seen one example in England. It is in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House, and forms part of a very handsome equestrian suit, of German manufacture, and is of the latter part of the fifteenth century.

The spurs are attached by straps to long-toed sollerets, which are cut away in an unusual manner at the back of the heel. The necks are straight, ten inches long, of a narrow lozenge-shaped section, being three-quarters of an inch, the width of the heel-plate, at the heel, and tapering towards the end. The last third of the neck is ornamented with a raised pattern. The spurs have six-pointed brass rowels, and are one and a half inches in diameter. The sides are straight, three-quarters of an

inch wide at the heel, and slightly tapering towards the ends. The spread is sufficient to go outside the sollar. The total length of these spurs is fourteen inches. I have drawn them in the illustration on Plate 22 in the position in which they are placed on the figure, but I think they were worn the other way up. As they are at present placed there are two slits near the lower edge for the attachment of two hooks side by side, which were doubtless rivetted to a broad strap, while near the upper edge is one slit for one hook, attached to a narrower strap. It is much more likely that the broad strap went over the instep, and was probably decorated, while the narrow strap went under the sole.

There is an identical pair of the same size and with precisely the same ornamentation in the Stibbert Collection in Florence, and as Zschille and Forrer have several illustrations of similar spurs, they appear to have been not uncommon in Germany.

There is also another form of straight, long-necked spurs of the fifteenth century, examples of which I have not seen anywhere in England. There are several at Florence and at Turin, and Zschille and Forrer have several illustrations of them. They are, I believe, of German make. The long, straight neck, often ten inches in length, sometimes tapers towards the end and sometimes not. They have usually eight-pointed star rowels, sometimes as much as four inches in diameter. Their peculiarity consists in their having, instead of ordinary sides or arms, a cup-shaped casing, two inches or more deep, with a sole or floor to it, which encloses the entire heel of the



Latter half of fifteenth century.
Half-size.

Sides 4 in. ; neck $9\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; rowel $1\frac{2}{3}$ in. Total length 14 in.
Wallace Collection, Herford House.

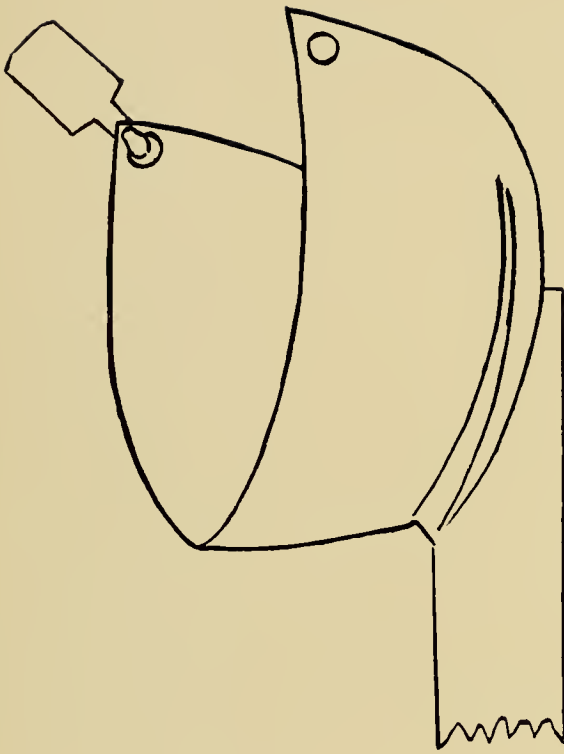


FIG. 1.

End of fifteenth century.

Cup-shaped covering for entire heel, with floor. Neck and heel ornamented with perforations and designs in relief. Attachment for instep strap at upper corners.

Straight neck, 9 in.; rowel 4 in. diameter.

Armeria Reale, Twinn.

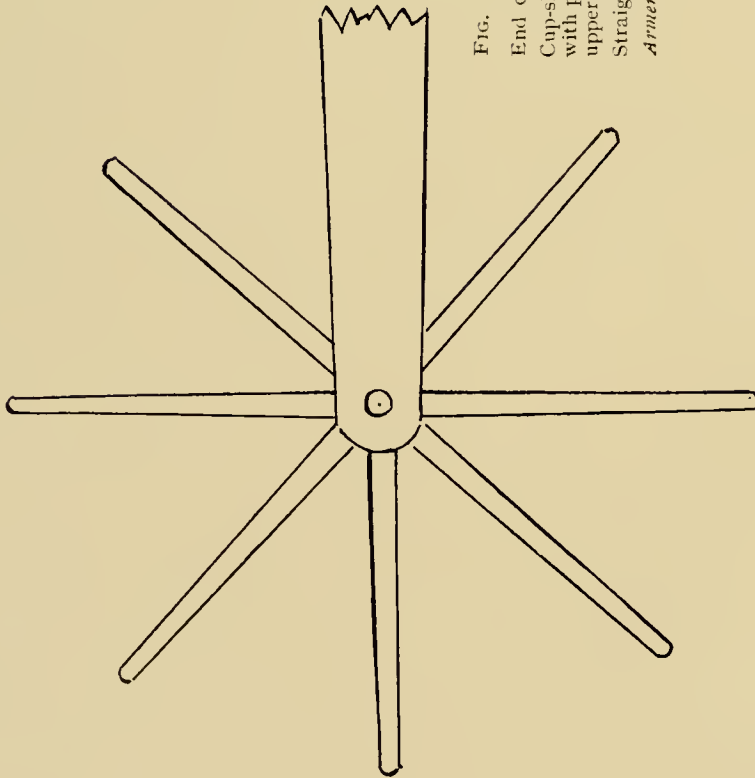
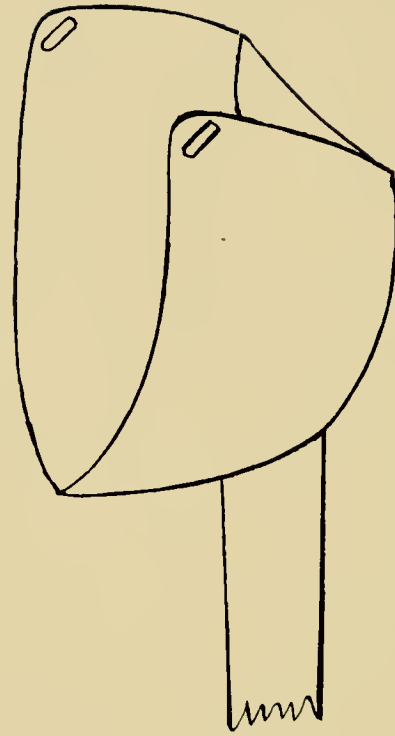


FIG. 2.

Iron spur. Late fifteenth century.

Neck 9 in., incised and ornamented, ending with three trident points instead of rowel; heel-plate perforated and ornamented.

Armeria Reale, Twinn.



wearer. This casing is usually ornamented with open work, and various patterns in relief, and the necks are generally ornamented with engraved or raised patterns. There are usually openings at the upper part of the front corners for the attachment of the instep strap. No sole strap is necessary, as the sole plate takes its place. The outline illustrations on Plate 23, Figs. 1 and 2, are taken from two pairs in the Armeria Reale at Turin. The rowel spurs are gilt, the necks are nine inches long, and they have large eight-pointed star rowels, four inches in diameter.

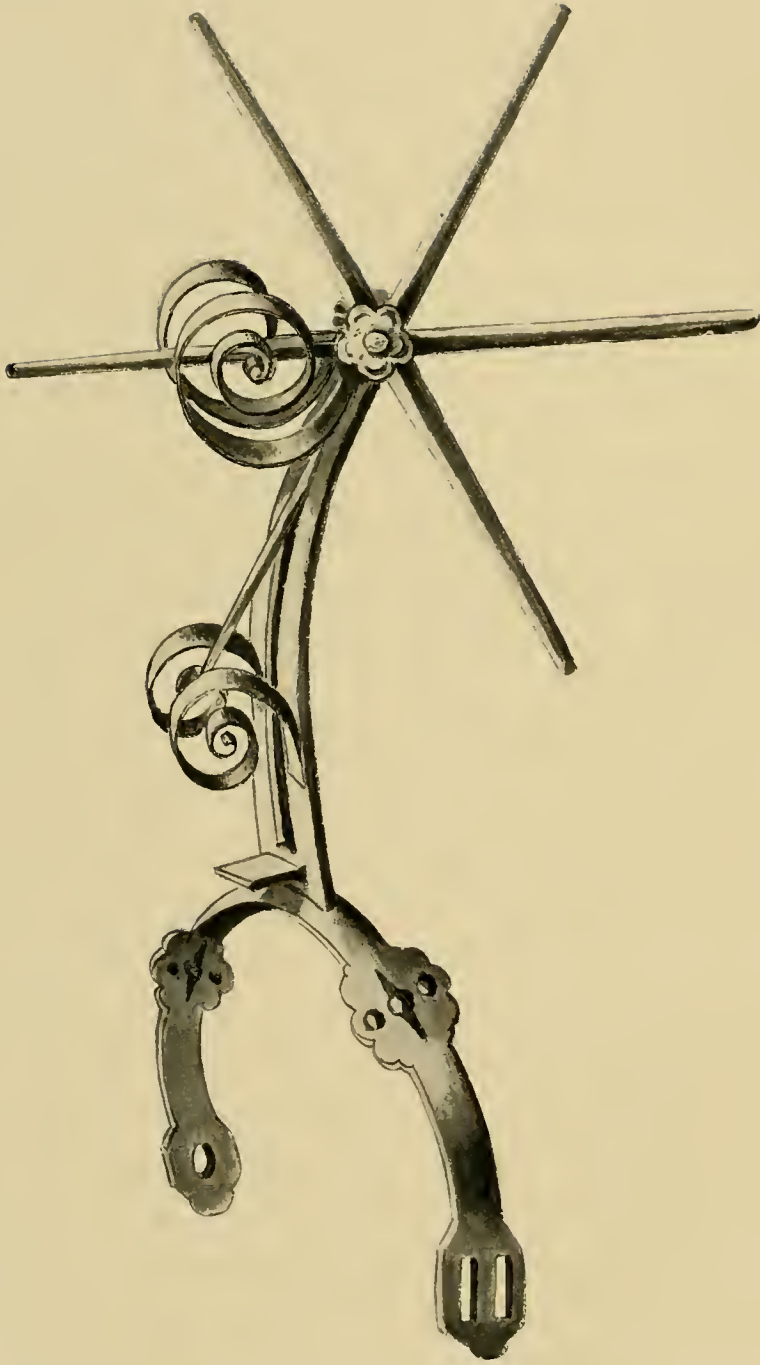
There is a spur of precisely similar pattern in the Musée d'Artillerie in Paris, with a six-pointed rowel, three inches in diameter. The other outline illustration is taken from an iron spur of very similar design to the other, but, instead of a rowel, the neck, which is also nine inches long, terminates in a sort of ornamental trident of three points. This probably was the caprice of some individual, since rowel spurs had been established for some two centuries when these spurs were made.

We have seen that spurs underwent great changes thus far during the fifteenth century, but they were destined to undergo further change before the century closed.

The long, straight neck, with the comparatively small rowel, disappeared, and the rowels, which we have seen to be growing gradually larger, increased enormously in size during the last part of the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth centuries. So inconveniently large did rowels become at this period, that many have thought that the enormous spurs which are

preserved in our various museums and collections, were not actually worn, but were carried in front of their owners in processions, and on state occasions, and so forth. But I think there is abundant evidence to prove that these spurs, inconvenient as they must have been, were worn by mounted men, and used in actual warfare.

The long, straight neck gave way to a shorter neck, generally but little longer than was required for the rowel-box, and the neck was turned *downwards*. There was a reason for this. If these spurs with their curved necks had been worn with the curve directed upwards, the centre of the rowel would have been some three inches higher than the wearer's ankle-bone, and the upper points of the huge rowel would have been three or four inches higher than the centre, and so would have been nearly on a level with the calf of the rider's leg. No human being in that case could have kept his spurs out of his horse's side, especially if the animal was at all restive. But turn the curve downwards, and the upper part of the rowel is about on a level with the rider's foot, and he could use his spurs or not as he liked. Also in all such spurs, and such illustrations of spurs as I have seen, the decoration is invariably on the convex surface of the curve. This, when the spur is worn curving downwards, brings the decoration on the upper surface, where it can be seen. I have dwelt upon this point because I have observed a general tendency to represent these spurs with the necks curving upwards, and consequently with the ornamentation on the under side. This, I feel sure, could not have been the case. But, if it was easier to ride with these



Found on the site of the battle of Barnet.
Three-quarter size.
Rowel 6 in. ; neck 4 in. ; side 3 in.
Total length 10 in.

spurs turned downwards, it must have been impossible to have walked in them in that position. And so it was, for there is abundant evidence that the wearers of these spurs experienced that inconvenience.

The spur illustrated on Plate 24 is very interesting in more ways than one. Where the actual spur is at the present time I cannot learn. My illustration is taken from a plate in *Archæologia*, Vol. VIII., and is contained in a letter written by Mr. Francis Grose, in 1785. The spur was dug up on the site of the battle of Barnet, fought in 1471, when making the excavations for the erection of the obelisk to commemorate the battle. It may therefore be reasonably presumed that it was worn by someone who fought there that day. So it not only fixes a date when these spurs were worn—they had probably only just come into use at that time—but it also affords evidence that these spurs with their huge rowels were actually used in warfare, and not carried only on state occasions. The points of this rowel are three inches in length, so that the rowel was six inches in diameter at least. The neck is four inches long, curved downwards, and decorated with some spiral ornaments on its convex surface. The sides are straight and have some perforated ornamentation in the middle of each. They terminate in two rectangular slits for the attachment of upper and lower straps. The weight of the spur is $10\frac{1}{2}$ ozs.

