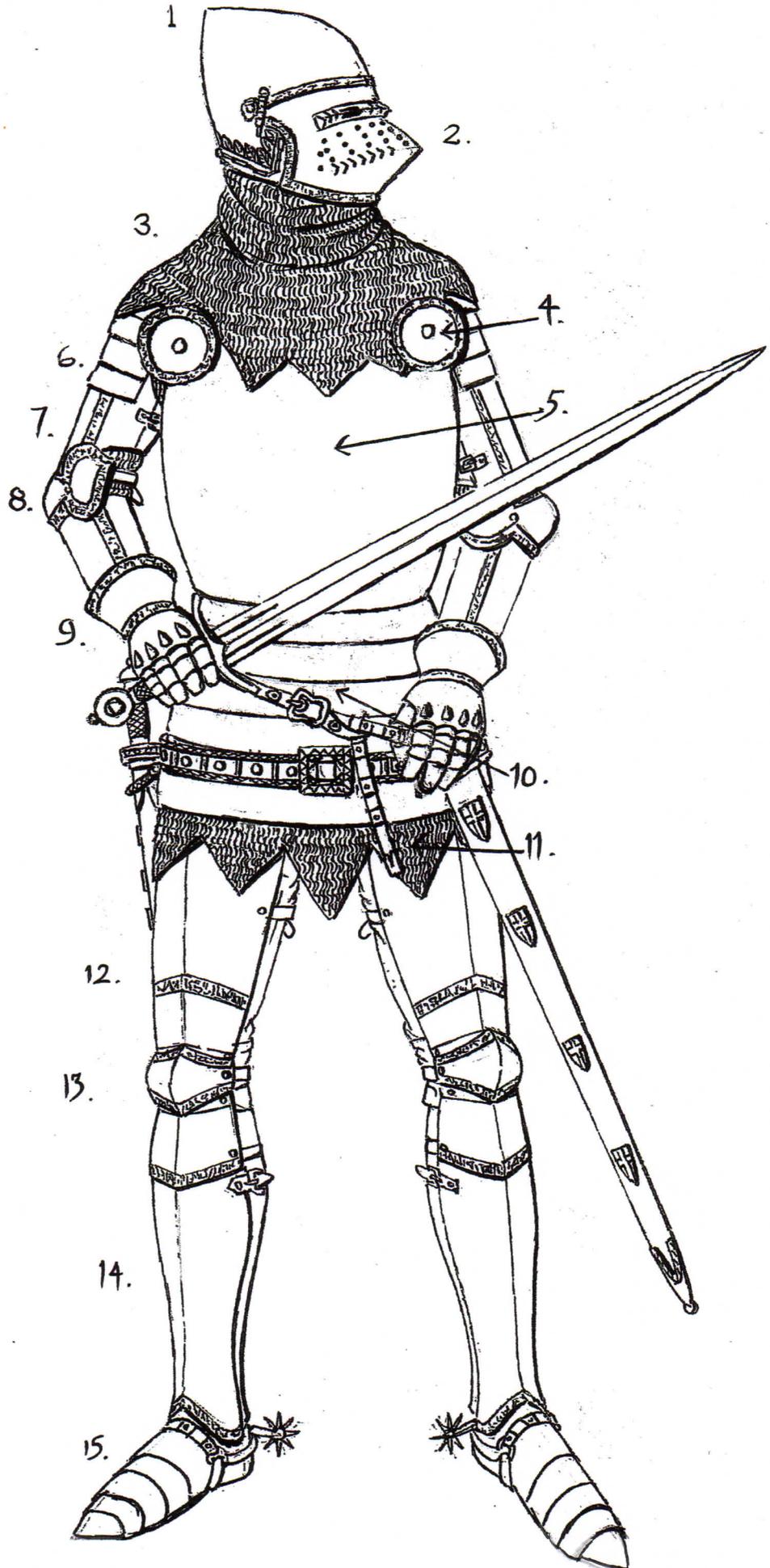


The parts of an armour

1. Helmet
2. Visor
3. Aventail
4. Besagew
5. Breastplate
6. Pauldron
7. Rerebrace
8. Couter
9. Gauntlet
10. Fauld
11. Mail skirt
12. Cuisse
13. Poleyn
14. Greave
15. Sabaton



The Parts of an armour

This particular armour dates from the years 1400 to around 1420, the years of King Henry Vth's campaigns to take control of France.

The function of an armour is to protect the body whilst still allowing freedom of movement in combat. All parts of the body, from head to foot are protected. In the period shown the armour was a combination of plate armour and mail. It was always known as 'mail' and not 'chain mail'. A padded garment would be worn under the mail, both for comfort and as additional protection.

The head is protected by a helmet with visor, in this period the Bascinet in various forms was worn as shown in the illustration. Later in the fifteenth century this style was replaced by other styles, in particular the Sallet in various forms.

In this figure it can be seen that mail protects the throat, groin and elbow, whilst additional discs of armour cover the armpits. The mail could be in the form of a mail shirt or perhaps mail attached to a padded 'Arming Doublet'.

As time passed armour became more plate than mail and the mail 'Aventail' was replaced by a 'Bevor' or 'Gorget' to protect the throat and steel 'Tassets' were attached to the 'Fauld' to give additional protection to the thighs.

Styles of armour differed, although they all served the same function, to protect. Italian armour was generally very rounded, whilst German armour had fluting, both being designed to deflect blows and missile strike. English or Flemish armour tended to combine features of both.

A good armour was expensive and was made to measure, the weight would be around 35 kilos, but this was distributed all over the body and was also flexible so movement would not be difficult. Nobleman were trained to wear and fight in armour from their early years and in fact today's soldiers carry heavier weights in combat.