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Authenticity

Aventails

Table of contents

Authenticity Rules - Aventails

1. Definition and general requirements

1.1. Definition
- An aventail, also called a camail, is a flexible neck defense attached to a helmet, typically made from chainmail. Scales aventails also appear in period art. The purpose of the aventail is to protect the neck, throat, and shoulders of the wearer by draping over the shoulders and upper chest. It typically hangs from the lower edge of the helmet and was popular from the 13th to 15th centuries, providing flexible but effective protection.
- By the turn of the 15th century, aventails were commonly sewn onto a leather band that ran around the base of the helmet. This was secured with cords to studs known as vervelles. Beneath the aventail, a padded liner called a pelerine extended from the helmet liner to cushion and distribute the impact of strikes. The outer edge of the aventail's rings was stitched to the pelerine for stability and to prevent shifting during combat.
- Aventails were primarily seen on bascinet-style helmets but could be adapted for other helmets like great helms or kettle hats. Many aventails were elaborately decorated, featuring quilted covers with heraldic designs as well as decorative chainmail rings and latten vervelle covers.

1.2. Aventails description
Aventails can be:

- Chainmail Aventail: Aventails made from chainmail elements, attached to the helmet with a suspension system.
- Scales Aventail: Aventails made of metal scales riveted to the pelerine.
- Fabric Aventail: Aventails made from fabric, used to display heraldry and must be decorated.

1.3. General Requirements
All types of aventails must respect the following requirements :

- Must be based on historical sources.
- Must be firmly attached to the helmet with a vervelle and leather system.
- Must be appropriately sized for the wearer, as depicted in historical sources.
- It is not allowed to combine two or more different types of aventails (e.g., chainmail and fabric) unless documented by historical sources.

Each helmet-related document will explain what types of aventail are allowed and denied.

2. Chainmail Aventail

2.1. Historical Sources and Datation

Chainmail aventails have been part of armor since the earliest helmets. By the 14th and 15th centuries, it was almost impossible to have a helmet without a chainmail aventail.

They are **Approved** for 14th-century, transitional, and 15th-century armors.

Book of the Queen - 1410/1414 - France

Wallace Collection - 1390/1410 - UK

2.2. Specific Requirements

- The outer edge of the chainmail aventail must be securely stitched to a padded pelerine to prevent displacement.
- The aventail must cover the shoulders, throat, and neck at all times without gaps.
- Chainmail aventails must be properly maintained: damaged rings must be replaced, rust must be removed, etc.
- Chainmail Aventails must follow the general requirements (1.3)

2.3. Examples of Approved Reproductions

Picture from Master Uley©

Picture from The Medieval Things

Picture from The Medieval Things ©

2.4. Examples of Denied Reproductions

Incomplete aventails
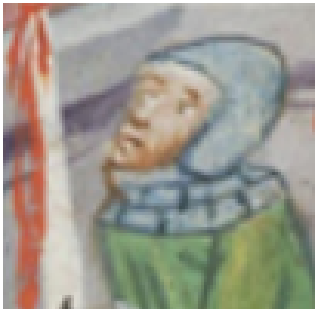

Poorly made aventails

Pictures from The Medieval Things ©

3. Scales Aventail

3.1. Historical Sources and Datation

Scales aventails consist of metal scales riveted to a leather or fabric base. Though no artifacts remain, they can be documented in manuscripts.

They are **Approved** for 14th-century, transitional, and 15th-century armors.

Book of Hours - 1425/1435 - France

Concerning the Fates of Illustrious Men and Women - 1415 - France

Sint-Martinusbasiliek - 1409 - Belgium

3.2. Specific Requirements

- Scales must be contoured (not flat) and securely riveted to the pelerine for a proper fit and protection.
- Allowed shapes include square, triangular, and semicircular designs.
- Scales must lay evenly and overlap slightly to ensure full protection with no gaps.
- Scales Aventails must follow the general requirements (1.3)

3.3. Examples of Approved Reproductions

Pictures from The Medieval Things ©

Picture from Forge of Svan ©

3.4. Examples of Denied Reproductions

Poorly made scales aventail

Picture from The Medieval Things ©

4. Fabric Aventails

4.1. Historical Sources and Datation

Fabric aventails, often displayed over chainmail aventails, serve decorative purposes. They may feature multi-colored designs, decorative stitching, embroidery, and coats of arms.

They are **Approved** for 14th-century, transitional, and 15th-century armors.

De Bello Civili - 1373 - Italy

Weltchronik - 1385 - Germany

Church of St Georges, Schenna - 1380/1400 - Italy

Runkelstein Castle, Ritten- 1395/1405 - Italy

4.2. Specific Requirements

- Fabric aventails must consist of at least one layer of fabric, attached to the helmet using the same suspension method as other aventails (see 6.).
- Fabric aventail must conform to the Textiles and Leather document.
- Fabric aventails must follow the general requirements (1.3)

Fabric aventails must include at least one of the approved decoration methods, such as:

- Multi-color base (at least 2 distinct colors)
- Embroidery
- Stitching
- Stamp-printing
- Decorations must be inspired by medieval images and not be offensive.
- Any additional plates must be concealed when standing.
- It is recommended to sew the fabric aventail to the pelerine.