There is another piece of evidence that these large rowelled spurs were worn on horseback, and of the inconvenience their wearers found when dismounted, to be found in *Some Chronicles of King Henry VIII. of England*, translated from the Spanish

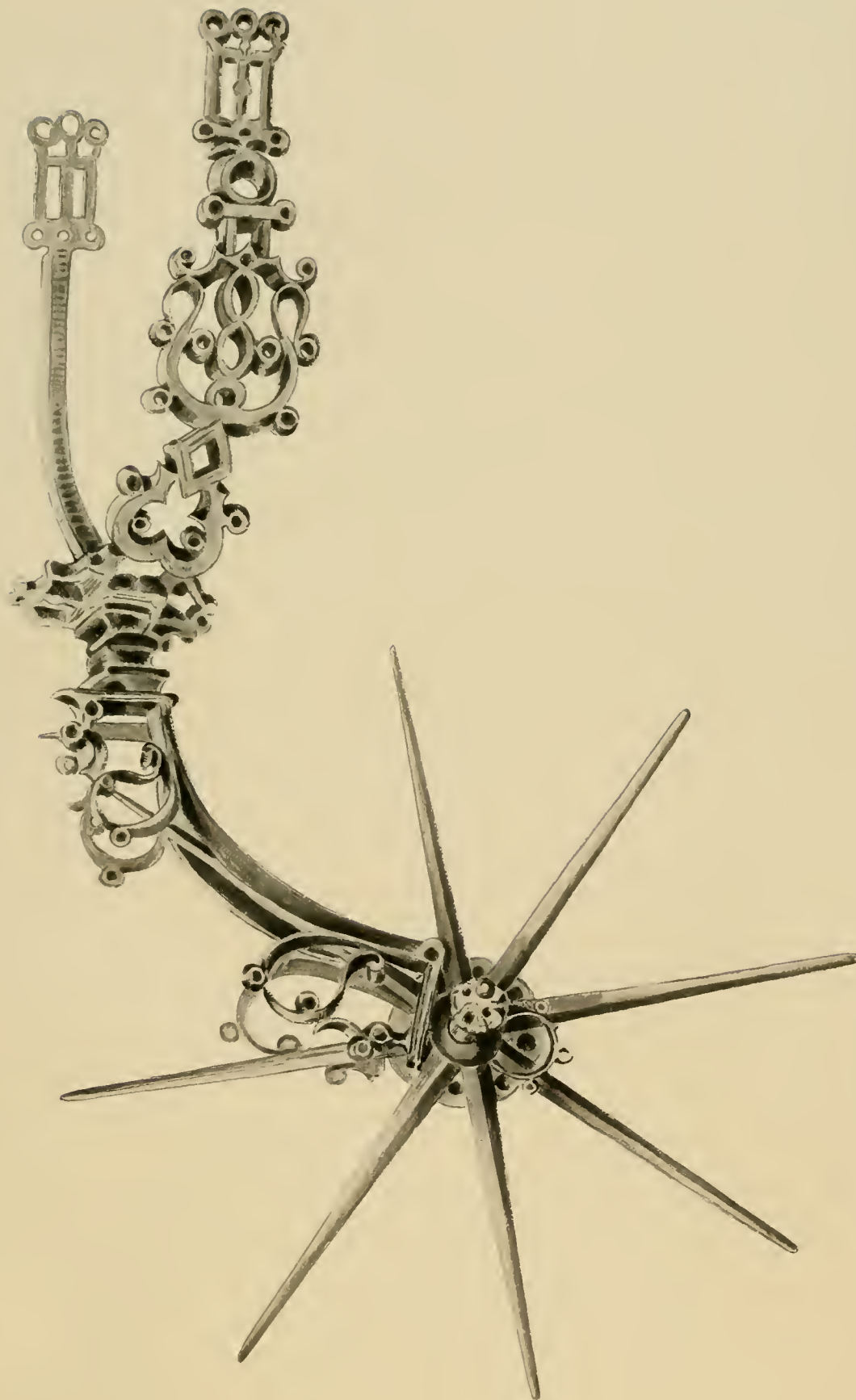
by Martin A. S. Hume. It contains an account of a duel fought at Calais in 1536, between Captain Julian, an Englishman, and Captain Mora, a Frenchman. The duel was fought with the approval of the King, who sent Sir Henry Knyvett to witness the combat. They fought mounted, but without lances, each having a sword and dagger. In the course of the fight the Frenchman killed, or disabled, the Englishman's horse, and Julian, when on foot, was encumbered with his spurs, and dodged his adversary round his fallen horse until, "watching his opportunity, he dropped on one knee, and with his dagger cut the straps of his spurs and threw them away." He then wounded the Frenchman's horse, who, fearing it would fall, determined to get a short distance away and dismount. But Julian, "being on foot and light without his spurs, ran after him and overcame him while trying to alight," thus somewhat ingloriously winning the battle. The Englishman was probably wearing some such spurs as are shown in our illustrations.

The spur found in London, of which I give an illustration on Plate 25, is now in the City of London Museum. It is probably a little earlier than the Barnet spur. It is somewhat uncommon in having a rowel of twelve points. No doubt, when new, the points were longer than they are now, quite two inches probably, making the rowel about five inches in diameter. This spur affords a very good example of the state in which ancient spurs are very frequently found, and which I have endeavoured to represent in my drawing.

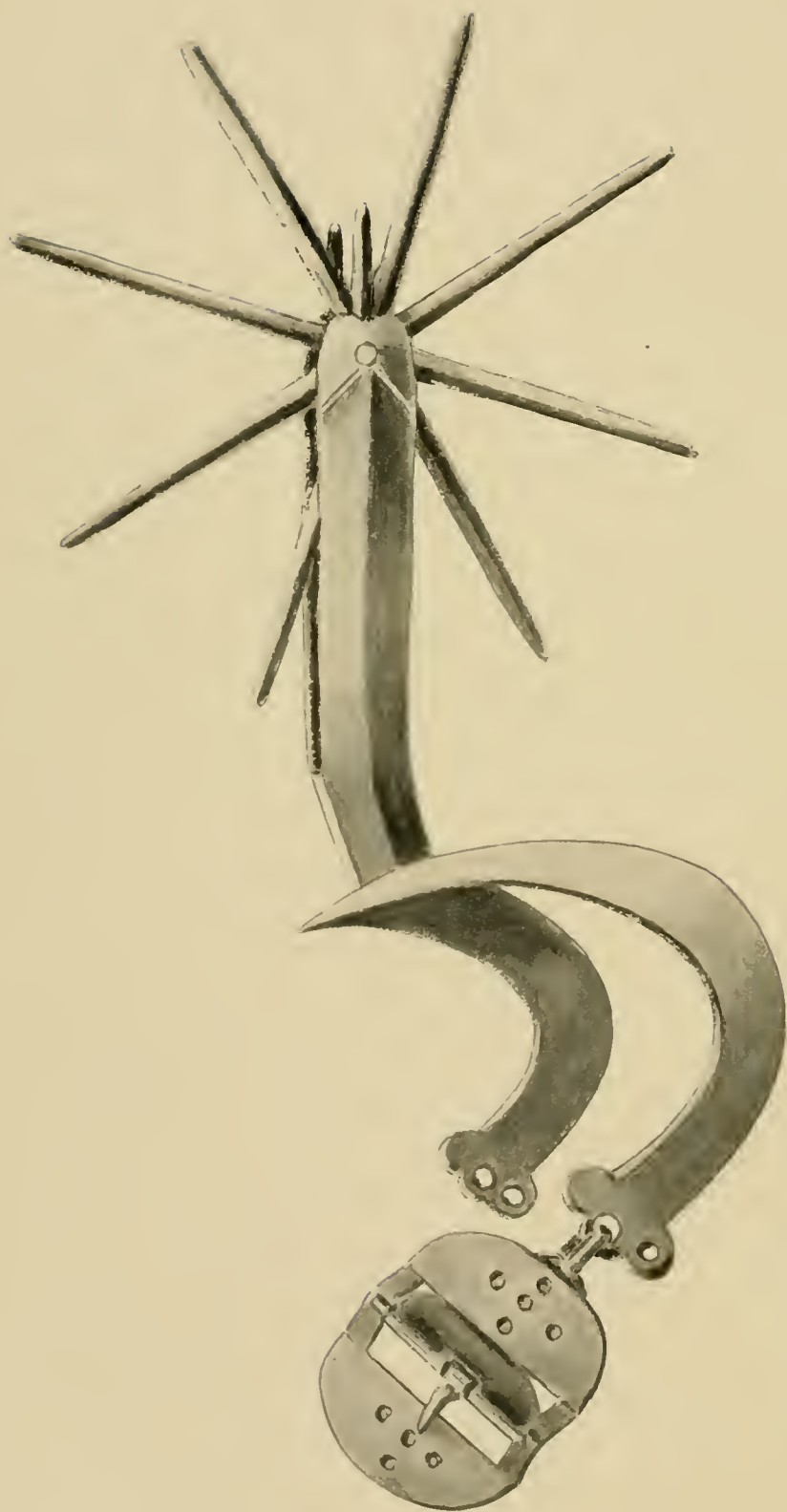
The very beautiful and highly decorated spur, now in the British Museum, figured on Plate 26, is, to the best of my



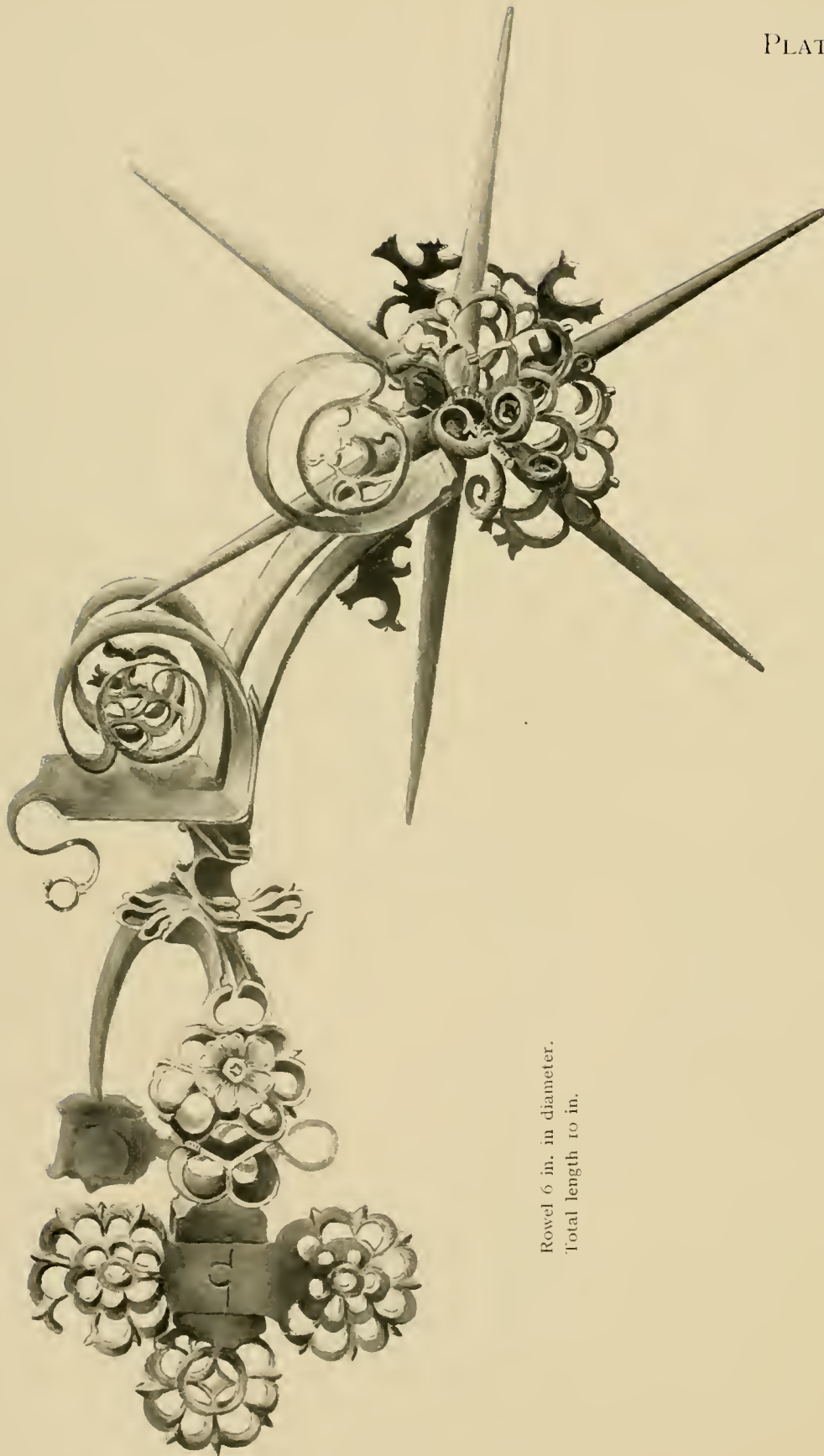
Sixteenth century. Found in London.
Actual size.



Late sixteenth century. Three-quarters of actual size. Total length $11\frac{1}{2}$ in. Probably the largest spur in existence.



Large rovel spur, now at the Tower.
Half-size.



Rowel 6 in. in diameter.
Total length 10 in.



FIG. 1.
Probably sixteenth century.
Actual size.
Mr. Redfern's Collection.

