

A half hour drive through the countryside brought us to a large quarry at Drügendorf (Upper (Malm) Jurassic, Kimmeridgian, 153 MYA). This fauna was similar to that of Gräfenberg, i.e. *Ataxioceras* and *Orthosphinctes* ammonites plus *Hibolites* belemnites, but instead of green, these were a stunning fire orange in color that provided an attractive contrast with the gray limestone matrix.

Brett and I entered the quarry late in the afternoon and only had about an hour to collect. We sniffed around for a bit before finding a rockslide of good matrix rich in orange ammonite fragments, and there was enough of it present to warrant our exclusive focus. So Brett took the top of the slide while I took the sharply angled slope.

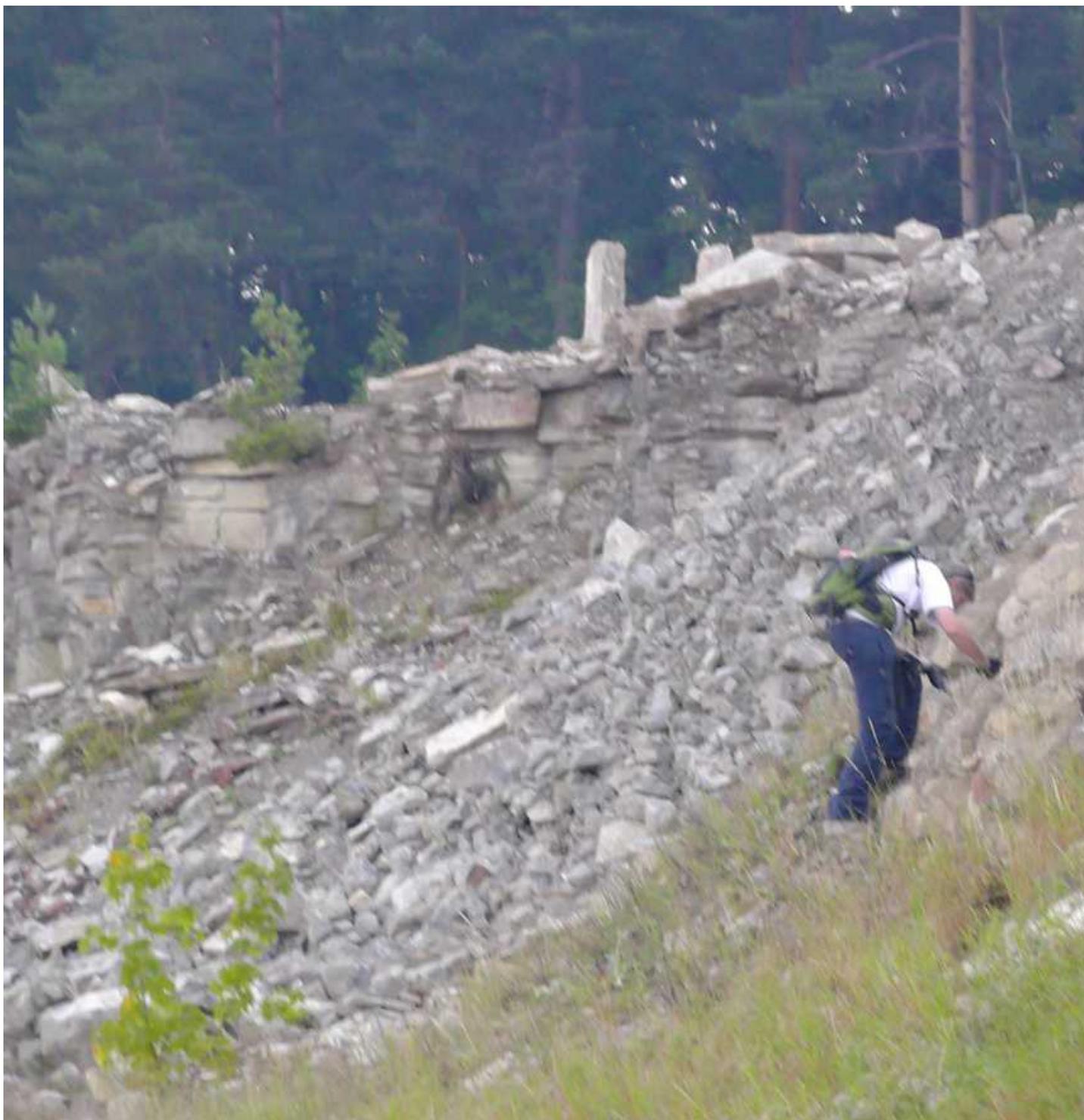


FIGS 650-654: Ms. Brett and the author deciding on an angle of approach to the Kimmeridgian age quarry at Drügendorf, this and next 4 pages (Site 570)









Our hammers and chisels happily rang out their tune and tempo until dusk, and in the process we hauled out a modest yet satisfying take of attractive ammonites up to perhaps 100 mm diameter. And thus concluded the collecting portion of our trip.



FIGS 655-663: Kimmeridgian age ammonites of the *Orthosphinctes Ataxioceras* spectrum, this and next 8 pages
(Site 570)



















FIGS 664-665: Kimmeridgian age belemnites *Hibolithes* sp., this and next page (Site 570)





FIG 666: Kimmeridgian age belemnites *Passaloteuthis* sp. (Site 570)

On the way back to Bamberg I opted to sample some of the different beverages available at the Agip gas station. Coffee cola was interesting....two flavors I really never thought of putting together. In my haste I grabbed what I thought was apple juice, but it had a distinctive flavor of something else I couldn't place..... "Alpinkrauten"??? One look at the label revealed that it was some sort of cabbage concoction, a flavor that I actually enjoyed.

So that sealed another day of adventure, and allowed us to turn our attention to non paleo adventures for the remainder of the trip.

September 18, 2011: Getting Medieval

Our decision to pack all of our last fossil sites into Saturday turned out to be a fortuitous decision as Sunday turned out to be a splendidly miserable, cold and rainy day that afforded a perfect ambiance for us to explore some medieval history in the northern Bayern country. Upon Wolfgang Dietz' suggestion, we headed 45 KM north of Bamberg to visit Veste Coburg, a huge brown medieval fortress set high on a ridge overlooking the town of Coburg. As we walked into the fortress we could envision the bone chilling, dreary dankness of living there centuries ago in the cold and rainy German winter, which I'm sure can be quite bitter.



FIGS 667-685: Veste Coburg castle 45 minutes north of Bamberg, this and next 18 pages



