

Almain Rivet Flemish or German c.1510-20
Church of St Mary the Virgin Mendelsham Suffolk.

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60 'Almain Rivet' Armour

Flemish or German, 1510–20

Steel and leather; h. 66 cm, w. 44 cm

Church of St Mary the Virgin, Mendlesham, Suffolk

This is a rare survival of a light half-armor worn by English infantry. In 1512 Guido Portinari, a Florentine merchant, supplied Henry VIII with '2000 complete harnesses called Almayne Ryvettes ... accounting always a salet, a gorjet, a breastplate, a backplate and a pair of splints for every complete harness' at 16

shillings a set (Brewer, et al., 1862–1932, I, p.415). This almain rivet is missing the sallet (open helmet, probably resembling a skull-cap), the gorget (collar) and the backplate.

The splints (arm-defences) are the most distinctive feature. Simple curved plates, connected by internal leathers, protect the outside of the arm. An ingeniously simple design – a slider in a slot in each wrist-plate extending plates to protect the hand as desired – replaces gauntlets.

KW

LIT. Blair 1958, p.119.

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