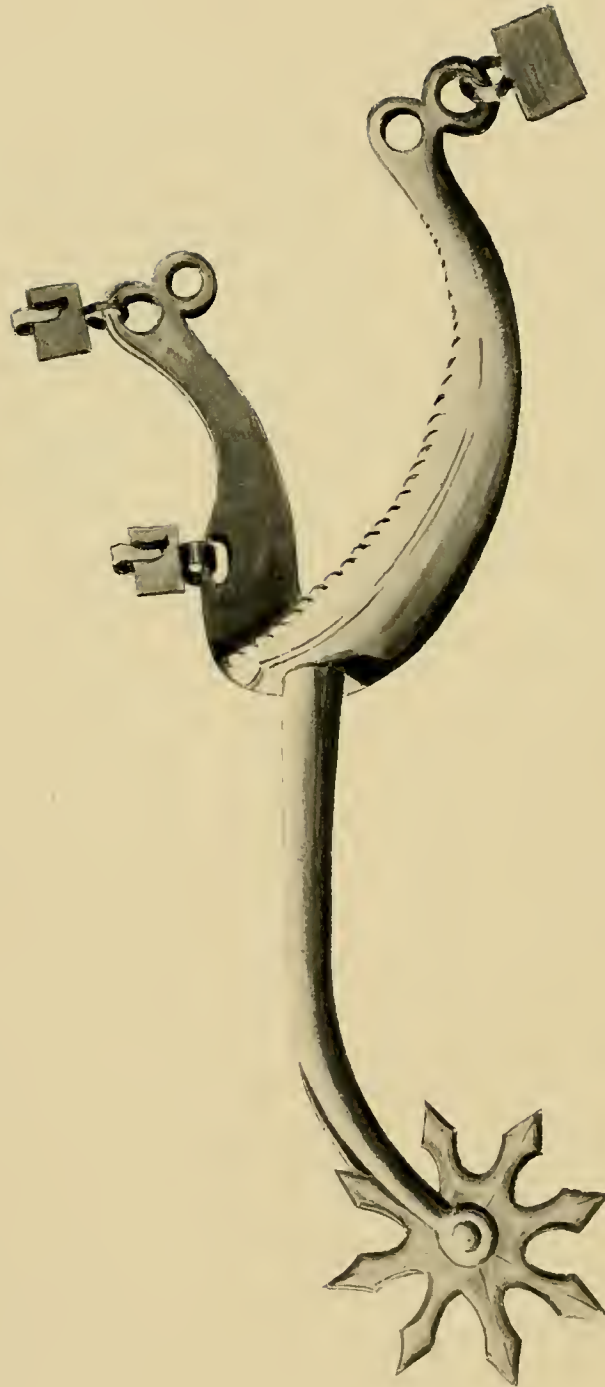


FIG. 2.
Late Tudor. A.D. 1550 to 1580.
Actual size.

belief, the largest spur now in existence. It is in the most perfect state of preservation, having evidently been spared the corrosive action of water. It is of iron, and the extreme length is eleven and a half inches. The rowels, of eight points, measure seven inches, the points being each three inches long. The length of the sides is four and a half inches, and the spread of the sides is just over three and a half inches. There are two or three strap plates, the upper one being slightly ornamented, still attached to the sides, which are not shown in the illustration.

The drawing on Plate 27 is from a pair of spurs now in the Tower of London. The rowels of these are even larger than the one in the British Museum, being eight inches in diameter. But the whole spur is not so large, nor is there any ornament. The sides are strongly depressed, and there is a buckle attached. The whole length of this spur is ten inches, and its weight one pound. Its date, like the other, is probably from 1500 to 1530.

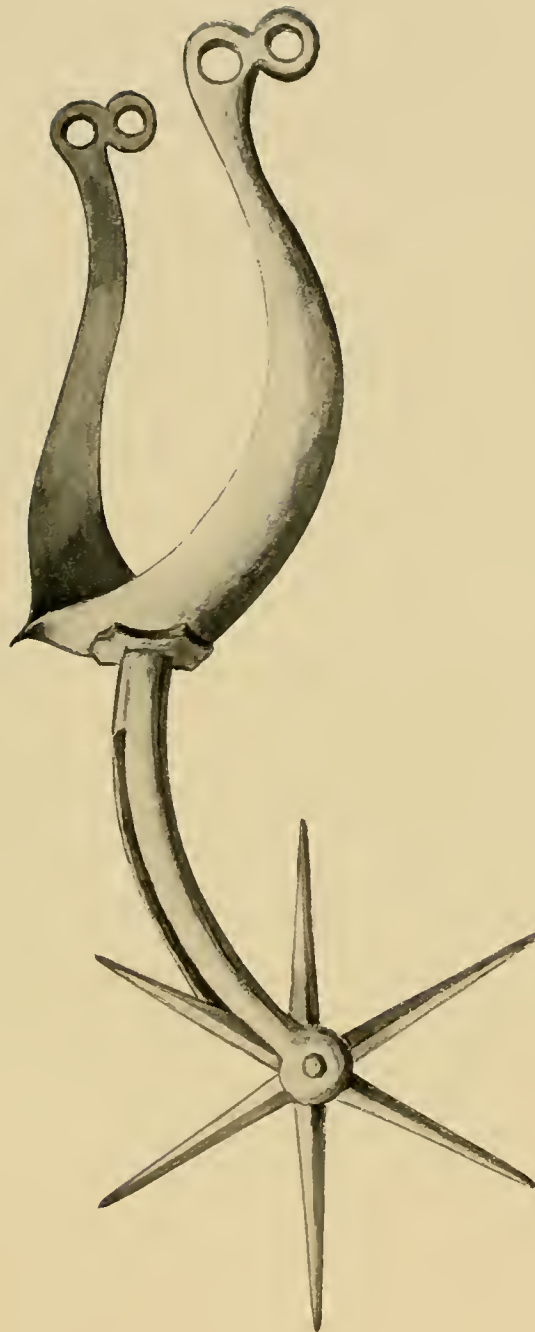
The remaining illustration of a large rowelled spur, on Plate 28, is taken from an elaborately decorated spur now in the South Kensington Museum, and believed to be French. Its total length is just under eleven inches, and the six-pointed rowel is six inches in diameter.

It is strange that this most inconvenient fashion lasted so long, for there is evidence that it lasted for sixty years, perhaps more. But we may assume that not everyone victimised himself to fashion in this manner. Many must have worn spurs of the type shown on Plate 29, Figs. 1, 2,

and Plate 29A. These forms of spurs were certainly in existence during the latter half of the sixteenth century, and most probably were worn also during the earlier part of the century.

There are many examples of large rowelled spurs in continental museums, but I did not see so many plain star rowels as there are in England. In the Italian museums, at all events, there were many large rowels of the rose pattern, and some still more ornate.

The close of the sixteenth century saw a great and decided change in the form of spurs. A fashion came in about that time much more sensible than the preceding, and one which was destined to last, with but little alteration, for a longer period than any other fashion of spur. The huge and ungainly rowels, which had been slowly going out of vogue for some time, now disappeared altogether, and the new form, though they had big rowels as compared with those of modern times—sometimes being as much as two inches in diameter—had nothing ungainly or inconvenient about them. These spurs had one characteristic, which prevailed almost unaltered throughout the seventeenth century: the neck, generally starting from the heel-plate in an upward direction, was then bent sharply downwards, sometimes at almost a right angle and sometimes at an angle more obtuse. A few examples may be seen of the neck being *curved* downwards, but the necks of the very great majority were *bent* downwards at a decided angle. These are the spurs which we so often see in our museums arranged upside down. When placed in this incorrect position the general shape of the whole neck somewhat resembles the



Usual type, sixteenth century.
Actual size.



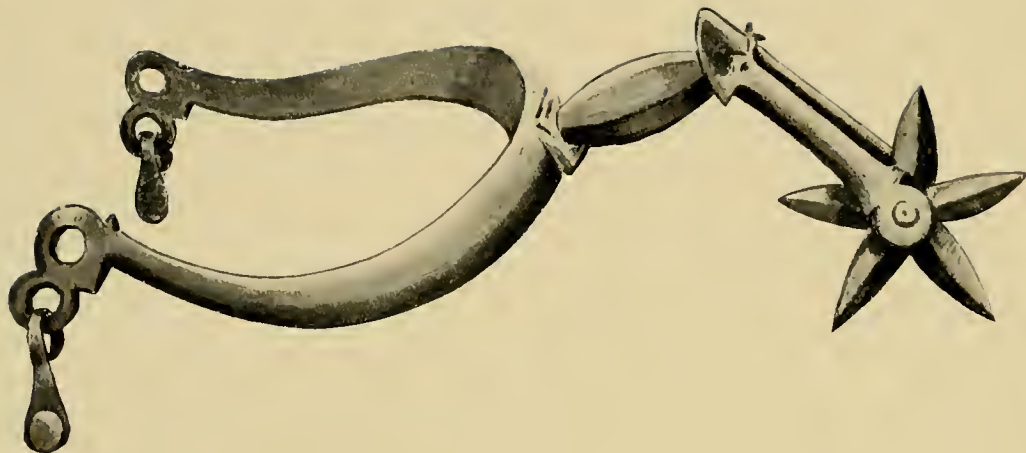


FIG. 1.

A.D. 1600 to 1620. Actual size.
Width of side $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. ; rowel $1\frac{1}{4}$ in.
Total length 5 in.

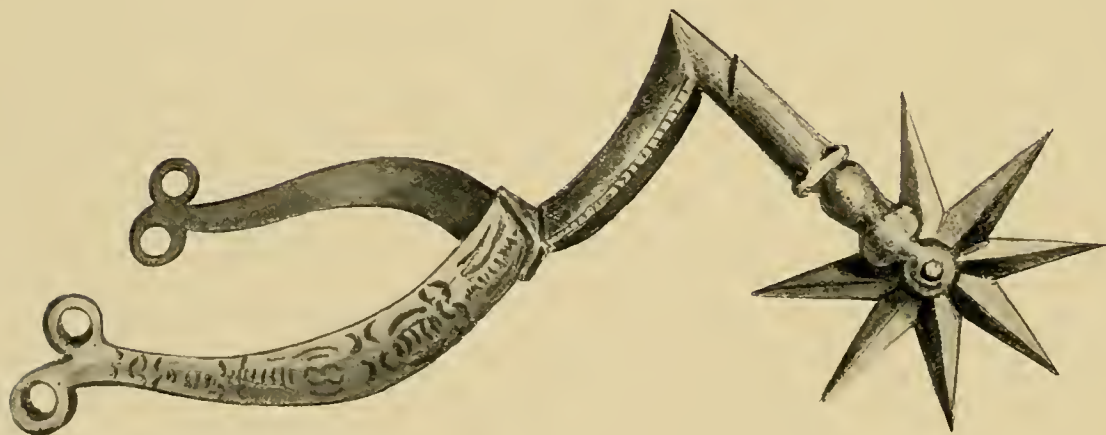


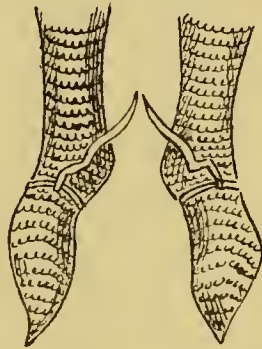
FIG 2.

A.D. 1620 to 1650. Actual size.

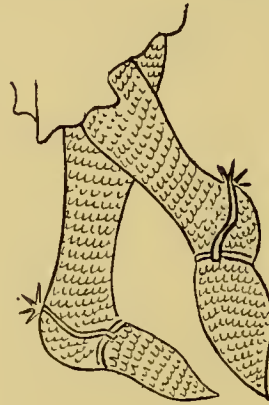
curve of the swan-necked spurs of the present day, and that, I suppose, accounts for the frequent mistake. But the curve of the sides—for they are always curved—and the arrangement of the double rings at the ends, to one of which, necessarily the upper one, an elaborate buckle is often still attached, will show at a glance the proper position. These spurs had invariably curved sides, a fashion which we have seen to have lasted, with the exception of some of the large rowelled spurs, through five centuries; and with very few exceptions the sides terminated in two circular rings. Sometimes these were one just above the other, as was usually the case in the earlier spurs; but very constantly during this century the lower ring was separated from the upper by a curved piece of metal, resembling in miniature the side-piece of a horse's curb bit, or the letter S, and at the lower end of this piece is the ring for the attachment of the sole strap. It is little details of this description which enable one to determine the date of some freak spur, which may have a prick point, or some other detail which is quite out of the period.

The illustration on Plate 30, Fig. 1, is taken from a spur in the City of London Museum, and serves as a typical example of the plain spurs of this period, a five-pointed rowel, which is very characteristic, the neck bent at an angle at the junction of the neck proper and the rowel-box, curved sides, and the double ring for the two straps. The spread of the sides is two and three quarter inches, thus fitting an ordinary boot, and the total length is just over five inches. This is a very fair example of a plain spur. Fig. 2 on the same plate shows a little more

ornament, for this was an age when an immense amount of decoration was put into the spur, and the majority of the specimens of this period to be found in our museums were highly ornate. The ornamentation varied largely, and appears to have been



From the brass of
Sir John d'Abernon, A.D. 1277.



From the brass of
Sir John Boteler, A.D. 1285.
Nearly the earliest rowel spur.
The second seal of Henry III.,
A.D. 1240.



From the brass of
Sir Roger de Trumpington,
A.D. 1280.
In Trumpington Church.



From the brass of
William de Longspee, A.D. 1227.
In Salisbury Cathedral.

