

the world of the Medieval
N I G H T

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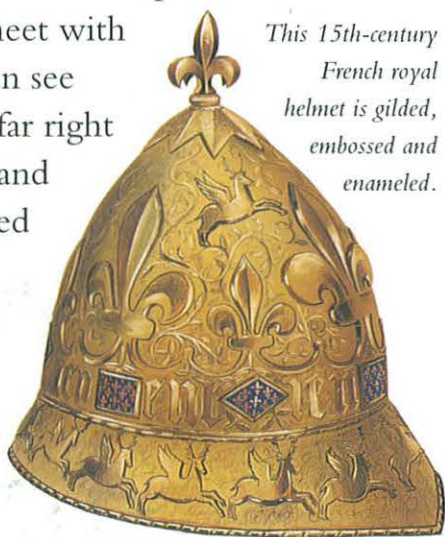
A K I N G A R M O R

Today, a modern armorer takes about four months to make a suit of armor. This busy Italian workshop could probably turn out six suits a day. After marking the steel with the shape needed

for the armor, the armorer cut the sheet with huge scissor-like snips, which you can see below. The charcoal furnace on the far right heated up the steel to make it softer and easier to work. The bellows were used

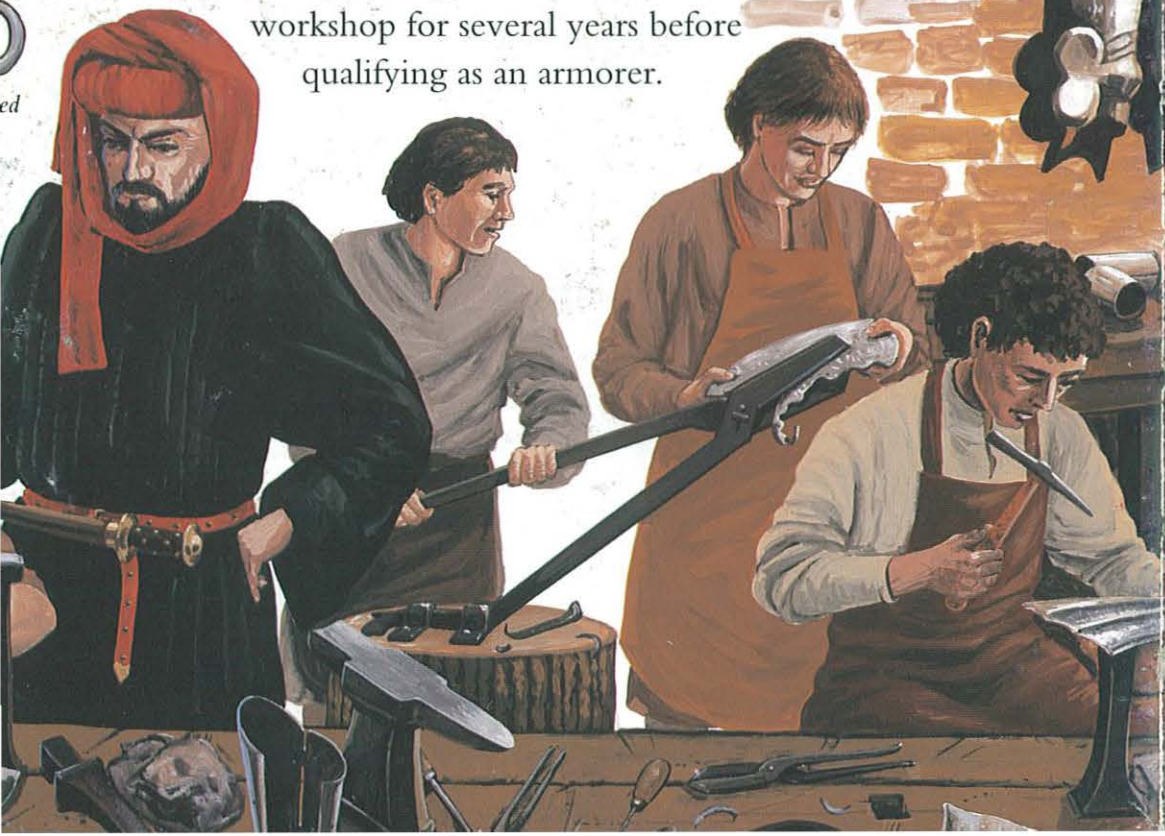
if more heat was needed. Next to the bellows the craftsman has been hammering a hot piece of steel over an anvil, which he has plunged into cold water to cool and, thereby, strengthen it. On the far right a

helmet is being 'drawn up' over a mushroom-headed stake pushed into a hole in a tree trunk. The man at the right of the table below is doing finer shaping, while the one on the far left is fitting pieces ready for riveting, leathering and lining. An apprentice trained in the workshop for several years before qualifying as an armorer.



This 15th-century French royal helmet is gilded, embossed and enameled.

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To make a sallet, a cold flat sheet was hammered down around the edges.



Hammering made the metal hard. They heated the metal to soften it.



The brim was beaten out and the edges turned over wire.



The polished helmet was fitted with a lining and chin strap.

Decoration

There was a whole team of people involved in making armor – armorers, finishers, polishers – and painters,

etchers and gilders who decorated the armor. Some plate armor was painted, or colored blue by heating. The main edges

might be decorated with borders of copper, latten (a kind of brass), or a precious metal such as silver or gold. Sometimes designs were

engraved on these borders with a sharp point. By 1450 some designs were etched in with acid, and occasionally decorated with gold.