4.3. Examples of Approved Reproductions

Pictures from The Medieval Things ©

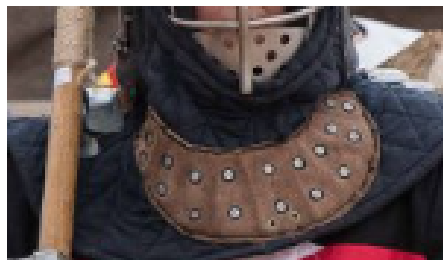## 4.4. Examples of Denied Reproductions

Only 1 color with no decoration

Mix of chainmail and fabric aventails

Metal plates must be concealed

Only 1 color, and floppy aventail

Pictures from The Medieval Things

5. Suspension System
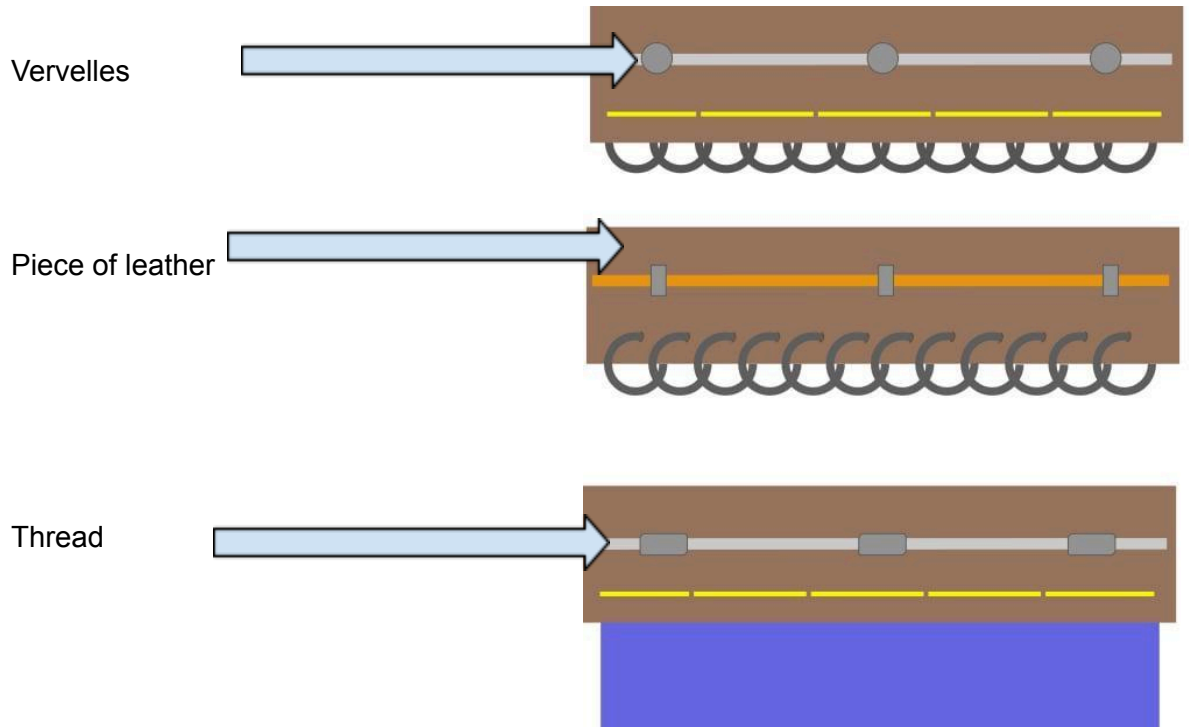
5.1. Historical Sources and Datation

From the first bascinets of the 14th century until the late armets, aventails were attached to helmets using a suspension system made of vervelles and leather. This system was used from the 14th to the 16th centuries.

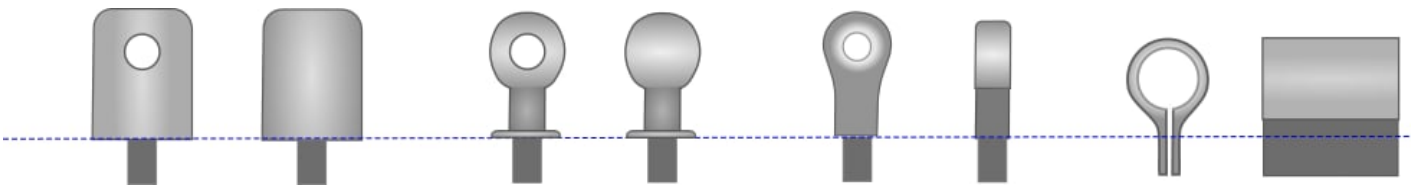It is **Approved** for 14th-century, transitional, and 15th-century armors.

Bascinet Royal Armouries, Leeds - 1380/1400 - Italy

5.2. Examples of suspension systems:

Vervelles

Piece of leather

Thread

Examples of vervelles

5.3. Specific Requirements

The suspension system consists of vervelles, a piece of leather, and thread.

- Vervelles: These are metal components with a hole, allowing threads (metal or leather) to pass through.
- Leather Piece: The aventail (chainmail neck guard) is attached to a leather piece, which can be riveted or sewn.
- Thread: The thread, made of either metal or leather (or materials that replicate their look), passes through the vervelles to secure the leather piece to the helmet.

Alternative Method for fabric aventail: the aventail can be sewn directly to the helmet's edge.

5.4. Materials Requirements

All materials used in the suspension system must comfort with the following documents
- Metal Parts: armors and weapons aesthetics and decoration.
- Fabric and Leather Parts: textiles and leather.

5.5. Examples of **Approved** Reproductions

Leather and vervelle system
Pictures from The Medieval Things©

6. Change log

Below, we will keep track of all the changes made over the lifetime of this document. This way, all our members can see how the documents are changing over time.

December-2024: -Add
Document has been created