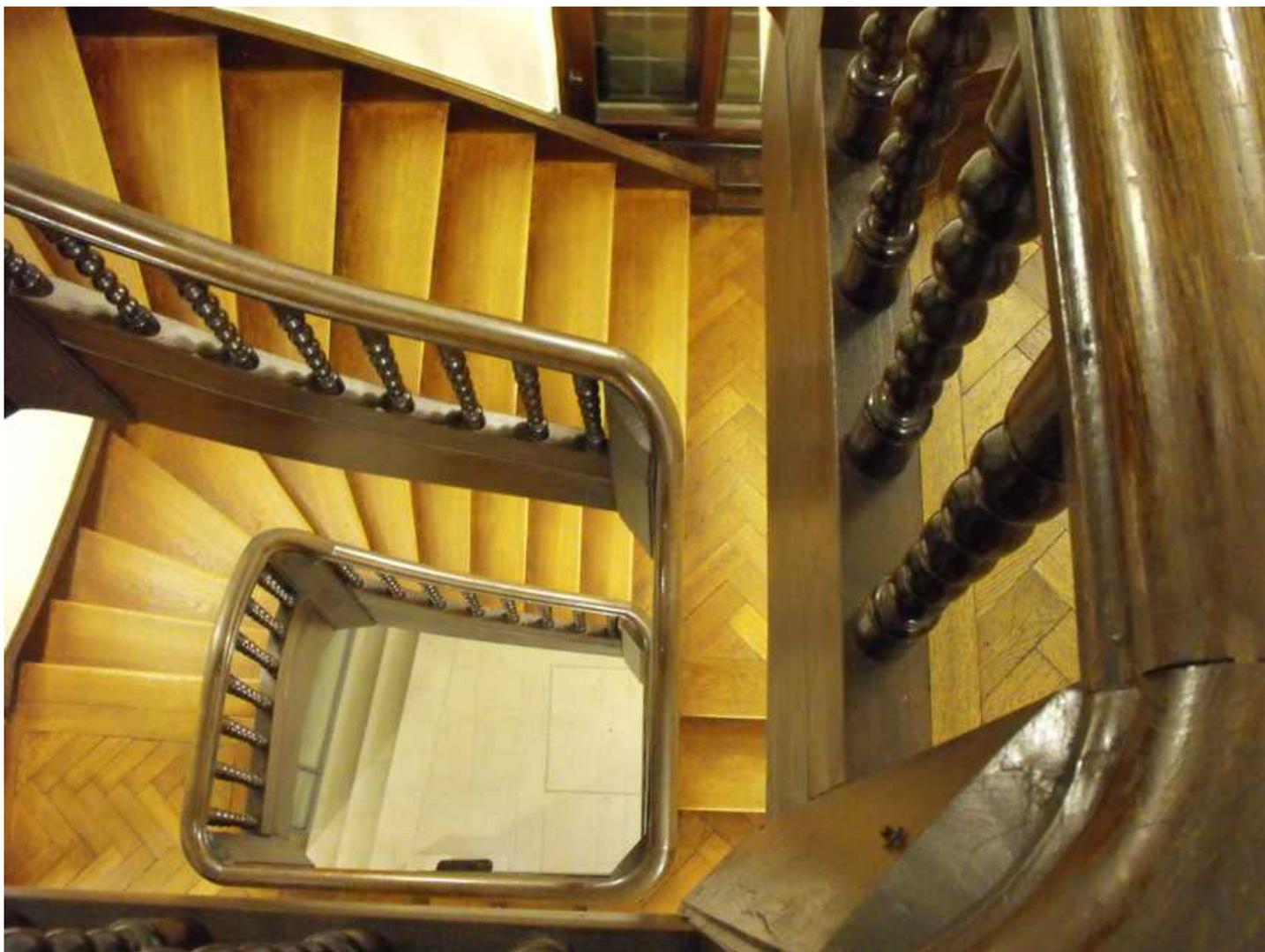








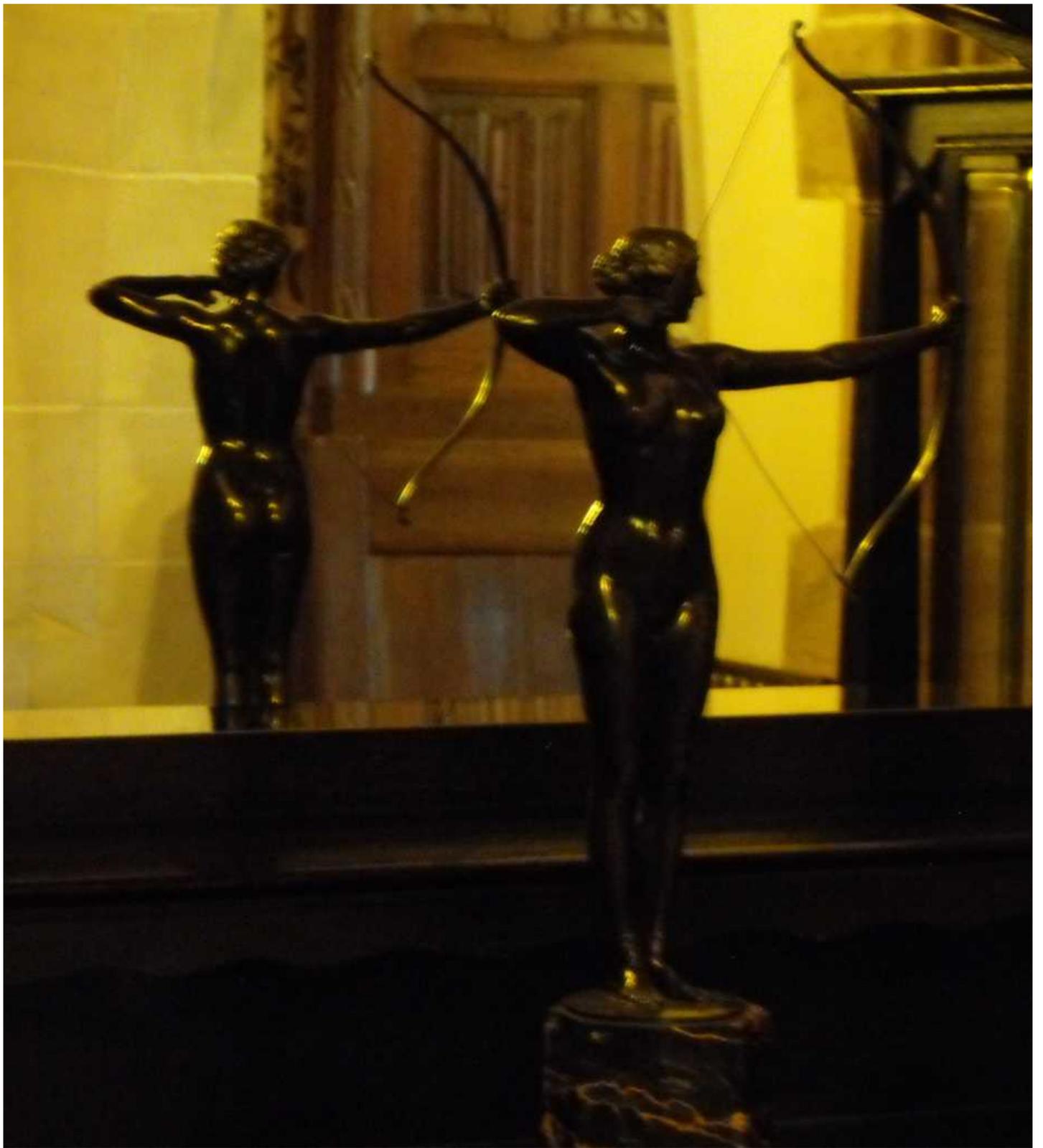




















Sartt Die Frau die weil ich wußt
Das ich zu Vogelen Habt Groß Lust
Der halb Sindt auch Alhie Beschert
Die besten Soael auß dem Herdt.







This place had all the attributes of a medieval castle I was looking for....architecture that was added onto over the centuries as the fortress expanded, archer's slits in the walls and parapets, a massive, unscalable surrounding wall, then inside displays of fine china, glass, paintings and artwork. But when Wolfgang mentioned a "good medieval weapons museum", I was not envisioning something of this magnitude and splendor.

One huge hall was dedicated to nothing but matchlock and wheel lock firearms and crossbows, all with intricately carved stocks of wood or ivory, and in some cases metal. Actions were intricately crafted works of art in their own right. To see endless display cases of this stuff was fascinating for a weapons buff like myself. Then there were cannons, swords, lances, hunting knives, even antiquated sketches of wild boar hunting scenes. I felt right at home! Curiously though, Ms. Brett took the time to enjoy the waiting area while I painstakingly scrutinized what must have seemed like every firearm...twice.



FIGS 686-696: A few of the crossbows and firearms from the Veste Coburg collection...just a small subset of the massive medieval arsenal on display there, this and next 10 pages





