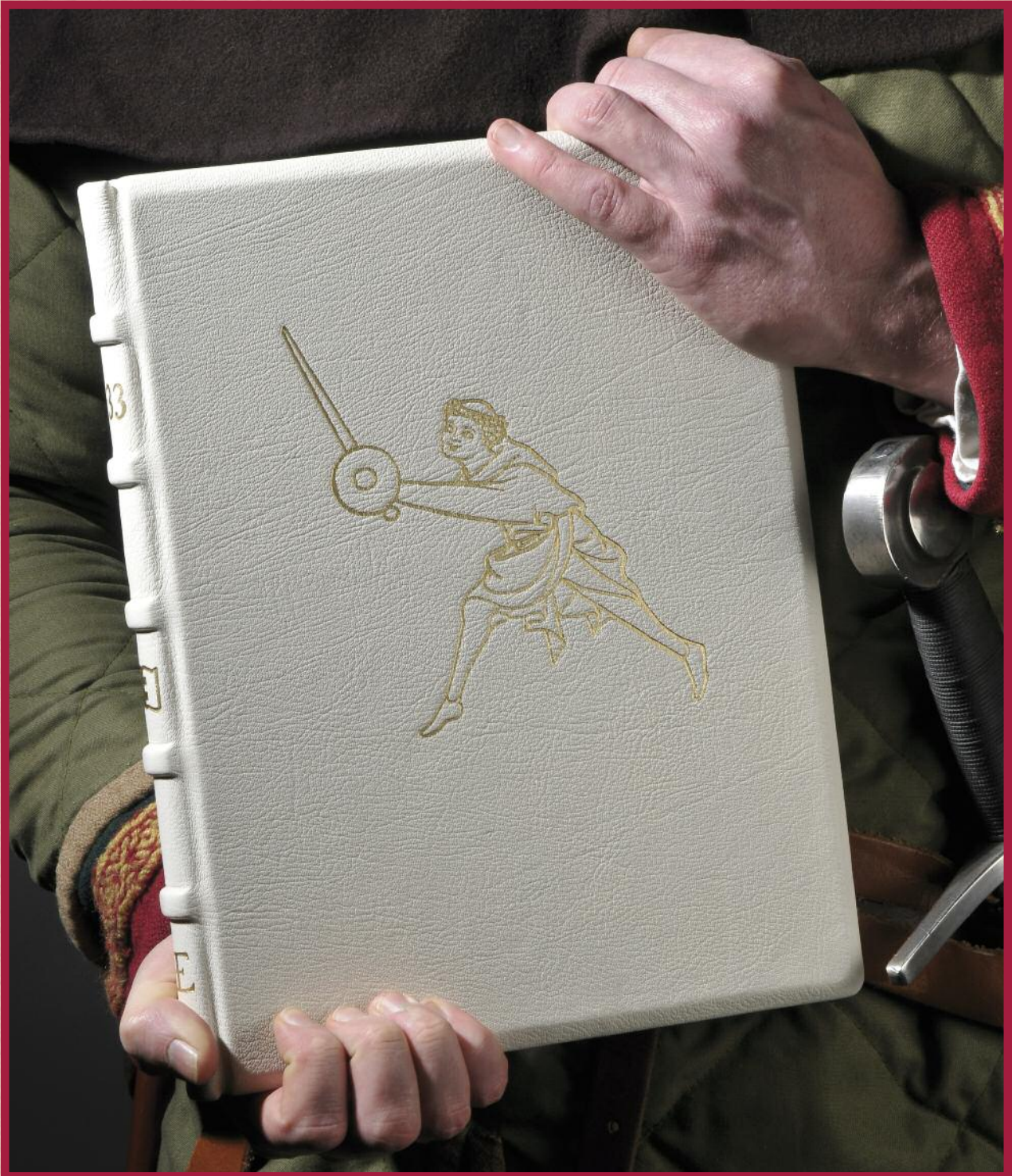


THE ILLUMINATED FIGHTBOOK

ROYAL ARMOURIES MANUSCRIPT I.33



A unique opportunity to acquire a copy of this rare and beautiful manuscript published for the first time in a limited edition.

THE ILLUMINATED FIGHTBOOK

Royal Armouries manuscript I.33, also known as the Tower Fechtbuch or the Walpurgis Manuscript, is the oldest known manual of swordsmanship in the western canon and one of the oldest in the world. The manuscript comprises 64 pages of approximately 30 x 23 cm, each richly illustrated, depicting a priest instructing a scholar and describing, with text and verse, a system of combat with the sword and buckler (a small round shield). Beginning with a few remarks on the art and illustrations of the seven basic guards it then proceeds to depict some 38 combat sequences.

The text is in Latin with some technical terms in German. The commentaries describe the action, discuss alternative options and offer general pointers to the budding swordsman. In fact there are more than 38 sequences as the alternative moves in the text expand the range of many of the set pieces.

Today the practice of historical martial arts is more popular than ever as increasing numbers of scholars and enthusiasts seek to rediscover and reinterpret the self-defence and fighting skills of the past. As the oldest manuscript of this type I.33 is therefore of great significance to practitioners, depicting a complex and sophisticated tradition of personal defence and combat sport.

In this year of Olympic swordsmanship the manuscript is being loaned for exhibition to the Wallace Collection in London. In preparation for display I.33 has been conserved and rebound, presenting the Royal Armouries with an opportunity to photograph the manuscript and to produce a top quality facsimile volume of this stunning manuscript and most sought after of fightbooks. The funds raised will be used to maintain and develop the Royal Armouries' collections.





