

Swords/axes

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 23 Oct 1998

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Peter Stephenson — 23 Oct 1998, 07:50

"Mark Millman" wrote:

In England (and in the Germanic countries generally, to a lesser extent) the axe was favored; on the Continent (and especially in the Romance countries) the sword was preferred.

Just a PS: the long-standing tradition in England was that common people were beheaded by the axe, nobles had the right to the sword. Thus many of the more famous executions (such as Charles I) were by the sword. Traitors from William Wallace on, as is even more well-known, were hung, drawn and quartered.

None of this seems to be relevant to Urth, were you can have any weapon as long as it's the sword the executioner happens to be carrying --- except maybe it implies the sword is more pleasant. Yeah, right. I think the executioner in question made more difference: an inexperienced one took several blows to get the head off.

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Mark Millman — 23 Oct 1998, 19:17 · follows Peter Stephenson

On 23 October 1998 at 7:50 am GMT,

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Right you are, Peter. The sword, of course, is the more noble instrument, thus aristocrats and gentry "get" (oh, lucky folk) to have it used on them.

Part of the reason that the sword was preferred on the Continent, I think, is that commoners typically didn't have the right to be beheaded--they could, at best (and think of what those phrases imply), be hanged. That was certainly the case in France, and I believe it holds true for the rest of continental Europe. As Peter says, England didn't pre-emptively prohibit commoners from being beheaded. Lucky sods.

Mark Millman