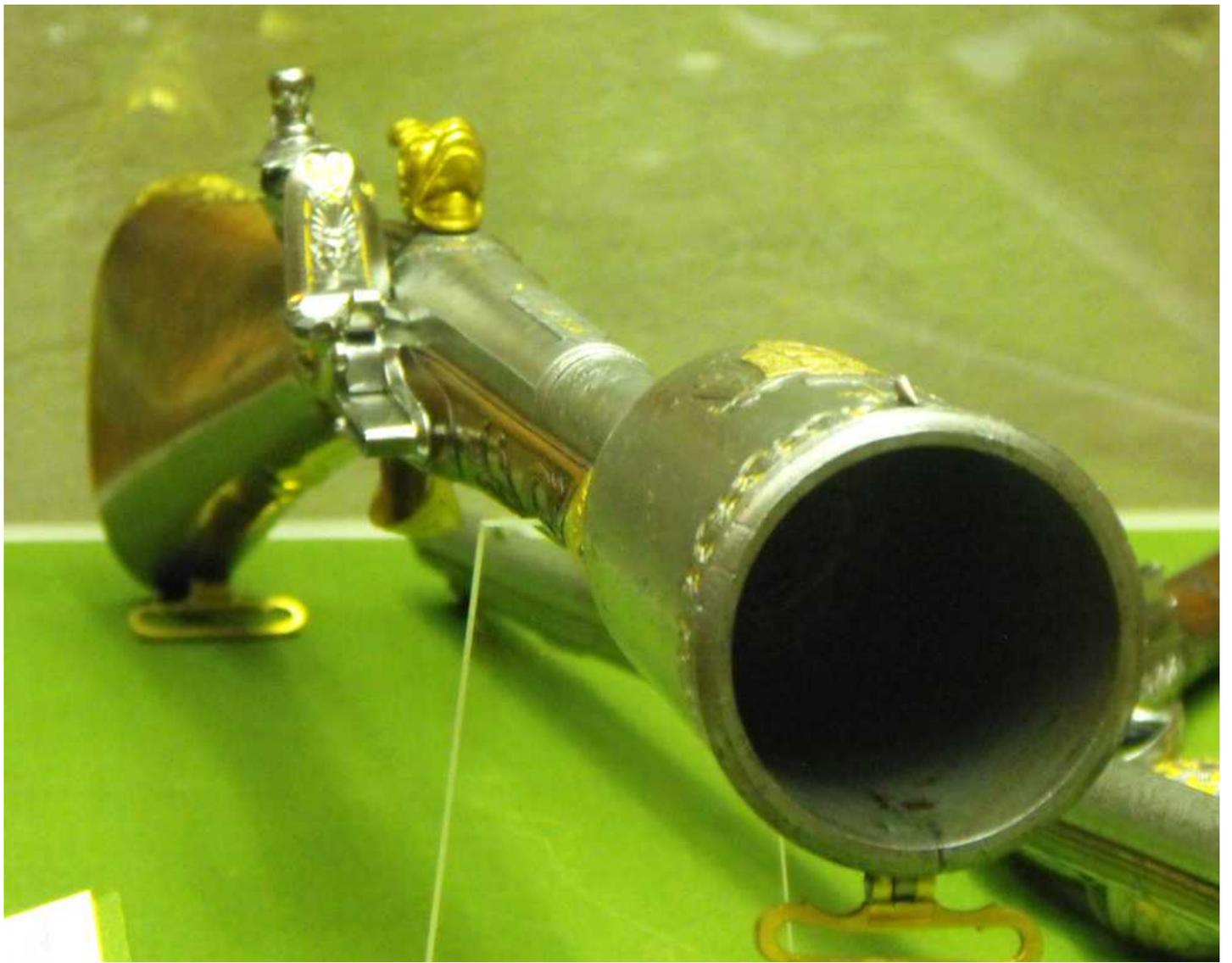












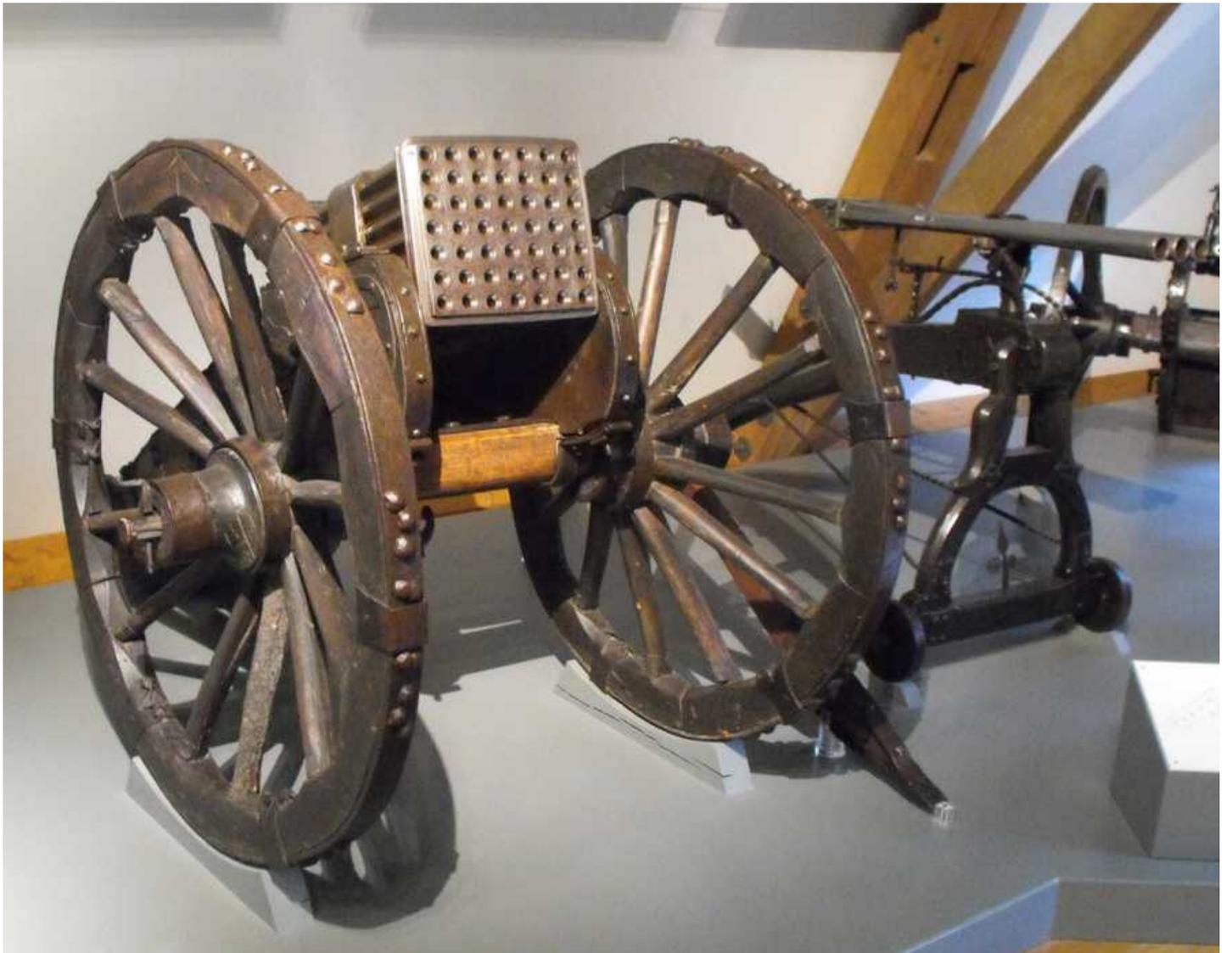




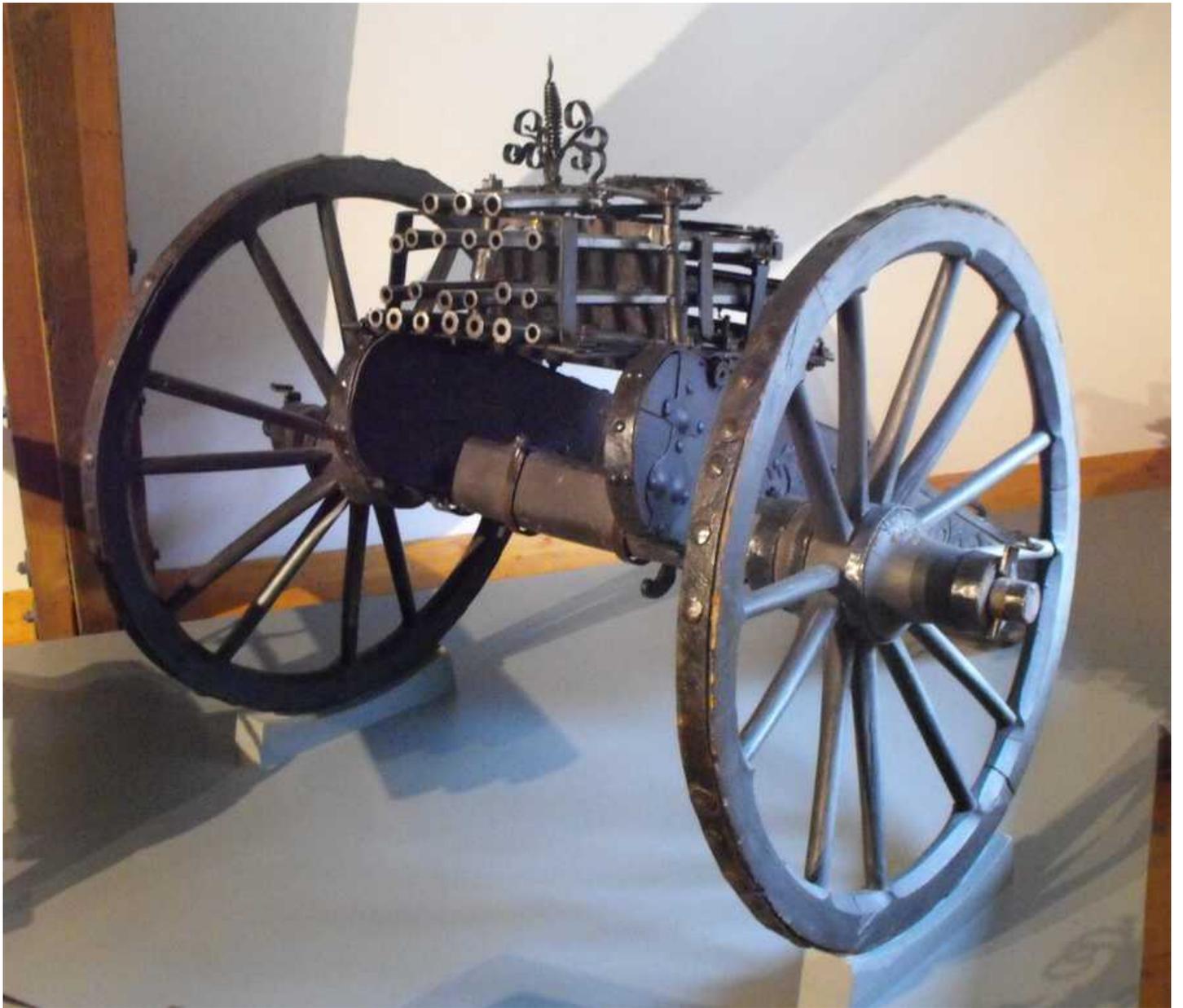
FIG 697: Medieval boar hunting scene



FIG 698: Darwin awards



FIGS 699-703: Cannons and rolling artillery, this and next 4 pages



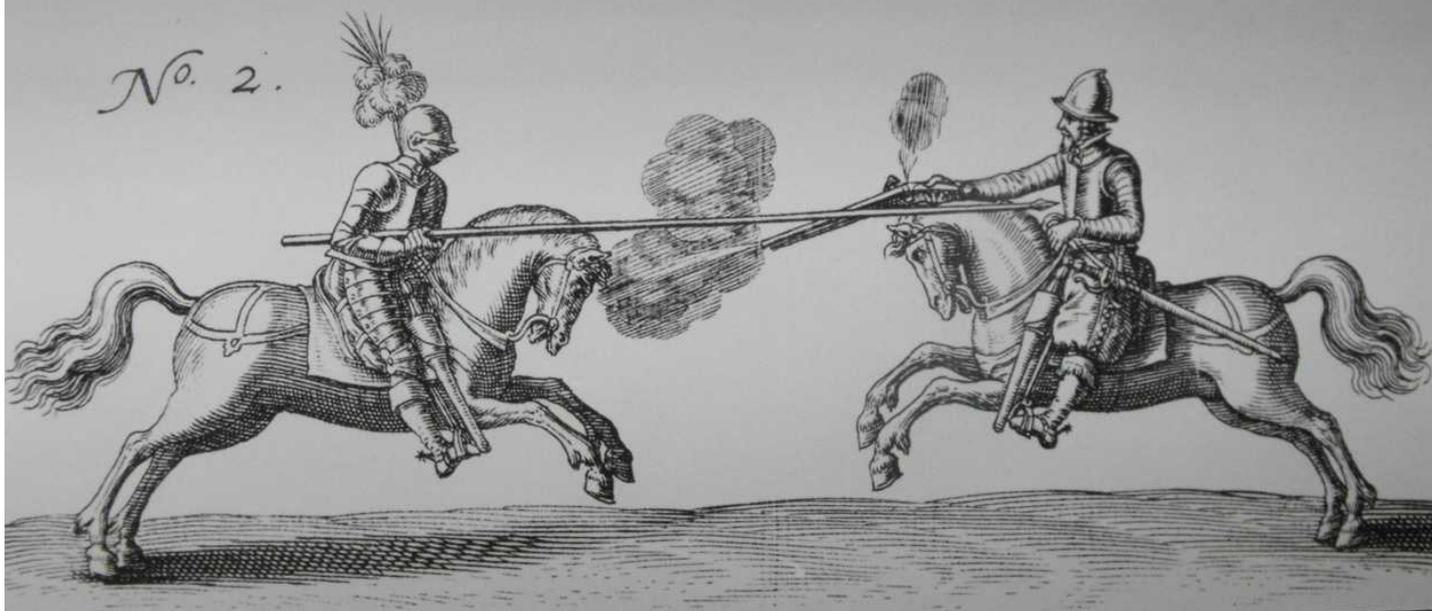








Figur: 3. Par: 1. Cap: 1.



FIGS 704-706: Perils of medieval warfare, this and next page

Wietwol ich bin voll streich vñ stich/
Zermorscht/verwundet iämerlich/

Doch hoff ich gott/kunstlich artzney/
Schylhans der werd mir helfē frey.



Then came the hall of armor....wow! Intimidatingly huge collection. There were seemingly hundreds of suits of armor there, both for the average warrior and the elite nobleman who probably never actually saw battle. Some chest shields were dented, a way of proof testing with a bullet fired into it to show its battle worthiness. Even suits of armor for children....can't say many medieval folks did that for their kids.



FIGS 707-719: Armor this and next 12 pages







... nicht mittels Riemen, sondern mit
... richtung direkt an der
... schuhan mon-



