THE 2012 PUBLICATION

The Royal Armouries have teamed up with specialist publishers of military manuscripts Extraordinary Editions to produce a full-size facsimile of the manuscript in a limited edition. Each copy of the manuscript will come complete with a companion volume containing a full transcription and translation of every page and a new introduction by Dr Jeffrey L. Forgeng.

Dr Forgeng is the Paul S. Morgan Curator at the Higgins Armory Museum in Worcester, Massachusetts. He rediscovered the manuscript lying almost unknown in the Royal Armouries' library at the Tower of London and set about translating it. He became the world's foremost authority on the manuscript and his original work published in 2003 sold out quickly and has been sought after ever since. He now adds nearly a decade of research to that original text.

Each scanned image will be subject to a rigorous digital examination to ensure the best possible and most accurate reproduction of the original parchment pages in full colour. The final reprographics and printing will be done at the fine art department of Hampton Printing in Bristol.

The collated print will then be sewn and trimmed at our bindery, Ludlow Bookbinders, who have many decades of experience in original and replica bindings.

The original manuscript has been re-sewn onto soft leather tapes and rebound in a soft or semi-limp

vellum casing without boards in order to best protect the priceless pages of I.33 without putting any strain on the original material. While this is eminently suitable for the restoration it is not for everyday use.

Accordingly, and after extensive research and consultation, we have designed a replica fourteenth-century binding with a blocked leather spine with raised bands over wood/composite boards. This is not only to stay true to the style of the period but also to create a suitably robust binding that will ensure the longevity of your copy of the book.

The companion volume will be 24 x 17 cm and limp sewn with a card cover. The two volumes are designed to lay flat and with their matching pages open together to make it as easy as possible to match the transcription and translations and to interrogate the text.

Both volumes will be packaged in a burgundy buckram covered solander box. The companion volume will sit in a recess beneath the facsimile copy and the spine of the solander will have a simple leather label with I.33 gold blocked on it.



THE EXTRAORDINARY EDITIONS

Each copy of I.33 will be fully leather bound by hand in a superior weight Nigerian goat skin, featuring raised bands over wood composite boards. The boards are especially made to have the look and feel of a traditional binding without the associated problem of warping. The cover of the book will be embossed in gold with the figure of a swordsman taken from the manuscript, the spine embossed with I.33 and the logos of the Royal Armouries and Extraordinary Editions [as shown].

ONLY 750 COPIES WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE WORLDWIDE IN THREE EDITIONS.

THE SPONSORS EDITION

The project will be underwritten by 124 sponsors' copies available strictly on a first come first served basis at a special price of £600.

Each sponsor's book will be numbered and personalised with the name of the sponsor and a full list of all sponsors will be printed in all the editions. Limited to 124 copies at £600 plus £25 packing and delivery within mainland UK.

THE ROYAL ARMOURIES EDITION

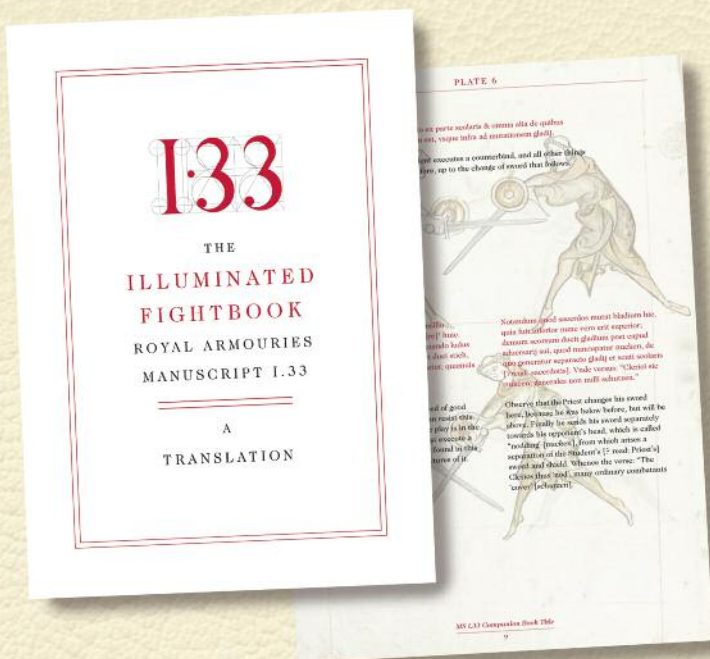
The Royal Armouries Edition will comprise the remaining 600 numbered copies available on a first come first served basis. Each copy will cost the full price of £750 plus £25 packing and delivery within mainland UK. [Overseas delivery costs available on application].

THE EXEMPLARY EDITION

The final 26 copies will make up The Exemplary Edition which will be especially bound in a cover of folded veined vellum over quarter sawn oak boards. The cover will be hand-tooled in gold and blind embossed with a fourteenth-century design and with a figure taken from the manuscript. The spine embossing will be as the other editions.

In addition, the companion volume will be quarter leather bound in calf over archival board covered in a heavyweight paper featuring a design from the original manuscript. The solander box for the Exemplary Edition will be designed to easily convert to a lectern for presentational use.

The Exemplary Edition is limited to 26 lettered copies at £1500 available on a first come first served basis and including delivery within the mainland UK.



TO ORDER

Extraordinary Editions can take payment by cheque – made out to – Extraordinary Editions Ltd. and sent to: PO BOX 66721, LONDON, NW5 9DW

Alternatively you can pay by debit or credit card by calling our order line +44[0] 20 7267 4547. You may also pay by bank to bank transfer. [details are on the attached order form].

Further information on the editions and their delivery costs as well as the terms and conditions for this offer may be found at:



www.illuminatedfightbook.co.uk or email mm@extraordinaryeditions.co.uk