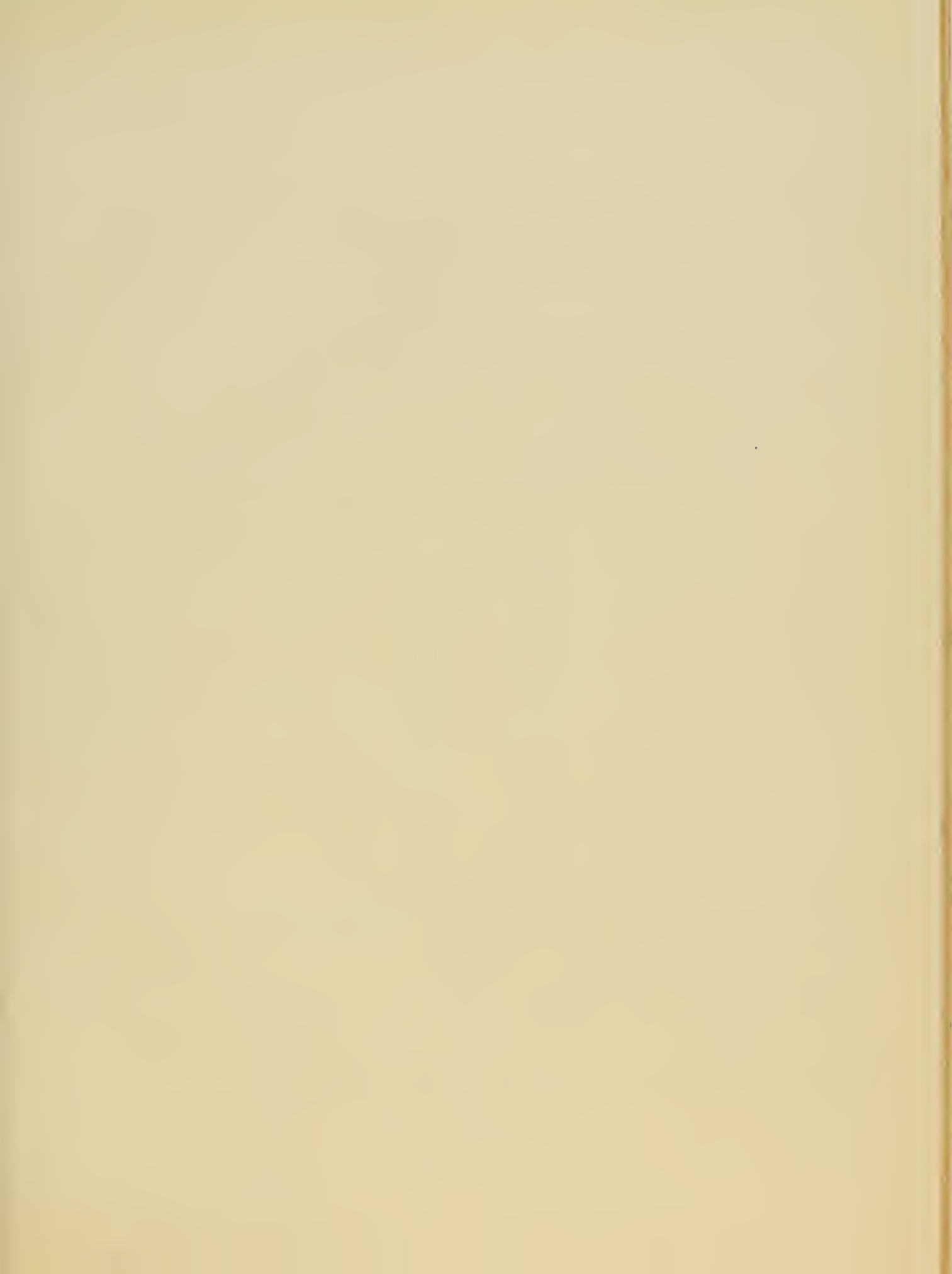
(See page 30.)

only controlled by the length of the owner's purse, and, we may guess, not always by that. There are some beautiful specimens in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House. Several are most elaborately chased and decorated with figures and





A.D. 1600 to 1630. Actual size.





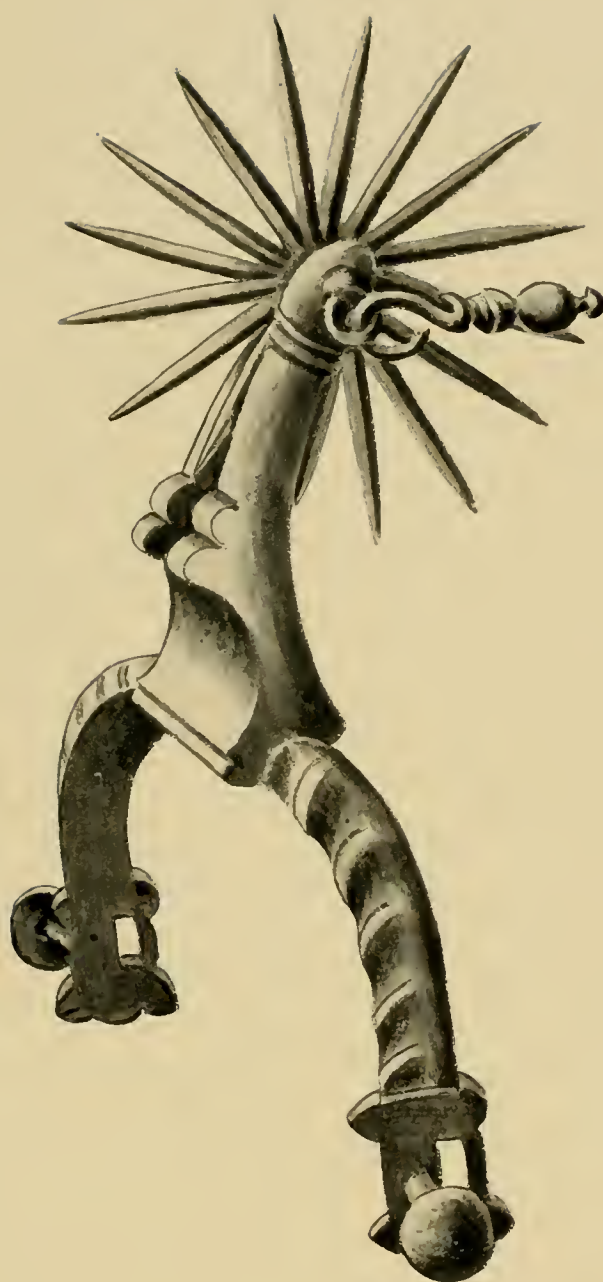
Seventeenth century. Actual size.
Tower of London.

scroll-work, and, as is rightly stated in the catalogue, require the assistance of a magnifying glass for their full appreciation. At the British Museum there are a few good examples of this period, one of which, shown on Plate 31, is a brass spur, bearing every indication of having lain for a long time in the water, and is believed to have been dredged up from the Thames. It possesses all the usual characteristics, and the rather large rowel of five points, two inches in diameter, shows a considerable amount of ornament. The five-pointed rowel is almost universal at this period. Sir Samuel Meyrick says that "it is certain that spur rowels were never of six points before Henry VI., nor of five till Charles I." He is certainly wrong about the six points, as there are numbers of specimens now in existence that were made long before Henry VI. But I have never seen a five-pointed rowel before the time of James I. or Charles I. The skill and ingenuity of the artificer was frequently directed at this period to the buckle.

The spur in the British Museum, just mentioned, has a very handsome buckle attached to one of its upper rings, and the very beautiful spur at the Tower, shown on Plate 32, has a still more elaborate buckle. The spurs of this period in continental museums all bear the closest resemblance to those in our own. In the Stibbert Collection at Florence there are a great number of spurs of this period, all more or less ornate, and at other museums that I have seen there are numerous examples. It is at this period that we see the first attempt at a universal shape. Not that there was any regulation pattern—that did not come for a long time—but the spurs of this

period were all more or less of the same form. In the earlier periods, all that can be said is that a certain form was more often used than another, and so was characteristic of that period. But now we are beginning to find them of one shape only.

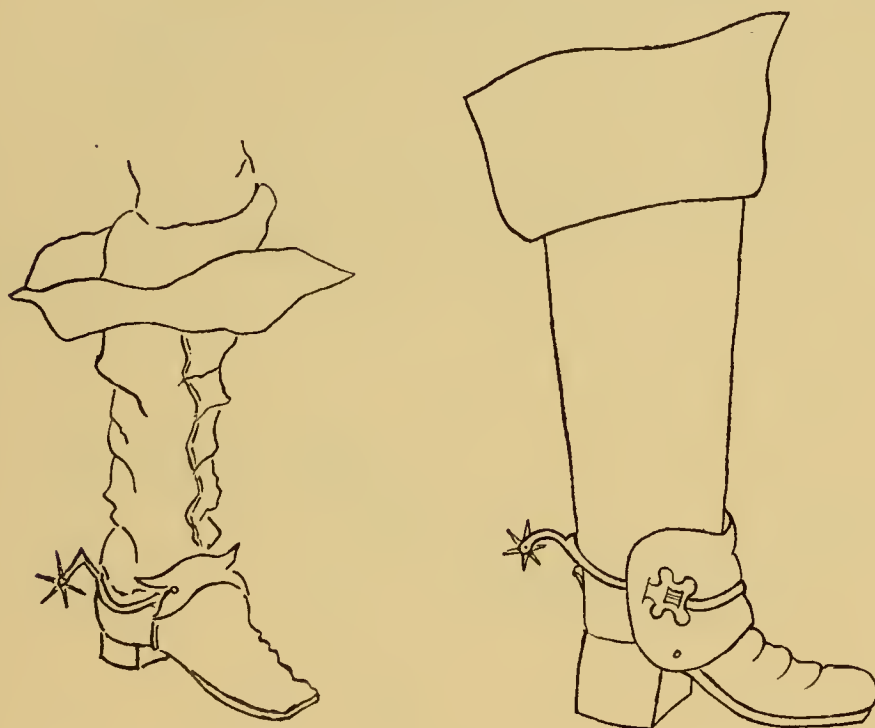
About the middle of the seventeenth century another form of spur was introduced, which appears to have been worn chiefly among the Cavaliers. It was a large and heavy kind of spur, with a large rowel of many points, much resembling the rowel of the Mexican spur. Indeed, the whole spur is very much of the type of the Mexican, but can be distinguished from it by the absence of the large circular heel-plate which is invariably found in the Mexican spur, and which is so characteristic of all spurs of Moorish origin. These spurs of the Cavaliers very frequently had "jingles" attached to them. This was a loose piece of ornamented metal, very like a drop ear-ring, hanging to the side of the centre of the rowel. This clinked against the rowel as the owner walked. My illustration of this form on Plate 33 is taken from one in Mr. Redfern's Collection. It is made of gun-metal, and is decidedly heavy, not only in appearance, but in actual fact. It has straight sides, though this is not universally the case with this form of spur, and a large rowel of sixteen points, two and three quarter inches in diameter, and has the "jingle" attached to it. In this spur we see the first return, after nearly eighteen hundred years, to the mushroom-shaped studs which are so universal at the present time, but which had not been seen since the earliest spurs of the Roman period, with the only exception, so far as



Cavalier spur, with jingle.
Seventeenth century. Actual size.
Mr. Roaf's Collection.

I am aware, of the spur with the elongated spike, figured on Plate 7, taken from Zschille and Forrer's work, and which is believed to be of about the fifth century.

The older form of spur with the curved sides and the bent neck still went on during this period, and continued till



the close of the century, when this type, which had lasted for so many years, seems to have disappeared altogether.

During the reigns of William and Mary and of Anne, the curved sides, which had held their own for so many centuries, gradually died out, and spurs with straight sides, as they are made now, became more and more common. The stiff leather boot of the period no doubt had much to do

with this—there was no longer any prominence of the ankle-bone for the sides to curve under. The marked angular bend in the neck now disappeared also, and though we see a suggestion of it in the spur shown on Plate 34, it is in a very modified form. The necks were now made much shorter, and, when not curved slightly downwards, were straight, much as they are now. The rowels, too, were much smaller, and usually of many points, and seldom more than three quarters of an inch in diameter. Indeed, the days of rowels of over an inch seem now to have gone by for ever. The advent of the enormously wide “bucket” boot of this period necessitated a very wide spread of spur, and it is no doubt for this reason that we often see spurs of this period with a hinge in the middle of the side. This is shown on Plate 34, Fig. 1. I know also of a spur exactly like it, and placed upon a “bucket” boot, on an equestrian figure in the Stibbert Collection at Florence. The other spur of this period, figured on Plate 34, Fig. 2, retains the old curved sides and has a six-pointed rowel, and altogether must have been considered quite an old-fashioned spur at the time. It has an enormous spread of over four and a half inches, in order to go round the big boot of the time. I saw some of a precisely similar pattern in Turin, which had a spread of quite six inches. Both these drawings of Queen Anne spurs were taken from specimens in the collection of Mr. Redfern, of Cambridge.

After the reign of Queen Anne no very great changes were made in the fashions of spurs. Rowels by degrees were made smaller, and ornament and elaboration became less and



FIG. 1.
Hinged spur, gun-metal. Early eighteenth century. Actual size.
Rowel, steel, $\frac{3}{4}$ in.; sides $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.; spread $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. Total length 4 in.
Mr. Redfern's Collection.