Proof tested



FIGS 720: Punishments of the times

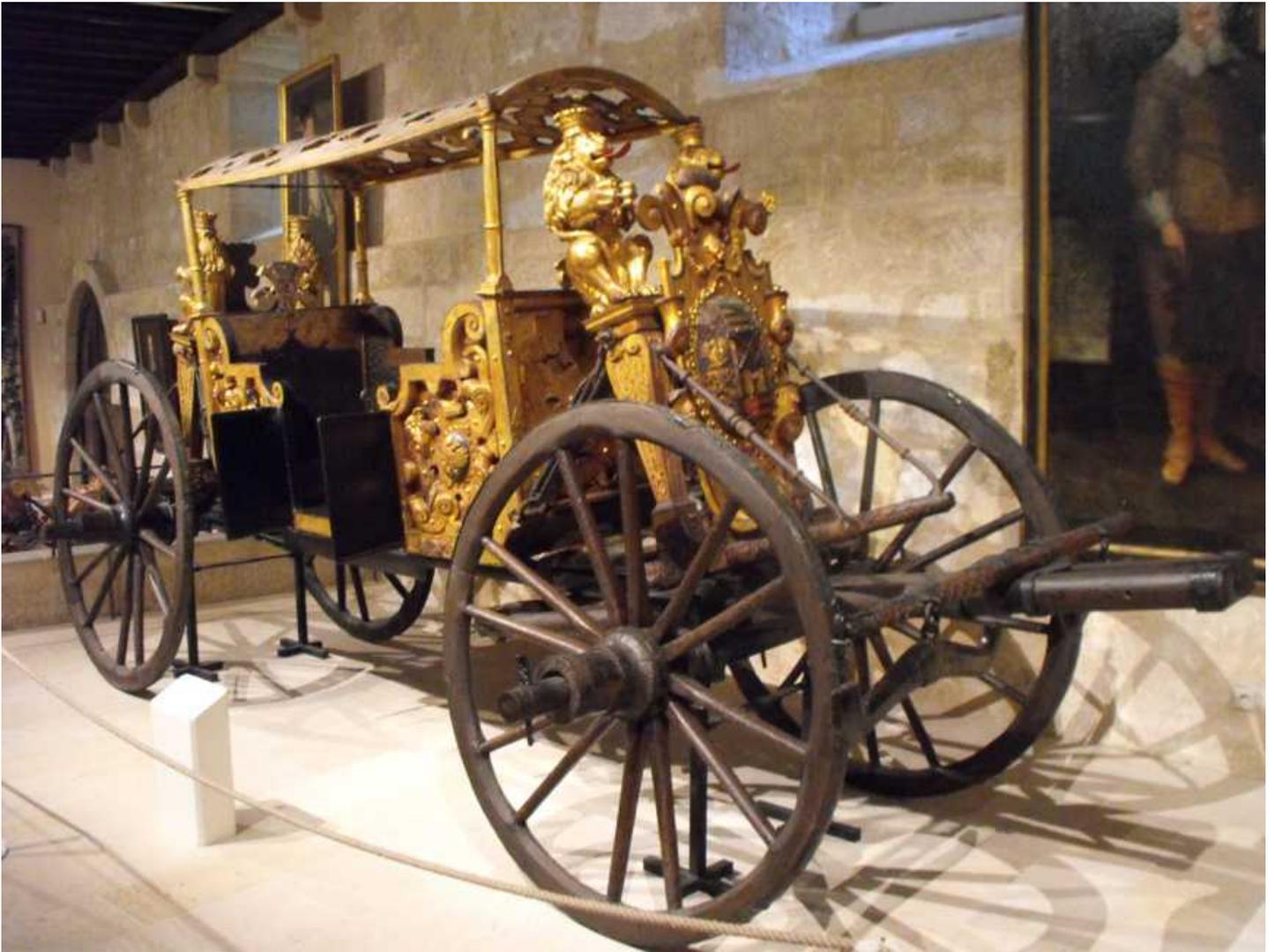


FIG 721: Life and death of the times

Again the armor artistry was superb, with bimetallic construction and inlays and patterns.....there were some truly skilled experts and blacksmiths back then fashioning such works of beauty with quite basic tools and methods by today's

standards...skill seemed to be a bigger part of the equation that in fabricating things today. There were more lances, even suits of armor sitting atop armored horses. The display of shields was interesting....some had signs of use in battle.

Another hall had a very cool display of 16th century "Prunkwagens" and ornate jousting sleds...I've never heard of such a thing. However, they were marvelous to observe. Again, mighty skilled artisans back in the day...



FIGS 722-727: Carriages and jousting sleds, this and next 5 pages

Prunkwagen um 1586

benutzt zur ersten Hochzeit (1586) des Herzogs Joh. Casimir v. Sachsen-Coburg (1564-1633) mit Anna, Tochter des Kurfürsten August von Sachsen







The Queen: 18th C.
The Queen's Chair: 18th C.



Tabl. Polbranon
Regione
di Lombardia

Its easy to work up a meat and taters appetite in this cold weather, so we headed back to a nearby berg and found a seat at a Gästhaus (inn) for lunch. Continuing my sampling of local favorites, I got the Haxe, a huge hunk of bone-in ox shank with a double helping of KloÙe or potato dumplings and sauerkraut on the side. We finished up with another raspberry sundae...like I needed that!

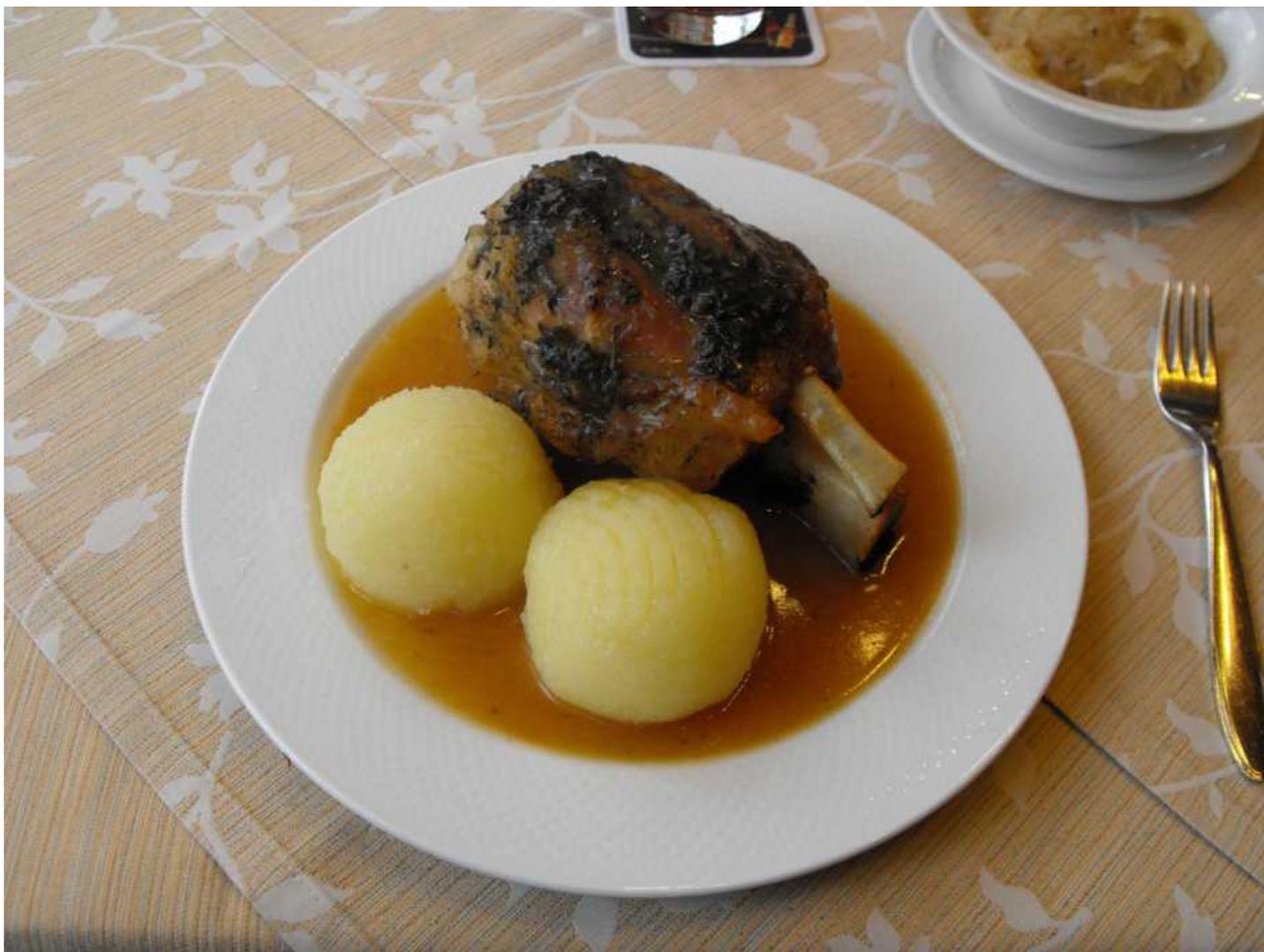


FIG 728: Something German looking for my friends and family



FIGS 729-730: We loved the castles and churches of the Bayern country





FIGS 731-732: Fattening myself up with more local fare ... Coburg area



Back at the hotel, a nap for Brett afforded me some time to whack on rocks and reduce weight for shipping. Later, we found historic downtown Bamberg to be quite beautiful with classic German architecture flanking the Donau Fluße (Danube River). Such a clean, wonderful town with a vibrant history. The town was safe enough that women were walking and biking around alone at night....always a good barometer of safety. Lots of walkers and window shoppers were out on a Sunday night even though all the shops were closed.



FIGS 733-738: Beautiful downtown Bamberg, this and next 5 pages











German restaurants differ from American restaurants in a very important way, in my opinion. I don't see enough American restaurants trying to be the best in class; instead it seems to be a game of maximum profit at minimum effort, leading to unimpressive concoctions of the cheapest ingredients thrown together with little pride, with fast food chains making up a huge segment of the restaurant market. In sharp contrast, nearly every German restaurant we visited seemed to be a one-off, some a couple hundred years old, all serving wonderful offerings of home cooked quality fare, served at roughly the same price as dinner out in the U.S. (8-12 Euro per plate generally). I much prefer the latter.

OK time again for another local Franconian favorite for dinner.....Karpfen for me, or whole fried carp encrusted in Bier dough, something generally not considered conventional tablefare in the U.S. The Kartoffelsalat was a wonderful accompaniment. Then the Apfel Struedel mit Vanillæis...yummy! The restaurant was seated in a building built in 1300

A.D....gotta love the history of this place! Fortunately Bamberg dodged most of the Allied bombing runs of WWII, leaving us kühl venues like this to enjoy.



FIGS 739-740: Enjoying Karpfen für Abendessen, this and next page



We closed out our long day with a few rounds of air hockey at the bowling alley attached to our hotel...it got a bit competitive and at one point I ricocheted the puck right through Ms. Brett's lovely flaxen mane....good thing we stopped before someone got hurt! Bowling seems to be a bit 70s in the U.S., but still a target pursuit in Germany. I liked this and found it to be nostalgic. What a wonderful, full day!

September 19, 2011: On to Nürnberg

Monday brought another day for us to explore non-paleo things after we picked up a trunk sized within airline regulations and packed up as many fossils as could be shoved into the trunk and 3 suitcases so as to balance out a hair under 50 LBS each.

Pressing south, we opted to explore historical downtown Nürnberg (Nuremberg to us Yankees). Being Hitler's nerve center during WWII, the Allies had bombed much of the town into oblivion. I pointed out evidence of this to Ms. Brett: many buildings in Bayern town centers share walls, and juxtaposition of an old building next to a newer building sharing a wall to me suggested that bomb damage had demolished the adjacent building.

Our first stop was a point of interest of Brett's choice, the Dokumentation Center at what was formerly known as Kongress Halle, part of the Nazi rally grounds situated across a lake from the former Zeppelin Field, the stadium with the huge swastika that the Allies blew up at the end of the war. Lots of history; quite somber, yet worthy of our exploration and understanding on this trip.

On a lighter note, our venture toward the town's center dropped us right in the big middle of "Altstadtfest" (Old Town Fest) where we enjoyed the myriad food booths....this was a harbinger of bigger and better things to come.



FIGS 741-743: Scenes of beautiful downtown Nürnberg, this and next 2 pages





I'm not much of a trinket collector while traveling, but I will pick up a few items of meaning and value from time to time. On that note, we dropped by a coin shop where I picked up some 100 year old German Münzen (coins), specifically hundred year old silver 2 and 3 Deutsch Mark coins for Weston and me plus we bought a few recent proof sets of both Euro and Deutsch Mark denominations. This plays into a childhood interest of mine that my son Weston now enjoys as well...numismatica.

With the trip winding down now, we meandered down to a nice Gästhaus at Hallbergmoos, situated very close to the Hans Joseph Strauss Flughafen (airport). We walked next door that night to another Gästhaus, the one with the Rolls Royce on display...outside of my budget, except for dinner! There we enjoyed Spätzle mit Kasse (basically a German version of macaroni and cheese) followed by hot cheese struedel mit sahn (whipped cream).

I dozed off that night with a dose of culture shock....watching Japanese martial arts movies with German subtitles....

September 20, 2011: A Day in München

Now soaking up as much local history as possible from a non-paleo angle, I let Ms. Brett decide what points of interest we would visit on as much of the trip as possible when we weren't collecting. She had been stationed in Germany and other parts of Europe over the years and traveled extensively, but having never visited a concentration camp memorial, she expressed an interest in visiting Dachau, just northwest of Munich and maybe 35 KM from our Gästhaus.

Overcast skies that Tuesday morning seemed well suited for the somber overtone of this tragically historic site. I was not aware until visiting that not only thousands of Jews met their demise here, but also great numbers of gypsies and political prisoners as well between 1933 to 1945 under the guise of “work re-education camp”. Fashioned from a defunct munitions factory, Dachau was converted and expanded to serve as the archetypical concentration camp of the time, with others modeled after it both in layout and management.

I consider myself a student of history and strive to learn all the chapters. Many countries have highs and lows in their history, the U.S. included. Taking it all in perspective, I love Germany and would certainly return.



FIGS 744-746: Monument at the former Dachau concentration camp northwest of Munich, this and next 2 pages





From there we dumped the Mietwagen back at the Flughafen and noticed that we had covered 4241 KM total in our 2 week tour of Europe. Time to check out the urban scene... we jumped on the public rail system which expedited us quite efficiently to downtown München, Thereissenstrasse to be exact.

We took the subway escalator back up to ground level, dumping us directly into the midst of Oktoberfest! The scene was shockingly overstimulating, with lights, sounds, music, the smell of food, a sea of people moving in all directions.....I had never experienced festive chaos of this magnitude before and in a strange way it struck me as overpowering as did the opening scene of Saving Private Ryan, without the gunfire of course!



FIGS 747-757: Ms. Brett and the author enjoying scenes of Oktoberfest, this and next 10 pages













Bier Tent









We visited mid day on family day, and there were plenty of adult rides, pretzel stands, Bier and food tents, men, women and children in their Lederhosen. Bier was coursing through the veins of the entire monster called Oktoberfest. We visited several tents and although it was family day as mentioned, there were enough Bier enthusiasts to foster an atmosphere where dancing on tables was completely acceptable and encouraged.

One tightly wound roller coaster type ride was Ms. Brett's idea, so we jumped on, although her screams suggested that perhaps this was not the best pick of rides for her. It was such a hectic ride that for a while I thought it was just some kid screaming out of control only to realize it was poor Brett right next to me. Admittedly that ride wasn't very good for my stomach either, and since I'm not a drinker this was intended to be more of a culinary outing for me, so I opted for just one last ride before the marathon food binge was to begin.

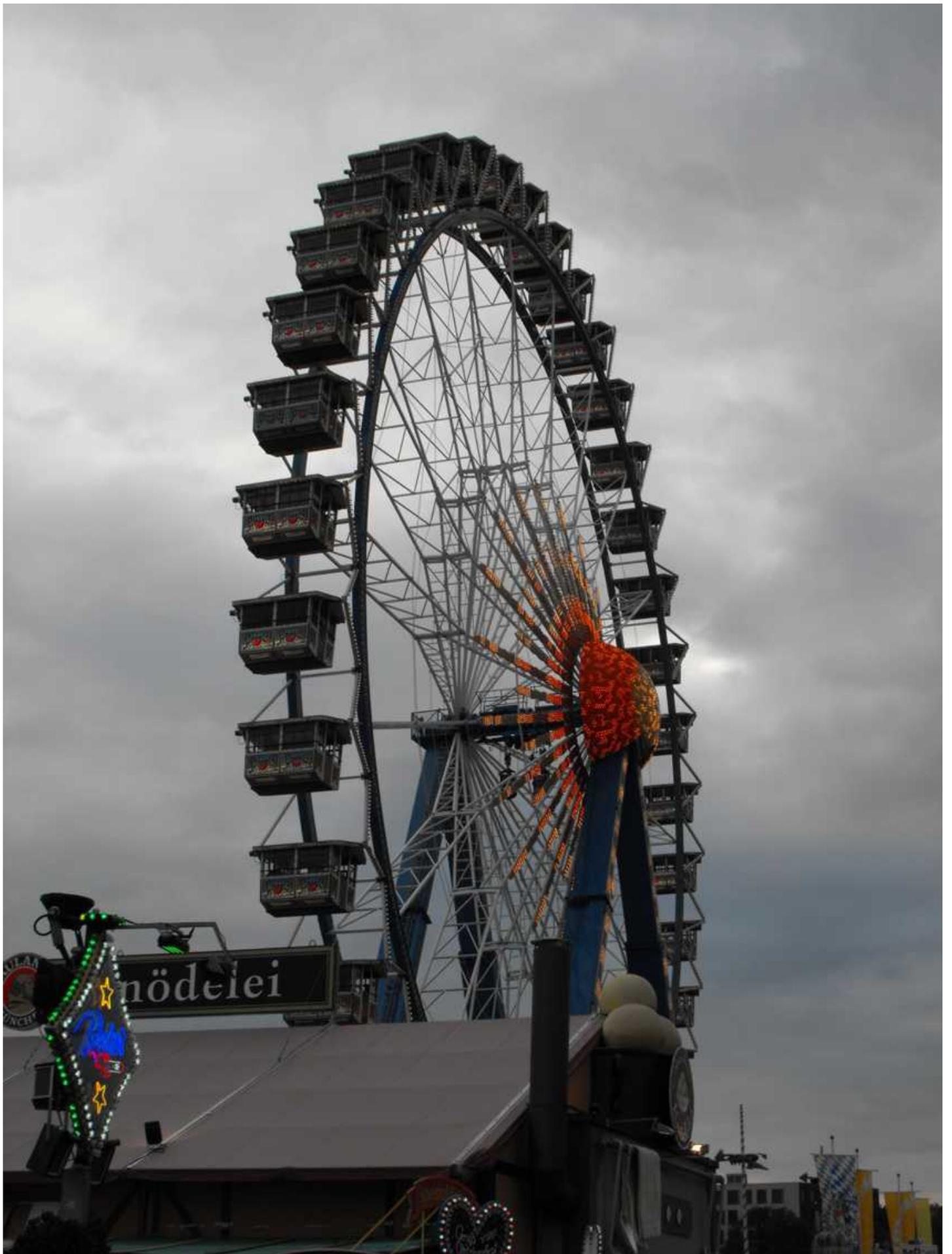


FIGS 758-762: More Oktoberfest, this and next 4 pages

















Brett would not get on the 100 foot high spinning swing with me, so I went up and watched her far below as I surveyed the grounds from my lofty, whirling parapet. Even with a wool jacket on, it was quite cold and windy at altitude for this summertime Texan.