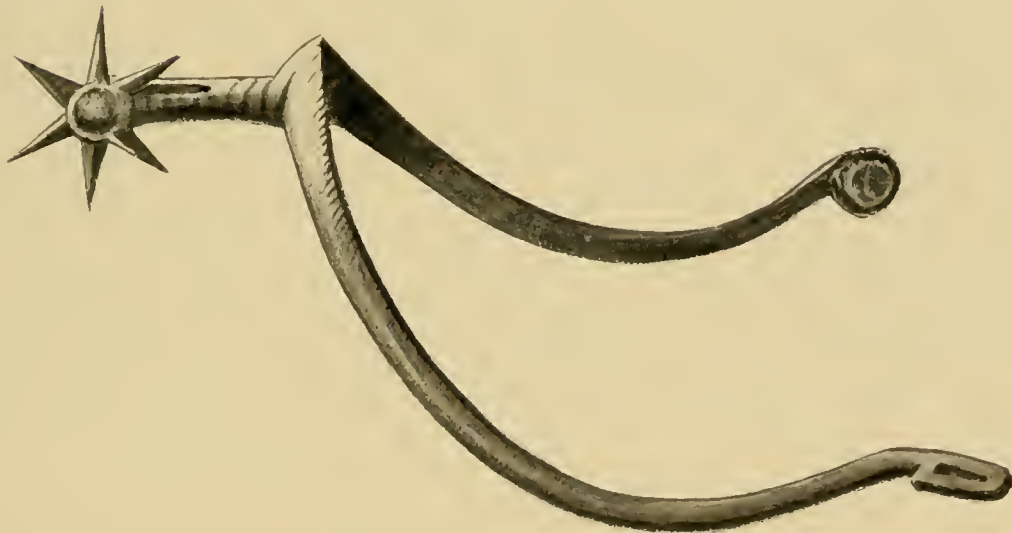
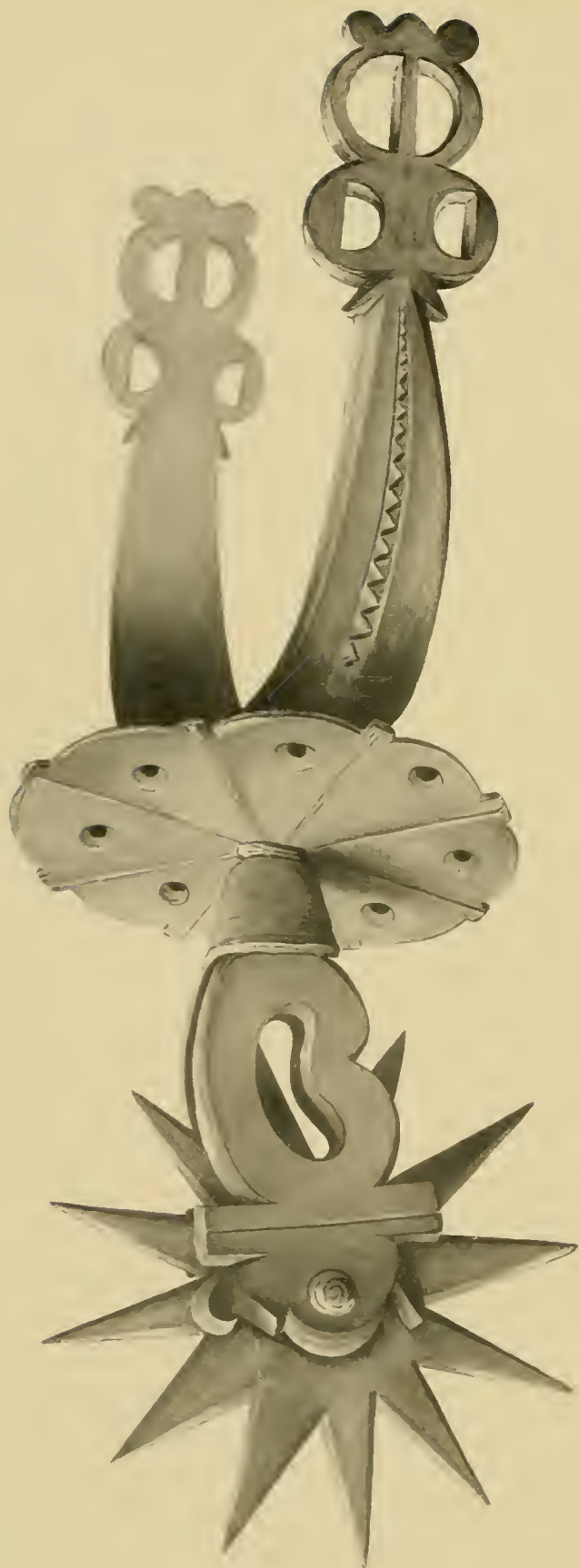


FIG. 2.
For bucket boot. Early eighteenth century.
Neck 1 in.; sides 4 in.; spread $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Mr. Redfern's Collection.



Mexican. Actual size.

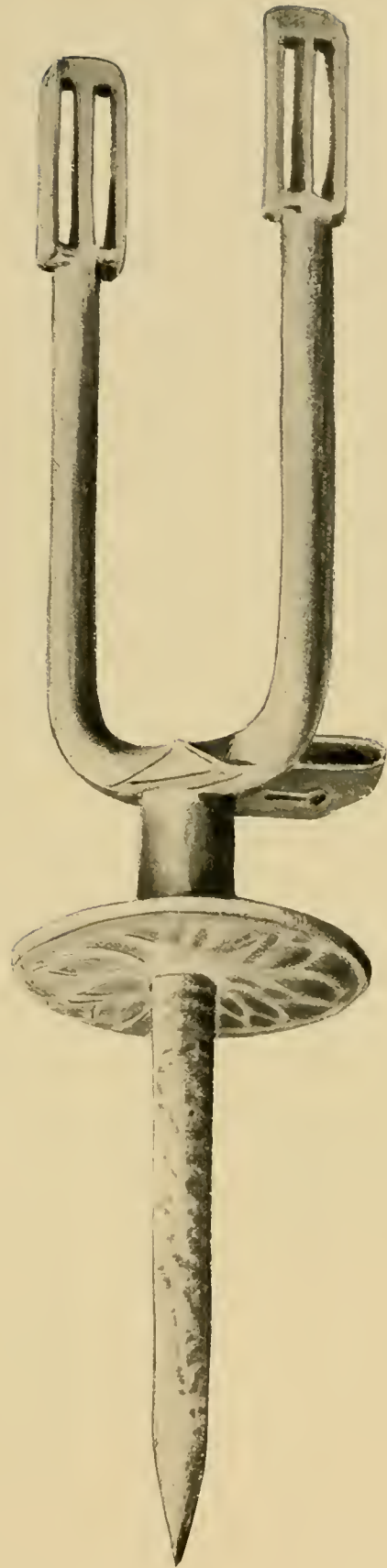
less until, by easy stages, the form of spur much as we have now was arrived at.

The spurs of the nineteenth century will be briefly described in a separate section.

There remains to be described a form of spur which, from its size and weight and imposing appearance, has always been readily sought by collectors, and of which specimens are to be found in nearly every museum. I refer to Mexican spurs. The old-fashioned Mexican spur had two great characteristics; one a large circular heel-plate, generally ornamented with perforations to save weight, and the other a peculiarly shaped opening in the thick curved neck—which opening, for want of a better word, I will call kidney-shaped. This last is an invariable characteristic of spurs of Mexican origin, and can be seen more or less clearly in the cow-boys' spurs of the present day. The object of the opening was, no doubt, to save weight, and the shape has been copied from one generation to another. The round heel-plate, now more or less gone out, but always seen in the older spurs, is a survival of the Moorish influence. The Moors left many traces of their influence among the Spaniards, and this round heel-plate is one of them. It does not seem to have lasted so very long in Spain itself, but it was taken to Mexico by Cortes and his followers, and has remained there to the present day. The rowels are many pointed and very large, the sides straight and heavy, and frequently covered with leather. These spurs all are very much alike, and the illustration on Plate 35 is fairly typical of them all. In the more modern Mexican spurs the round heel-plate

has become reduced to a mere vestige, but the kidney-shaped opening in the neck can generally be seen more or less marked.


I give on Plate 36 an illustration of an old Moorish spur taken from one in the Tower of London, and there are many similar examples in continental and other museums. It is of iron, damascened with silver. The total length is eleven inches. These spurs always show the same characteristics—the round heel-plate, long, straight sides, round in section, and with a very narrow spread and a long, straight point. Although not a rowel spur, I have put it here, next to the Mexican spurs, because it shows the round heel-plate, from which the Mexican spurs derived theirs, and which does not seem to have been copied by any European nation except the Spaniards.



Moorish Iron, damascened with silver.
Sides 5 in. ; spread of side $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; point 4 in. ; diameter of heel-plate $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.
Total length 11 in. Weight 1 lb.
Tortor of London.

ON SPURS AFFIXED WITHOUT STRAPS

AND ON CERTAIN ECCENTRIC FORMS OF SPURS

LTHOUGH from the earliest times, all through the Middle Ages and down to the present day, spurs were attached to their owner's feet by straps in the very great majority of instances, this has not been invariably the case. It is certain that spurs rivetted on to the armour are more often seen on effigies and church brasses than was actually the case in real life. But in these cases the evidence is not always trustworthy, as I have remarked before. I have seen in more than one instance a marble effigy of a man in armour with the spur rivetted to the *front* half of the leg-piece. Had this existed in real life, the unfortunate wearer could never have got his leg armour off. In these cases, as in many others, the evidence afforded by effigies and brasses is so tainted with inaccuracy as to render it of doubtful value. But there have been periods when the fashion of attaching spurs without the aid of straps has prevailed to a certain extent.

In very ancient times this fashion was obviously unknown, since, until the introduction of plate armour, there was nothing to which a spur could be rivetted. And for a very considerable period when plate armour was worn, the spur was strapped to the man's foot inside the armour, and the neck protruded through a slit in the back of the jambe, as we have already seen.

The system of rivetting the spur to the armour occurred, so far as I can ascertain, occasionally during the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century. After that time the disuse of plate armour on the legs and feet necessarily occasioned the disappearance of the custom.

Upon the advent of trousers, early in the nineteenth century, the British Army, and continental armies also, were equipped with box spurs let into the heel of the boot—a fashion which obtains at the present day with soldiers of all ranks when unmounted.

But to go back to the days of armour; the practice of rivetting the spur to the armour was rare.

There is, in the Tower of London, a very handsome small suit of armour, richly gilt, and decorated with inlay, which was made for Charles I. when he was a boy, and which has the spurs rivetted to the leg-pieces. But this, of course, was a fancy and very exceptional suit, and is in no way illustrative of everyday life. In the Poldi-Pezzoli Museum at Milan there are a pair of very highly decorated and inlaid leg-pieces of armour which probably date from about the end of the sixteenth century, and which have very ornate gilt spurs rivetted on to them. An illustration of these is given on Plate 36a, Fig. 1. In both these cases the suits of armour are very ornamental, and were evidently not intended for everyday use.

Mr. James, in his contributions to the journals of the Archæological Association, and Mr. Hewitt, in his *Ancient Armour and Weapons*, both refer to the "beautiful long-toed

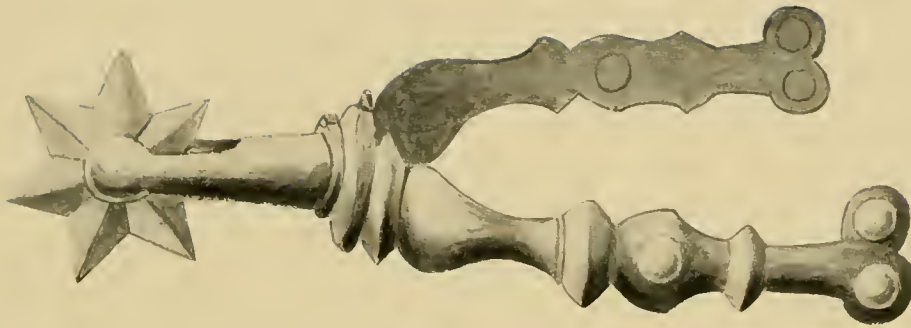


FIG. 1.

Gilded ornamental spur, rivetted on to jambes, ornamented with gilt inlay; three rivets on each side. Probably end of sixteenth century. Neck $1\frac{1}{2}$ in.; seven-pointed foliated rowel 1 in. in diameter.

Poldi-Pescoli Museum, Milan.



FIG. 2.

Iron spur, rivetted to outside piece of jambe, with hinge immediately behind rivet. Inside arm much shorter and fastened by catch spring to narrow flap, which is all there is of inside of jambe, and is hinged to outer half. Eight-pointed foliated rowel $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. German, circa 1500

Stibbert Museum, Florence.

solleret" in the Tower of London, which has a long straight-necked spur rivetted to it. The solleret in question is certainly beautifully made, but I have the highest authority, no less than that of Lord Dillon himself, for saying that this piece, now under his charge, is not a genuine piece of old armour, but a comparatively modern reproduction. Indeed, a most cursory examination will show that no human foot could ever have got inside it. James also says, speaking of the same subject, "That in the Musée d'Artillerie at Paris is obviously of recent manufacture, and is attached to a suit formed of a doubtful visored bascinet of Richard II., twilles and breast-plate of Richard III., and pauldrons of Henry VIII." Here are two cases of spurs rivetted to foot-pieces of armour, in both of which the piece is not genuine, and there is consequently room for doubt as to whether the method of attachment is genuine also. It is always the foot-pieces in museums which are open to doubt, as they are the pieces which were so frequently lost or mislaid in the days when curators of museums were neither so careful nor so skilful as they are now.

There is a suit in the Armeria Reale at Turin having a very good example of the long-toed solleret, and here six-pointed rowel spurs, having straight necks, square in section, and eight inches long, are attached to the solleret by having the end of the neck turned downwards at a right angle to the extent of an inch, forming a sort of square hook which fits into a square socket which is welded on to the heel-plate of the solleret. In this case the spur could be detached even more easily than if it were fastened by straps.

In the same museum at Turin, where there are some very fine equestrian suits of armour which belonged to various Dukes of Savoie and other well-known Italian nobles, there are several suits which have the spurs rivetted on to the armour. They are all of the first half of the sixteenth century. Here, again, the suits are all very ornate, and several of them richly gilt. And although their history tells us that they belonged without doubt to well-known individuals, and so, presumably, were worn by them, it is probable they were only used on state occasions.

Many of the plainer suits in the Turin armoury, of precisely the same period, have spurs with identical necks and rowels buckled on in the ordinary way, and with the curved sides in vogue at that period. Where the spur is rivetted there is only a short, straight piece embracing the heel, and not extending more than two inches on each side of the median line.

In the Stibbert collection of armour at Florence there is a German suit of the first half of the sixteenth century which has a very peculiar spur rivetted to the leg-piece. The suit is somewhat incomplete, the bascinet being missing, and several pieces are, I think, open to doubt as to their genuineness. The legs have only the outer side protected, and to this outer half of the jambe is the spur rivetted. Immediately behind the rivet is a hinge in the arm of the spur, and the inner arm, which is much shorter than the outer one, ends with a spring catch, which fixes and helps to hold steady a sort of flap which is hinged on to the back of the outer piece of the jambe, and serves to protect the back of the man's leg. The

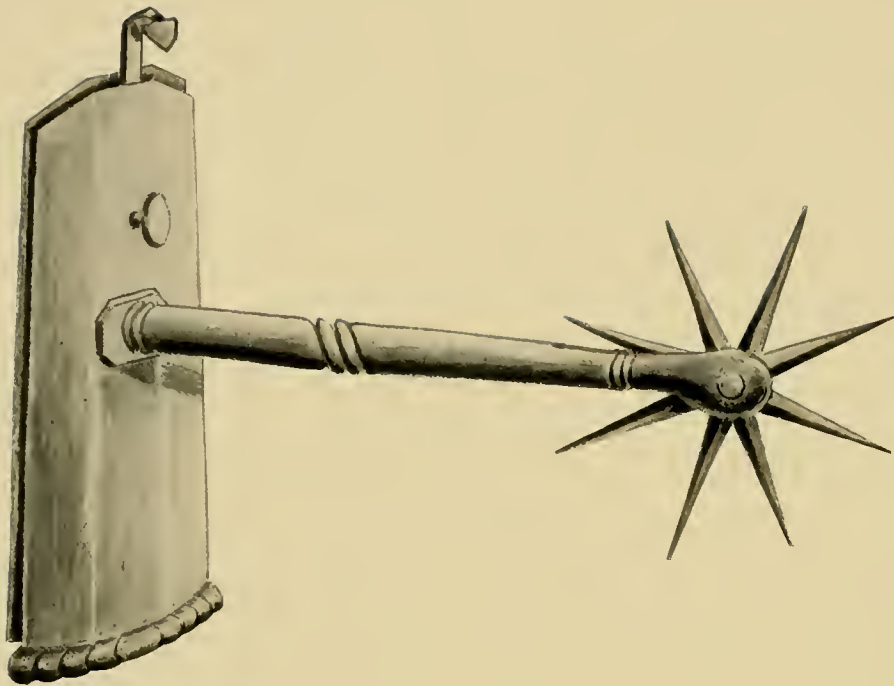


FIG. 1.

German. Early sixteenth century.

Straight-necked spur, fixed to grooved plate which slides up into slot at back of jambe and is caught by a spring.

Plate 3 in. long, 1 in. wide at top, $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. at bottom.

Stibbert Museum, Florence.

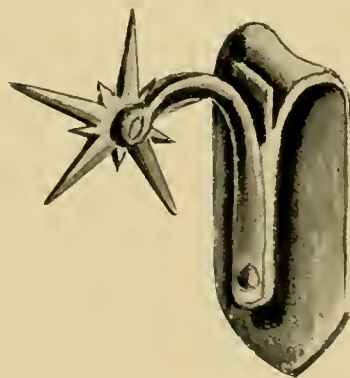


FIG. 2.

An ancestor of the box spur. A.D. 1650 to 1680.

Actual size.

spurs on this figure are not a pair; that on the left foot has two equal arms rivetted to a wide heel-piece, which makes a continuation of the jambe, and is hinged on to the solleret on the inside, and kept in position on the outside by a strap over the instep. The solleret is of the broad-toed pattern. An illustration of the spur on the right foot is shown on Plate 36A, Fig. 2.

In the same museum there is an interesting spur which is also attached without straps but not rivetted, and can easily be removed. It belongs to a German fluted suit of the early part of the sixteenth century, with the broad-toed solleret. The spur, of which an illustration is given on Plate 37, Fig. 1, has a straight neck about four inches long fixed to a plate three inches high, and one inch wide at the top and an inch and a half at the bottom. This plate has grooved edges, and is slipped upwards into a corresponding opening in the back of the jambe, and is caught and held in position by a spring catch at the top. The straight neck is round in section and has some incised ornament, and it carries an eight-pointed star rowel two inches in diameter.

In the Armeria Reale at Turin there is a spur, with the same arrangement as to fastening, attached to a very handsome suit which belonged to Cardinal Ascanio Maria Sforza, and which dates from quite the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century. The spur here is somewhat longer in the neck, since the horse armour is very complete, the horse being entirely covered. The rowel is about the same size—two inches—and has six points. In both these spurs the

arrangement is such as to render it easy to remove or replace the spur. I think it is the absence of this facility in the case of rivetted spurs which rendered their use so uncommon.

An entirely different form of spur, but attached without straps, is shown on Plate 37, Fig. 2. It was used about the period of the Thirty Years' War, so that its date is about from 1650 to 1680. The drawing is taken from a specimen in the museum of the United Service Association in Whitehall. It is adapted for wearing with a shoe. A curved plate, resembling part of a shoe-horn, went down inside the shoe between the shoe and the man's heel, while a bar, bent over the upper edge of the shoe, came down outside the leather, and in this specimen had a screw-hole at the bottom of the bar for a screw to tighten it to the leather. From the upper part of this bar projects a short curved neck, carrying a five-pointed rowel, about an inch in diameter. There are several of these spurs to be found in continental museums, though I am not aware of another in England. There is one in the Musée d'Artillerie in Paris, described as English. Zschille and Forrer give two examples as having been used in Germany, and I know of another in Italy. I think this kind of spur was not an uncommon one at this period, when the rank and file of armies generally wore shoes in preference to boots.

The comparatively modern form of spur inserted into the heel of the boot will be mentioned in the description of modern spurs.

The above forms of spurs, attached to their wearers' feet without the aid of straps, were all more or less common at



Iron spur. Attachment without straps; elongated side probably went into socket along inner side of boot.

Two-thirds actual size.

Rowel, seven points, 1 in.; neck 4 in.; short arm $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.; elongation 7 in.; spread $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. Total length $1\frac{1}{3}$ in.

Museo Nazionale, Florence.

the various periods in which they were in vogue, and numerous examples of them are to be found in our museums of the present day.

It remains to describe certain peculiar forms that I have come across, and which were, I imagine, the inventions of some of those eccentric individuals who have existed in all ages, and who have delighted in having their clothes, or arms, or accoutrements of a different pattern from their neighbours'.

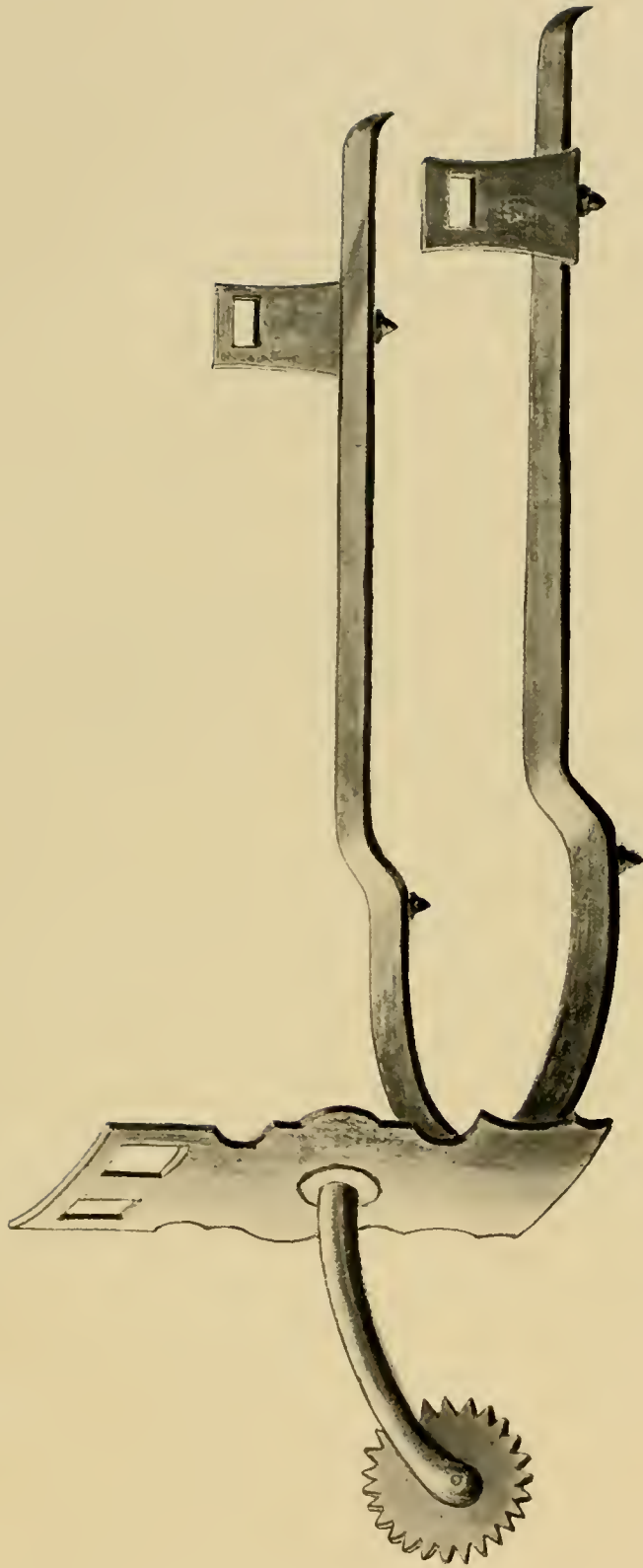
One of such spurs is to be found in the Museo Nazionale in the Bargello at Florence, and of which an illustration is given on Plate 38. It is an iron spur, probably of the end of the sixteenth or beginning of the seventeenth century, with a straight ornamented neck about four inches long, carrying a seven-pointed ornamented rowel about an inch in diameter. The arms are of unequal length, one of the ordinary length, about three inches, ending in a plain rounded plate, without any arrangement for the attachment of a strap. This arm, together with the other one for the same distance, is ornamented at intervals with a raised pattern, as shown in the illustration. The other arm is prolonged seven inches into a plain straight piece, oval in section, about three-eighths of an inch wide and three-sixteenths of an inch thick, ending in a plain rounded end. This prolongation was doubtless passed into a long socket in the side of the boot. The total length of this spur, from the rowel to the end of the prolongation, is thirteen inches.

Another very unusual form of spur is in the Stibbert Museum at Florence. It consists of an ornamented heel-plate about three inches high, from the centre of which projects a plain

round neck two inches in length, and curved slightly downwards, having a small-toothed serrated rowel three-quarters of an inch in diameter. This heel-plate is welded to a narrow sole-plate arranged to fit round the margins of the sole of a boot. This sole-plate is depressed at its back part to fit the heel of a boot, and the sides are a little more than six inches in length and half an inch wide. Near the ends, towards the toe, are two small upright plates with a square opening in their upper part, presumably for the attachment of a strap which went across the foot near the toe. On the underside of the sole-plates are placed studs at intervals to prevent slipping. An illustration is given on Plate 39. In both these spurs the eccentricity lies in the form of the attachment.

It may not, however, be out of place to describe here some peculiar spurs in which the eccentricity lies in the adoption of a prick point, long after the period when prick points were in vogue.

There is a spur in the British Museum which is interesting from the fact that everything about it points to its being of the seventeenth century, except that it has a prick point instead of a rowel. An illustration is given on Plate 40. The sides are curved and are triangular in section, flat on the inside, and end in the usual double rings for the attachment of the two straps. The neck is quadrilateral in section, and about three inches in length. It starts in an upward direction for about half its length, and is then bent downwards at an angle, so characteristic of the spurs of the seventeenth century. The neck ends in a conventional flower of four petals, from the centre



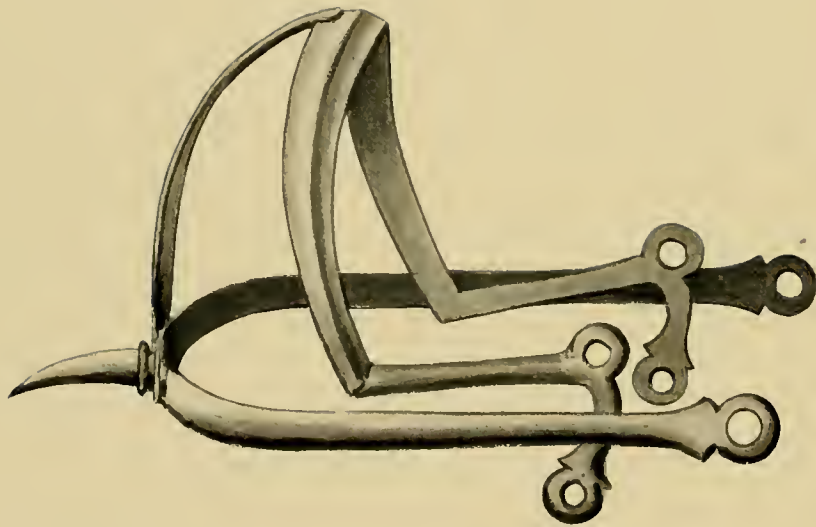
Ornamental heel-plate attached to two sole-plates adapted to the sole of a boot, with attachments for a strap to go over the front of the foot.

Curved plain neck 2 in. ; serrated rowel $\frac{3}{4}$ in. ; sole plates $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide, $\frac{1}{8}$ in. thick.

Siribbert Museum, Florence.



Iron. Probably made in the seventeenth century.
Neck and point $2\frac{1}{4}$ in. ; sides $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; spread $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. Total length $4\frac{3}{4}$ in.
British Museum.



Gilt iron spur, with short curved prick point and double sides. The ordinary sides straight, terminating with single rings. A curved flexible piece springs upwards from heel-plate 2 in., from which sharply depressed sides depend, ending in double rings, and which do not touch the straight sides. Probably seventeenth century.

Actual size.

Armeria Reale, Turin.

of which springs a rounded spike about half an inch in length. The condition in which the spur is, the workmanship, and everything about it, except the absence of a rowel, point to its having been made in the seventeenth century. There is another very similar spur in the collection of Mr. Redfern, of Cambridge. These spurs are certainly not of the period when prick spurs were in vogue—that is, prior to the end of the thirteenth century; and I have some idea that it was a freak of James I. to equip his huntsmen, or yeomen prickers, with this pattern of spur.