With all that foolishness out of my system, once my stomach stopped spinning, I chased down a fried pork sandwich, chased it with a fried Haxe Semmeln (ox meat) sandwich, Bratwurst, Haselnüsse (hazelnut) ice cream, and candy coated Haselnüssen. Hey, while at the biggest, best festival in the industrialized world I figured a world class belly ache was in order.

While American festivals often feature games of darts and shooting hoops, German festival games gravitated heavily toward Schützen.....again, these people were my kind of people!







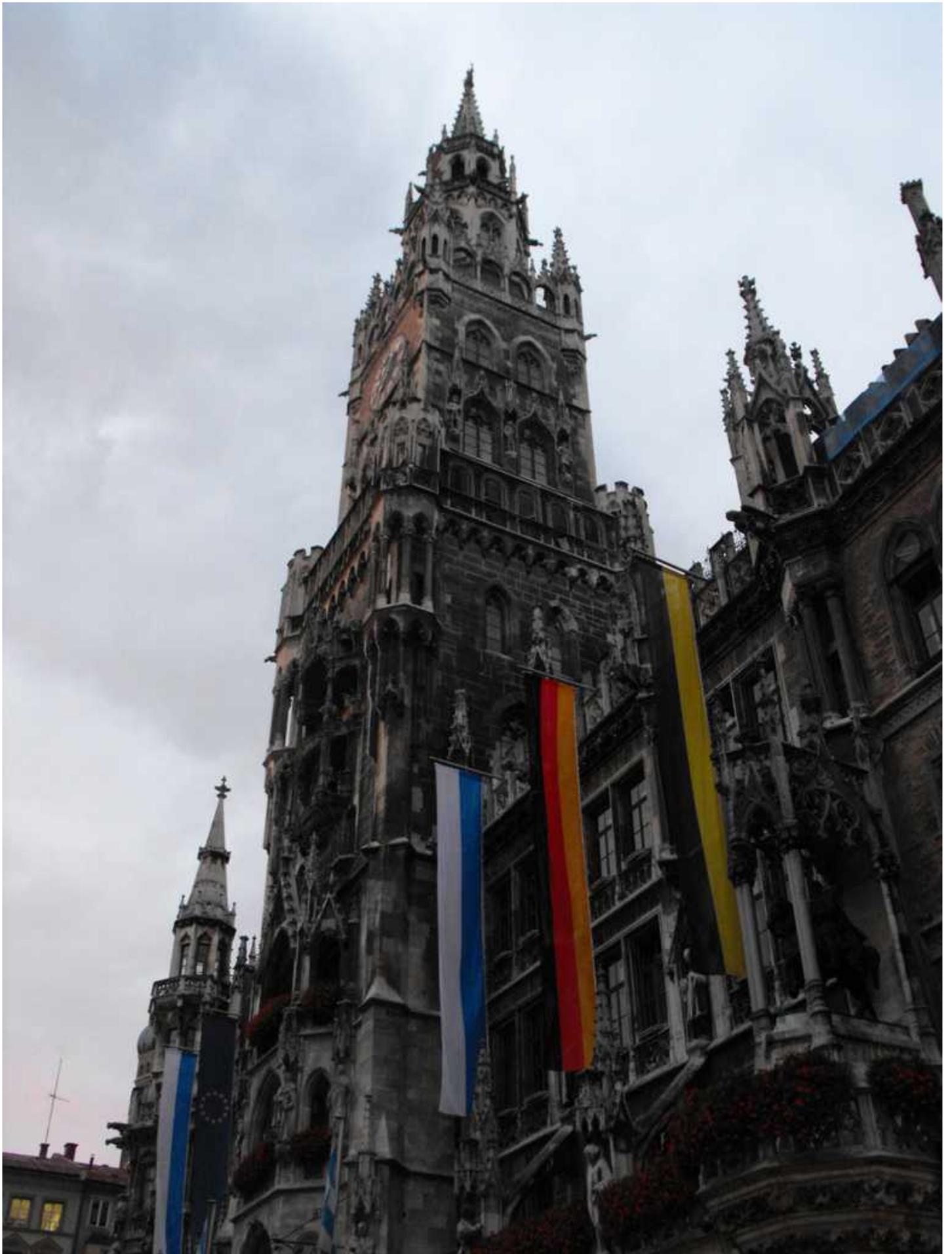




With all that hyperfestivity behind us, and with the requisite souvenir t-shirts and mugs and so forth in hand, we ducked back down into the subway tunnel and caught a ride to the München town center for a relaxed change of pace. There we found beautiful old buildings with flood lights highlighting them against the night sky. We enjoyed the varied street performers we ran into, stores, restaurants, and musicians.

After relaxing at an outdoor restaurant where we enjoyed one last raspberry sundae, we were caught off guard by a couple really good piece classical music quartets and quintets playing on various street corners. A day full of depressing concentration camps, Oktoberfest, food, music, walking, looking, and absorbing fortunately wore us out equally, and we agreed it was time to bring our final day of real vacation to a close.









Freibier gibt's morgen



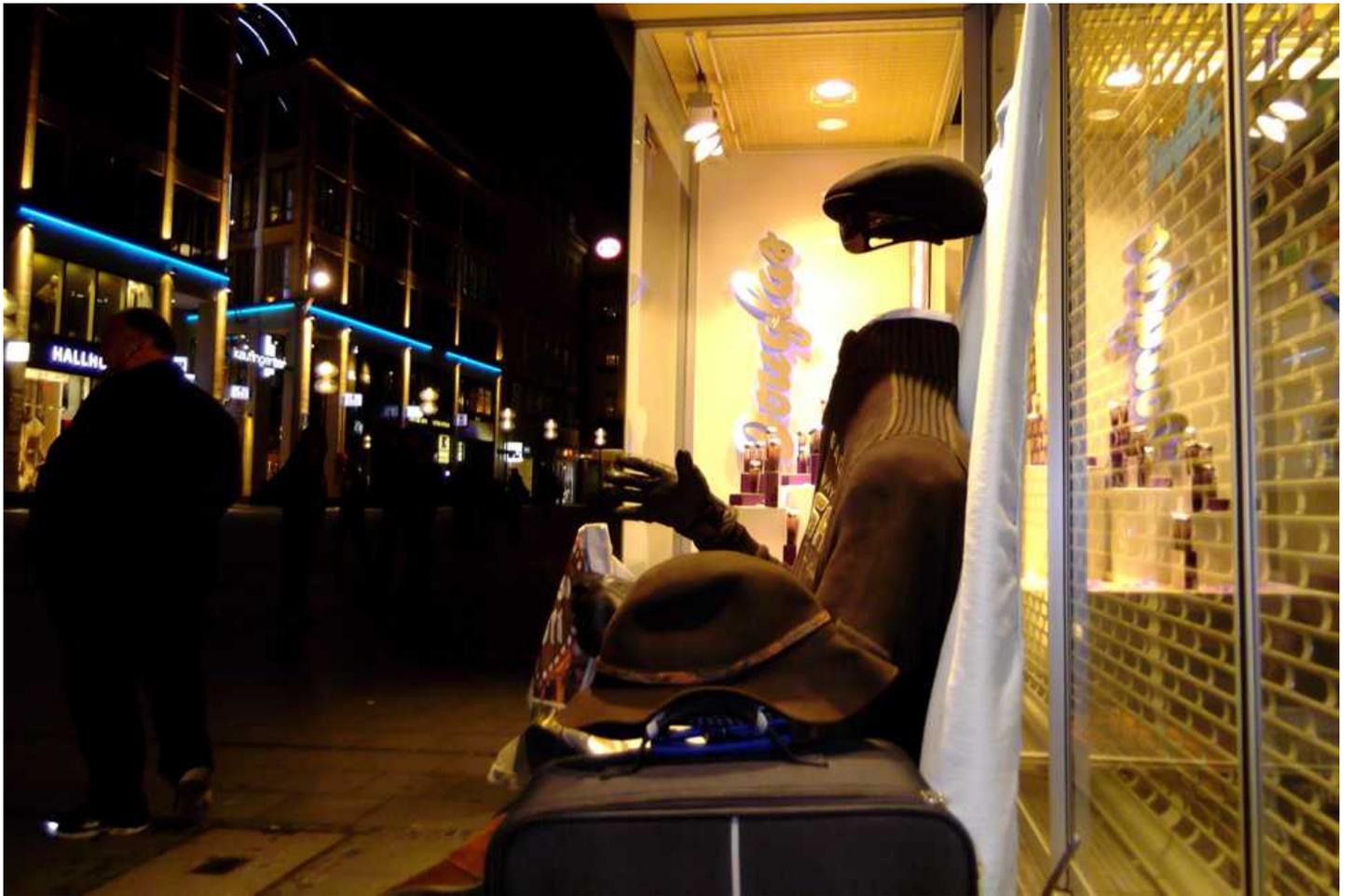














On the ride home I had time to reflect. Adulthood is a state of constant compromise. We don't often have both time and money at the same time to do what we would really enjoy. Sometimes you just have to do it anyway, as was the case here.

And speaking of time, time really flies by fast during the treadmill of adult life as we are caught up in responsibilities, unlike the endless first 12 years of my life when I had no concept of time. Summers lasted forever, and so did the school year for that matter.

But on this trip, time unfolded differently. For once, time dragged on in a very good way. Usually time flies when you are having fun as the cliché goes, conversely in life's most adverse situations, time can drag on painfully slow. But on this trip the hours felt strangely long and we sucked the marrow out of life each and every day. It was truly a trip of a lifetime, and I got to spend it with a very wonderful woman.

And with all that philosophizing behind me, I immediately fell into deep slumber as soon as I saw my pillow...

September 21, 2011: The Home Stretch

Since I had never experienced international air travel before this trip, it was fortuitous that we took the conservative approach by dumping off the Mietwagen early and making our way to the Flughafen 4 hours before our flight, because we needed every minute. Basically we had to go through customs twice, and security check twice, and visit the VAT office for my sales tax refund, all on an extremely busy day with several international flights arriving late with a resulting

sea of humanity in a hurry to make it through all the lines at the same time. It was worse than waiting in line on the first day of the season at a big amusement park, but we joked our way through the excruciatingly slow and sweaty process.

I tensed up each time my backpack was inspected as it was clearly over the 18 KG weight limit for overhead carry-ons, perhaps twice the limit. But it held some of the best finds of the trip, the ones I didn't trust in anyone's hands but my own. With brief explanations of a scientific nature in broken German I was waved through both times.

Ms. Brett was stopped during x-ray inspection as she had picked up a nail in her shoe!

My next extended tense moment came when our four pieces of luggage left our sight on a conveyor bound for customs inspection. I had fears of some sort of snag along these lines that would prevent our finds from coming home, despite friendly export laws of France and Germany. Perhaps the huge work load associated with deluge of travelers worked to our advantage as all our bags made it home unopened and in perfect condition after the long, sleepless flight home.

Brett gets the Ultimate Girlfriend Medal of Valor as a result of this trip....life experience has revealed to me that not many women would fully enjoy 13 quarries in Europe over 15 days while covering 3000 miles at break neck speed and little rest with a fastidious detail freak like myself, then still enjoy my company before we even had a chance to rest off the jet lag....that, in my opinion, constitutes a true keeper, my most coveted find of the trip!

September 24, 2011: Fossils on the Home Front

What better way to wind down from 15 days of fossil hunting and Oktoberfest than.....more fossil hunting! Still jetlagged and with plenty to do around the house, I opted break away and spend a little time in nature with my son Weston, and with rain having recently fallen, the Glen Rose Formation was calling us like a proverbial siren.

And so I donned kneepads and gloves while the boy ran around with boundless abandon. A two hour crawl over the rain pocked marl flat produced some nice things, most notably tiny echinoids – two *Pygopyrina hancockensis*, one *Goniopygus* sp., and 8 or 10 little *Salenia* sp. With a few micro crab claws and half a cidaris club spine to top off my film canister we pulled up stakes and moved on to the next area of interest.



FIG 763: Glen Rose Formation crab claws and a single starfish ossicle (Site 161)



FIG 764: Glen Rose Formation echinoids *Salenia* sp. left, two *Pygopyrina hancockensis* right, *Goniopygus* sp. lower right (Site 161)



FIGS 765-766: Closeups of *Pygopyrina hancockensis* and *Goniopygus* sp., this and next page (Site 161)





FIGS 767-768: Partial *Phyllacanthus* sp. echinoid spine this page, crinoids stems *Isocrinus annulatus* next page (Site 161)



Our next rain scoured Glen Rose venue was what I refer to as "Anthony's Site", the gritty yellow marl of the upper reaches of the formation being locally rich in echinoids – well preserved echinoids – *Loriolia rosana* to be exact. And although he started off riding his bike at the site in lieu of collecting, young Weston was not to be overshadowed by the Old Man. He finally saddled up next to me and started picking off very nice *Loriolia*, big and well preserved ones, from my knee level and below. I think the quick 30 minute hunt gave us each 4 or 5 good ones, making it well worth the effort.



FIGS 769-771: Young Weston's better Glen Rose Formation echinoids *Loriolia rosana*, this and next 2 pages (Site 550)







FIGS 772-776: The author's better Glen Rose Formation echinoids *Loriolia rosana* and an unidentified crab claw and gastropod, this and next 4 pages (Site 550)









This particular fall day was a bit too reminiscent of Texas summer, so we pulled the plug while spirits were still high.

September 25, 2011: Remember Me, O Corsicana?

Fortunately enough rain had fallen on another choice area outcrop, although it was partially overgrown and overwashed by non productive soil, leaving it ripe for another quick 3 person harvest. You'd think Ms. Brett would be tired of fossil hunting by now, but when she heard the word "echinoid", she had a near Pavlovian reaction. And so young Weston held the door of the truck for Brett and we 3 descended on the site.

Weston felt that his skill set was best put into play by assisting Brett in targeting productive zones and lithologies as well as prime faunal relationships.....siding with the lovely lady while throwing the Old Man under the bus....that little weasel!

Cutting the Old Man out of the picture! We helped Brett see a few *Hemimaster bexariechinoids* in the ground and that visual lock helped her locate some on her own at this most visually overstimulating of sites. We spent an hour or two on hands and knees before summer climes once again marshaled us back to the truck.



FIGS 777-779: Ms. Brett, Weston and the author enjoying Corsicana Formation Site 349, this and next 2 pages







FIGS 780-785: Crab carapaces *Dakoticancer australis* of the Corsicana Formation, in situ and prepped, this and next 5 pages (Site 349)













FIG 786: Unidentified partial crab claws from the Corsicana Formation (Site 349)



FIGS 787-789: Nautiloid *Eutrephoceras* sp. (*deKay?*) from the Corsicana Formation, in situ this page, as prepped next 2 pages (Site 349)







FIG 790: Partial straight ammonite *Baculites* sp. from the Corsicana Formation (Site 349)



FIG 791: Partial echinoid *Rachiosoma honobensis* from the Corsicana Formation (Site 349)



FIGS 792-796: Echinoids *Hemimaster bexar* from the Corsicana Formation, in situ and as prepped, this and next 4 pages (Site 349)











FIG 797: Partial echinoid *Linthia variabilis* from the Corsicana Formation (Site 349)



FIGS 798-799: Echinoid *Plesiaster americanus* from the Corsicana Formation, this and next page (Site 349)





FIGS 800-801: Miscellaneous gastropods from the Corsicana Formation, this and next page (Site 349)





FIG 802: *Trigonía castrovillensis* bivalves from the Corsicana Formation (Site 349)



FIG 803: Bivalves including *Neithea castrovillensis* and *Plicatula mullicaensis* from the Corsicana Formation (Site 349)

However, finds were decent. We all got nice bivalves and gastropods and *H. bexari* echinoids, and I grabbed 3 *Dakoticancer australis* crab carapaces, half a *Rachiosoma honobensis* echinoid, and two *Eutrephocera* sp. nautiloids...not bad for our weary, ragtag krewe of collectors. And on that note, we chose to take a rest and call it a month...