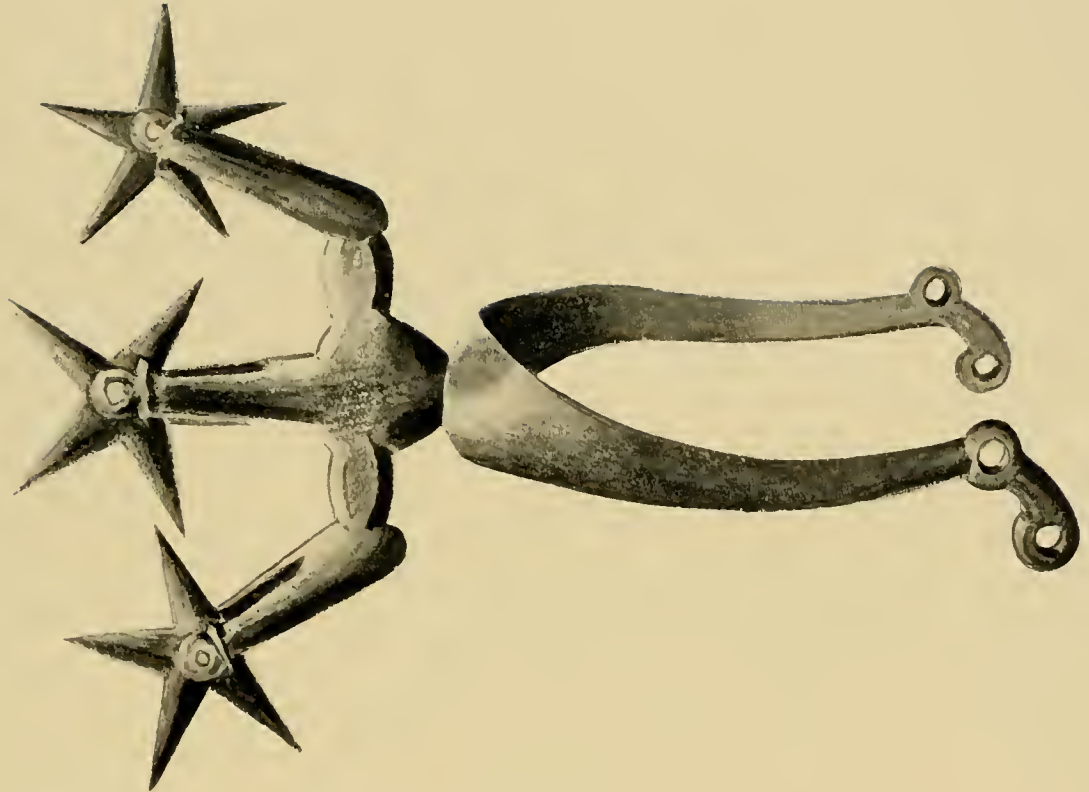
Another very eccentric pair of spurs are to be seen in the Armeria Reale at Turin, of which an illustration is shown on Plate 41. It is a small gilt iron spur with a very small, curved prick point. Its peculiarity consists in its having a double set of arms.

There is one pair of arms starting from the heel-plate from which the point springs, which are straight and terminate in single perforations, and which are of the usual length and spread; then from the top of the heel-plate, in the median line, springs upwards a curved piece of metal about two inches in length. To the top of this is welded a secondary pair of arms, which are directed downwards until the level of the other pair of arms is reached, when they are bent sharply forwards and continued for about an inch and a half close to, but not touching, the straight sides, and terminating in double rings of the pattern very characteristic of the seventeenth century. This, from the appearance and workmanship of the spurs, is most probably their date. They were the invention, I imagine, of

some very eccentric individual, and the use of the secondary pair of arms is by no means obvious.

There are, no doubt, many other freaks to be found in the various museums and private collections—for these are just the things to get into museums—as curators readily seize upon them on account of their peculiar form, while all history of their origin has perhaps been lost for years.

While on the subject of eccentric spurs, this seems the place to mention those spurs which have more than one neck and more than one rowel on each spur. There are several such now in existence. The first I found is in the collection of Mr. Redfern, of Cambridge, and of which an illustration is given on Plate 42. It is a German spur, apparently of the seventeenth century. It has curved sides terminating in the usual double rings, and has three necks one above the other, each carrying a five-pointed rowel rather more than an inch in diameter. When I first saw this spur I thought it might have been presented to some individual by his friends as a joke, as emblematic of his extreme celerity of movement, or possibly in sarcasm on account of his extremely sluggish habits. But I found in the Stibbert Collection at Florence an exactly similar spur, which might have been the fellow spur to Mr. Redfern's, except that in the case of the Florence spur there were some incised lines cut by way of ornament on the connecting pieces between the three necks. This spur is also believed to be German. In the Poldi-Pezzoli Museum at Milan there is a three-necked spur with straight sides having a great deal of ornament and a hinge in the middle of each side.



Iron. Three-necked. German, seventeenth century.
Sides 3 in. ; necks $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; rowels $1\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Mr. Redfern's Collection.



Iron, five-necked. German, seventeenth century.

At the terminations there is a second opening for attachment of sole strap, and the chains lead to a circular plate on the instep strap. Actual size.

South Kensington Museum.

The necks are curved downwards, and are about an inch long; the two lower necks side by side, about three-quarters of an inch apart, and the third neck is in the centre above the other two. Each neck has a very ornate and perforated five-pointed rowel, about an inch and a half in diameter. The sides terminate in two rectangular openings for the attachment of the upper and lower straps. This spur is much more elaborately ornamented than the preceding. In the South Kensington Museum there is an elaborate and highly ornamented pair of spurs with five necks. Two necks are arranged side by side above and two side by side below, and the fifth is in the middle. Each neck bears an eight-pointed rowel an inch and a half in diameter, and on each of the eight points of the rowels is a little eight-pointed rowel again, about half an inch in diameter. The sides are slightly curved, three and a half inches long, and with a spread of three and a half inches. The total length of the spur is seven inches.

These many-necked spurs could not have been made for any practical use, and I can find no history or theory about them. I think, myself, they may have been a sort of badge of some society having for its object celerity of movement, in the same way as our King's Messengers have a silver greyhound for a badge.

Zschille and Forrer mention three-necked spurs, and give an illustration of one something like the one at Milan, calling it a "Kutschen reiter Sporn." They describe it as being of German make and of the eighteenth century, and they can only conjecture as to the use of these spurs. They have given

them the name they have, as they think they may have been worn by outriders accompanying the coach of some great personage when travelling in state. This may have been so. Anyhow, the idea is much the same as mine—that these many-necked spurs were merely emblematic of speed.

In some of the large rowelled spurs of eight or six points, where each of the large, thick points terminated in another small rowel, it will be found that the large points were hollow. Zschille and Forrer have suggested that secret despatches may have been carried in the hollow cylinders. I should doubt this—it may have been done once or twice—but I should think riders carrying important despatches would choose a less cumbersome and more useful sort of spur. I have not seen, myself, any of that sort in England, though I know of a Spanish spur of this kind with eight large points and eight little rowels at the ends of the points, in the Stibbert Collection at Florence; and Zschille and Forrer give some illustrations of German spurs of this description.

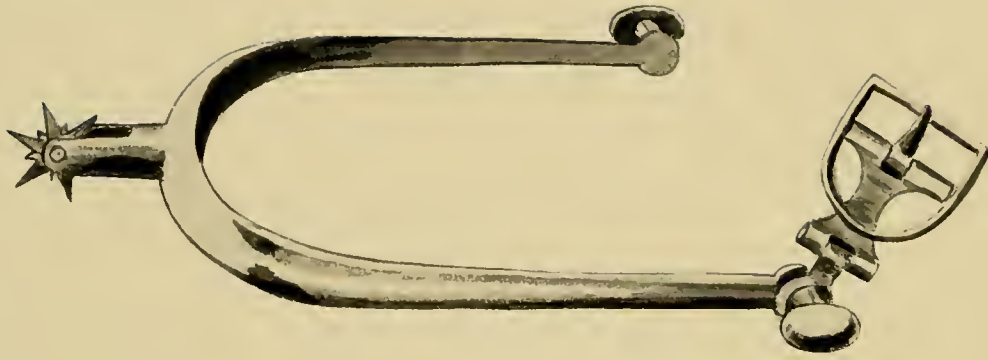


FIG. 1.
Hunting spur. Period George II.

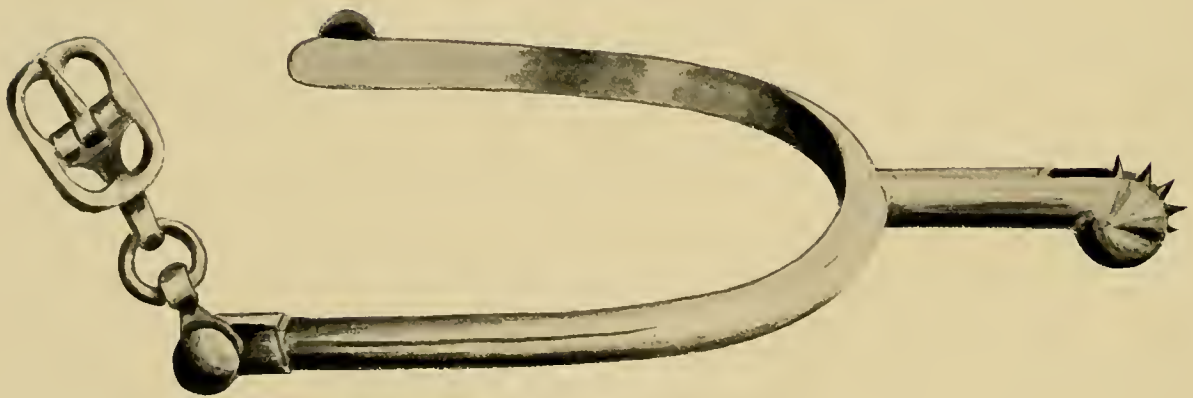


FIG. 2.
Modern hunting spur.

MODERN SPURS

BY the courtesy of Messrs. Maxwell, the well-known London spur makers, I am enabled to give some illustrations of modern spurs, both military and civil. The hunting spur has changed very little in the last hundred years or more, and only in occasional differences in the length of the neck. The spur shown on Plate 43, Fig. 1, is one in the possession of Messrs. Maxwell, and is of the time of George II. It is a plated spur with a very short, straight neck, only five-eighths of an inch in length, with a small, slightly ornamented six-pointed rowel. It may be observed that in this spur the rowel-box, technically termed the "boss," is not turned downwards, as is the case in more modern spurs, as well as more ancient patterns of almost all ages. But the neck and rowel-box are in a straight line. The sides are straight, and three inches in length, and terminate in oval studs, to the outer one of which a buckle is attached. The spread of the sides is two and three-quarter inches, slightly less than those of the present day, of which the spur shown on Plate 43, Fig. 2, is an ordinary example. This has a straight neck, one and a quarter inches in length, with the rowel-box turned downwards. It has a many-pointed rowel, the sharp points only just protruding beyond the rounded end of the rowel-box. The spread of the sides is three inches, and the sides terminate in circular studs, to the outer one of which the buckle is attached.

From time to time the fashion varies as to the length of the neck. Some years ago the necks were three inches long, and occasionally even more; more recently the fashion of very short necks came in. But these are the only changes in hunting spurs; the sides and the studs have remained practically the same since the days of George II.

In military spurs there have been many changes in the last hundred years. At the period of the battle of Waterloo the British Cavalry, with the exception of the Life Guards, wore overalls, and the spurs of that period took the form of box spurs, fastened to the heel of the boot only, and not embracing the foot. The spur shown on Plate 44, Fig. 1, is typical of the military spur universally worn during the first part of the nineteenth century. A short spike in the centre of the spur was driven into the leather of the heel of the boot, and at the ends of the sides, which embraced the heel only, screws were inserted into the heel to give an additional hold. Consequently these spurs were seldom taken off the boot. Soon after the period of Waterloo, Mr. Henry Maxwell, the then head of the firm of spur makers, invented the box spur, as used at the present day. A small brass box is embedded in the heel of the boot, having a small steel trap-door flush with the heel of the boot, controlled by a spring, which closes the opening when the spur is withdrawn, and prevents the entrance of dirt, etc. An additional spring in the interior of the box serves to retain the plug firmly in its place, thus doing away with the necessity of side screws, and enabling the spur to be attached and withdrawn with



FIG. 1.
Brass spur. Period of Waterloo.

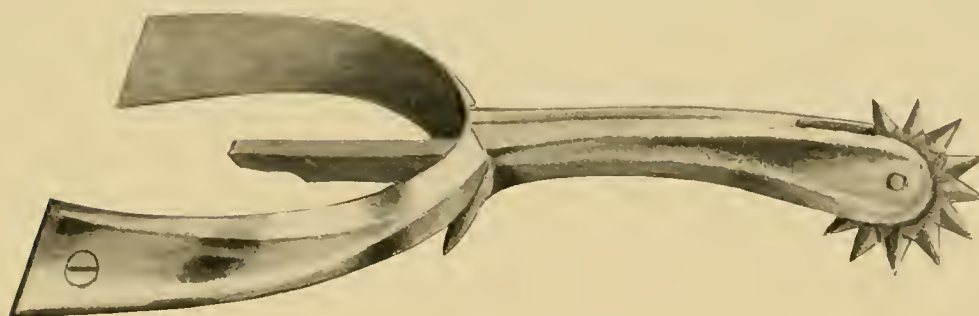


FIG. 2.
Spur worn at the time of the Crimean War by the British Cavalry
(except the 4th Hussars) and the Household Brigade.

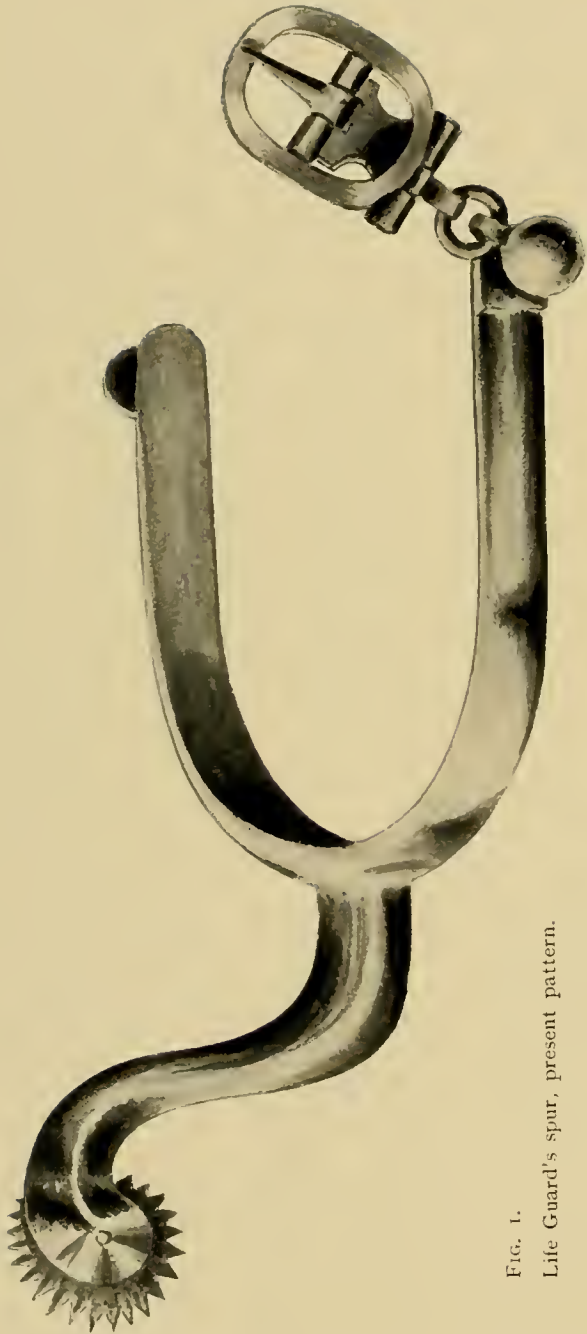


FIG. 1.
Life Guard's spur, present pattern.



FIG. 2.
Officer's dress spur.
About 1840.

ease. At the time of the Crimean War the British Cavalry were equipped with spurs, as shown on Plate 44, Fig. 2. The sides were a little broader than those of the present day, and the neck was one and three-quarter inches, without the rowel-box, and was nearly straight, but slightly curved downwards. It had a many-pointed rowel, the points of which protruded from the rowel-box rather more than those of the present day. The whole of the cavalry of the line wore spurs of this pattern, with the exception of the 4th Hussars, who at that time wore swan-necked spurs.

The Household Cavalry have always worn jack spurs, and the pattern has not changed for many years. The Life Guards' spurs are as shown on Plate 45, Fig. 1, while the Horse Guards have always had a slightly different pattern. In these swan-necked spurs it may be observed that, although the neck is directed upwards for the greater part of its length, the rowel-box is directed downwards.

The spur figured on Plate 45, Fig. 2, is an officer's dress spur, and is about the date 1840. Each regiment had then a particular pattern of its own, and the dress spurs were then, and for some years after, usually gilt; all these have now been done away with in the Army. But the spur shown is very similar to those worn by Court officials at the present day. When boots and breeches were introduced as the uniform for the Cavalry of the British Army, a change became necessary in the spur, and after various changes the present form was arrived at.

The officers' spurs are at present, when mounted, as figured

on Plate 46, Fig. 1. It is a swan-necked spur, with a neck two and a quarter inches long, with straight sides, terminating in circular studs, precisely the same in that respect as the ordinary hunting spur. The trooper's spur has a straight neck, one and a half inches long, with the rowel-box turned downwards, and is similar in every respect to the hunting spur, except that of late years the studs and buckles have been done away with, in order to avoid anything projecting from the outer side of a man's spur catching in his neighbour's stirrup when drawn up in close line. The sides of the troopers' spurs now terminate in an opening, as shown on Plate 46, Fig. 2, to which the sole strap, or chain, and the instep strap are fastened, thus reverting to the method of attachment which had been in vogue for so many centuries previous to the eighteenth.

When dismounted, both officers and troopers wear a swan-necked steel box spur, without sharp rowels, as shown on Plate 47.

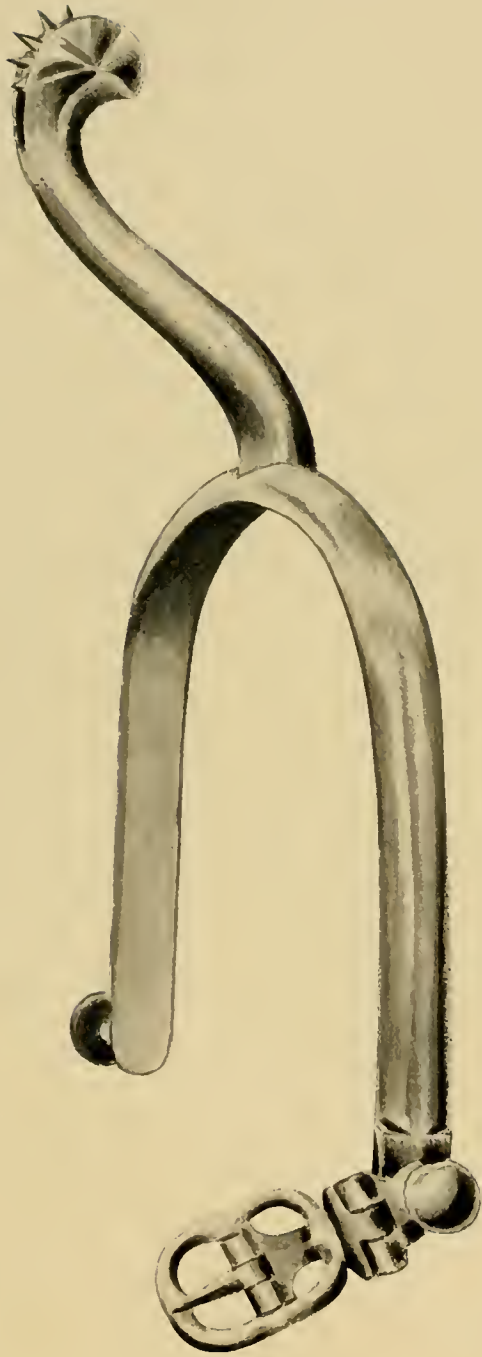
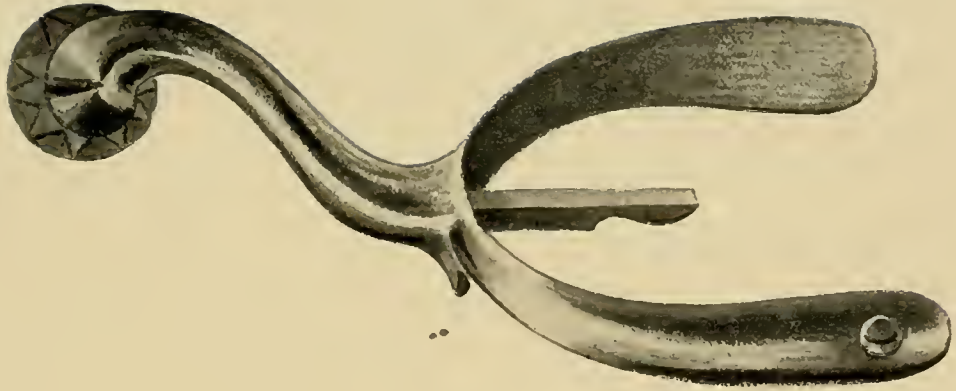


FIG. 1.
Officer's spur, mounted. 1890.



FIG. 2.
Trooper's spur, modern pattern.
No studs or buckles. Straps sewn on.



Dismounted spur.
Modern pattern for all ranks.

THE ST. GEORGE'S SPURS

OR

THE KING'S CORONATION SPURS



THESE spurs, known as the St. George's spurs, which form part of the regalia and are preserved with the rest of the Crown jewels in the Tower, are only used at the Coronation of the Sovereign, and are extremely interesting. The following is the account given of them by Mr. Cyril Davenport, F.S.A., in his *English Regalia*, published in 1897:—

“In the list of the regalia made for Charles II., and drawn out in 1685, in preparation for the coronation of James II., mention is made of a pair of golden spurs. They are figured in Sir Edward Walker's account of the coronation of James II., and appear to be the same now as they were then, with the exception of the straps and buckles. They were most probably made by Sir Robert Vyner, and are of the kind known as 'prick' spurs, as they do not end in a rowel, but in a sharp point projecting from a conventional flower. They are of solid gold, richly chased in flowing patterns, and have straps of crimson velvet embroidered in gold. They are known as St. George's spurs, and are, of course, the emblem of knight-hood and chivalry, and with the sword help to mark the military character of the sovereign. At the coronation the spurs are presented to the sovereign, and immediately deposited on the altar, being afterwards redeemed by the payment of some handsome fee. This procedure, indeed, takes place with

most of the articles used at the coronation, one after the other. In former days no one was allowed to enter a sacred edifice with military arms upon him. These were generally left with one of the attendants at the door, or in the porch, while the owner went in to pray. When the prayers were finished and the soldier came out again, he had to redeem his accoutrements with such money as he had available, and 'spur money' had always to be taken into consideration when an armed knight went to his devotions."

These St. George's spurs are especially interesting to the student, in that they, most appropriately, present a combination of almost every style of spur that has been in use in this country since the Norman Conquest. The short, sharp "prick" is of the kind I have described elsewhere as the "inserted point," and has not been used since the beginning of the twelfth century. This was the first form of arrangement used to prevent any accidental penetration of the horse's side, which must not unfrequently have occurred with the long unguarded spikes, sometimes three inches and more in length, that succeeded the plain, short points of the Roman period. This form of short spike inserted into the end of the neck came into use probably about the beginning of the tenth century, and continued during the eleventh, and this was probably the usual form of spurs worn at the time of the Norman Conquest.

The conventional rose which forms the end of the neck in these spurs, and from the centre of which the point springs, may be taken to represent the Tudor rose, the amalgamation of the York and Lancaster badges. The peculiar bend in the

neck, which may be observed here, is only seen in the seventeenth century, the period when these spurs were made. But in the spurs of this epoch that portion of the neck which was bent downwards was split up to form the rowel-box, and so to contain the comparatively large star rowel then used. The depressed sides, curved so as to pass under the ankle-bone, represent a very long period, more than three centuries from the time these spurs were made; a fashion soon to be replaced, early in the Georgian period, for the straight sides, such as are used at the present time, and which were also in vogue prior to the twelfth century. The terminations of the sides for the attachment of the straps are somewhat unusual for the period at which they were made. That the sides should end in a double arrangement, one for the attachment of the instep strap, and the other for the sole strap, to pass under the sole of the foot, is in accordance with the fashion of the seventeenth century, and for several centuries before that; but the terminations until this date had been invariably rings, or circular perforations in the widened out ends of the sides. The mushroom-shaped studs—which these spurs have, and which are much the same in form as those of the present day, only now one stud serves for the attachment of both straps—had only just come into use again after an absence of fifteen hundred years, and were by no means in universal use in 1685. The double ring was then much more often seen than the stud. The movable bar to which the upper stud is attached in these spurs is also very uncommon. I have seen it in a few spurs of this date, but it is by no means usual.

In the British Museum there is a spur, to which I have referred elsewhere, which has every characteristic of the seventeenth century spurs, but which has a short prick point springing from the centre of a conventional flower, instead of a rowel, much the same as in these St. George's spurs, and which I have some reason to believe were a design of James I. It is possible that these spurs were taken from this design of James I., always supposing that he did design the pattern of the spurs I refer to. But I prefer to think that Sir Robert Vyner designed these coronation spurs to illustrate by their various characteristics a long period of English history.

I am indebted to the kindness of Messrs. Garrard for the sketch from which the illustration which forms the frontispiece of this book was taken.

CONCLUSION



HUS have I attempted to trace link by link the gradual sequence of changes of spurs in the long chain which has been handed down to us from the earliest times. The primitive wooden contrivances, if they existed, as I am sure they must have, are, of course, conjectural; but the evidence afforded by the wooden spurs used by the savages of Patagonia until recent times, though I dare say now they get their spurs from Sheffield, shows that wooden spurs have been used, and I firmly believe were used by the primitive nations of Europe.

In the earliest metal spurs that have been preserved we see the simplest possible form: a tiny structure that could just be fitted to the heel, with a small point no larger than was sufficient for the purpose of giving the horse a slight prick. We then perceive that the changes which so soon began all tended in one direction, enlargement and amplification—first of the sides, to get a firmer grasp of the foot, and then of the point, with here and there an attempt at ornament. The enlargement in this direction, as the artificers in metal improved in their craft, grew, as I have said, fostered by a spirit of emulation, until a formidable weapon was arrived at, which could do, and doubtless did, harm that was never intended. Then came the various devices for preventing this undue penetration—and so we are brought down to the commencement of the Middle Ages.

Next we see the one great radical change that took place—the introduction of the rowel. We know within a few years when this change was made, but whose idea it was, and from what country it came, we have no certain knowledge. Then began extravagances of form and size, keeping pace with the extravagance in dress which characterized Plantagenet times. Some of the changes, as we have noticed, were called forth by alterations in armour, notably in the case of the long-necked spurs, but by the end of the Wars of the Roses the height of extravagance was reached as regards size and lavish decoration.

One wonders how men could have submitted to the inconvenience which must have been occasioned by the enormous rowels which came into fashion. But one must bear in mind that the Lancastrian and early Tudor periods were characterized by extravagance in dress and in all modes of living. After this, when spurs had reached their height as regards size and ornament, there came a great change. What brought it about? Gunpowder. Everything was changed by that invention. Men no longer built grim stone castles, for what was the use of stone walls, no matter how many feet thick, if they could be battered down by cannon? So there sprang up all over England the beautiful timbered and highly decorated houses which are among the many beauties of our country to this day. At first, in the infancy of gunpowder, our archers laughed at the noisy things which could shoot neither so hard nor so far as they. But when the contest of guns *versus* armour began in earnest, and guns rapidly developed more and more power, the armour was soon beaten. Men had to carry it on their

backs, and they soon dropped a heavy load that was becoming day by day more useless. The same contest is going on now, but the armour is holding its own longer in the struggle, because the ships carry it, and not the men; still, the end will eventually be the same. But when the complete armour of man and horse of the Tudor period was swept away, spurs a foot long, with all their elaborate decorations, vanished for ever. From that time forth the changes in spurs progressed in the opposite direction to what had gone before, and all tended towards diminution in size and simplification of form.

The spurs of the Elizabethan and Stuart periods were simple to a degree compared with the ponderous implements of a century before, but they were embellished with decoration most elaborate to our eyes, which are nowadays accustomed to the simplicity of the present utilitarian age. Those were days when beauty of adornment entered more into men's everyday lives than now, and some of the most beautiful decoration ever lavished upon spurs was found upon them during this age.

Then from the days of Queen Anne, through the Georgian period, and down to the present day, simplification and again simplification became the order of the day, until now we have arrived at very nearly where we started two thousand years ago, with a perfectly simple form, totally devoid of ornament, only sufficiently large to firmly embrace the heel, and capable of no more penetration than is necessary to make a horse understand that his rider is urging him on to further endeavours.

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