

The Rappier of Paulus Hector Mair

Paulus Hector Mair was an avid collector of Fechtbucher/Fencing Manuals. He eventually undertook the task of producing a large Fechtbuch of his own that brought together material from various sources in his collection. Several variations of this work were made. This was an expensive undertaking, since each one was hand-made and heavily illustrated by talented artists of the day. Mair was employed as a government official by the city of Augsburg and was driven to embezzle municipal funds in order to bankroll his projects and his lavish lifestyle. He was hung for this in 1579.

The material you see here are my translations from the edition of Mair's Fechtbuch that is in the collection of the Sächsische Landesbibliothek in Dresden Germany. It is dated to 1540 and is in two volumes, labeled as C93 and C94. It is one of the most artistically illustrated Fechtbucher known. You can find the SLUB's scan of C94 with the Rappier section on-line here:

[http://www.slub-dresden.de/sammlungen/digitale-sammlungen/werkansicht/cache.off?tx_dlf\[id\]=51335](http://www.slub-dresden.de/sammlungen/digitale-sammlungen/werkansicht/cache.off?tx_dlf[id]=51335)

While Mair calls his weapon a "Rappier", it should be noted that it is really what we would now classify as a "Sidesword." The Rappier section immediately precedes the Sword & Buckler section in Mair's work and they are numbered consecutively.

The page numbers reflect the numbering of the plates in the PDF scan of the Rappier section of the Dresden version of Mair's Fechtbuch.

The following translation is copyright 2011 by Keith P. Myers. It can be used freely with appropriate credit given.

Keith P. Myers

Meyer Freifechter Guild

October 2011



It happens like this in this technique: hold your Rappier in your right hand in front of your forward leg in a low thrust position directed towards his groin. He then stands with his left foot opposite you and thrusts towards your face at the upper opening (as in illustration). Then drive up with your Rappier out of the low thrust position, fall over his Rappier and with that take away his thrust to your left side with your short edge. Then immediately step with your left leg in the triangle on your right side and strike to his forward leg.

If he strikes low towards you like this, then yank your left leg back and take it away with the long edge so that you avoid injury from him and can work against him once more.



Hold yourself like this with this technique: stand with your left foot forward and hold your Rappier in an Understich (low thrust position) opposite the opponent on your right side with the blade along your left thigh. He then stands with his right foot opposite you and strikes from above to your head. Then drive up with your Rappier out of the low thrust position and with that fall over his Rappier to take away his strike to your left side with your short edge. Then immediately follow outward with your right leg and do an extended strike from above to his head.

If he strikes like this to your upper opening, then take it away with your long edge and immediately step back. As you step back pay attention that you strike his right forward set leg and with that yank back away from him.



It happens like this with this technique at the closing: he stands with his right foot forward and holds his Rappier with his right hand outside of his right leg. You then stand opposite him with both feet together and hold your Rappier up high in the Zornhaw over your head (as in illustration). He thinks you will then strike him wrathfully from above, but step in with your right leg and wind with a Verborgnen Stich (concealed thrust) behind your head and forward from your right side to your left into his face with a Nachtruck (after-press).

If he has wound a thrust like this towards your face, then take it away with your short edge to your left side, immediately follow outward with your left leg and strike him with the same thrust to his right opening that you then see. With that step back away from him.



Hold yourself like this with this technique at the closing: stand with your left foot forward and hold your Rappier in an Underhaw outside next to your left thigh. He then stands with his right foot opposite you and fires a high thrust towards your face or chest (as in illustration). Then go up with your Rappier out of the Underhaw and take his thrust away with your long edge and at the same time follow outward with your right leg and strike to his head. Then immediately step with your right leg behind your left in the triangle and wind a thrust towards him from your left to his right side.

If he thrusts at you like this, then strike against his thrust with an Underhaw with the long edge and with that spring back. Thus his thrust is averted.



It happens like this with this technique at the closing: step in with your left leg and thrust with an extended arm behind your head forward to his face. (Verborgnen Stich/Ort: Concealed Thrust/Point)

If he thrusts towards you like this from above and you stand with your right foot opposite him, then drive up with your Rappier and take it away from your right side to his left with your long edge (as in illustration).

If he has parried you like this, then wind through low with a Lufftstich (air thrust?) to his face or chest.

If he thrusts towards you like this, take it away with your long edge to your right side. Then immediately follow outward with your left and strike or thrust to his left forward set leg. If he persists and follows after you, then thrust to his face or chest from above and with that step back away from him.



Hold yourself like this with this technique at the closing: stand with your right foot forward and hold your Rappier high in your right hand extended over your head with the point directed at his face.

If he also stands this way opposite you with his body and Rappier and does not thrust or strike at you (as in illustration), then step in with your left leg and wind a thrust to his face or chest.

If he thrusts high towards you like this, then set your short edge high upon his Rappier and with that take his thrust away. Then immediately yank back high and thrust low to his groin.

If he thrusts low towards you like this, then step back with your left leg. If he persists and travels after you, then step in again quickly and hit him with a strong winding thrust to the body. With that move back away from him.



It happens like this with this technique at the closing: stand with your right foot forward and fire a long winding thrust from below to his throat.

If he thrusts from below towards you like this and you also stand with your right foot opposite him, then fall over his Rappier off-line with your short edge and with that take his thrust away outward on your right side (as in illustration). Then immediately wind a thrust in over his blade to his face or chest.

Should you perceive his thrust over your blade, then drive out high with your long edge and with that take it away. Then immediately yank your right leg back and strike him with the long edge to his right forward set leg. With that yank yourself back away from him.



Hold yourself like this with this technique at the closing: stand with your right foot forward and fire a long winding thrust from below to his body.

If he assaults you with a long thrust like this and you also stand with your right foot opposite him and hold your Rappier in your right hand behind your head such that the point hangs to the rear on your back (as in illustration), then yank your right leg back and with that go out from his thrust. Then immediately quickly step in towards him again and wind the Concealed Thrust from your right side to your left behind your head forward to his face or chest. If he intends to parry this, then step again in the triangle on your right side and strike or thrust to his left arm. With that yank yourself back away from him.



It happens like this with this technique at the closing: stand with your left foot opposite him and hold your Dagger in your left hand on your left hip with the point towards the opponent. Then immediately strike towards his head with the long edge of your Rappier.

If he strikes from above like this towards you and you stand with your right foot opposite him and hold your Rappier and Dagger next to each other in the Versazung (parrying position), then wind over his Rappier with your Dagger (as in illustration) and step in quickly with your left leg. During the step drop your arm over his blade such that it stays under your left shoulder. Then immediately thrust your Dagger low to his groin and your Rappier high to his body such that the long edge is turned up.

If he goes at you like this with both thrusts from below and above, then go up with your Dagger from below to his Rappier and take it away to your left side. Then step inward with your right leg in front of his left and at the same time wind your long edge upward and shove powerfully away from you with the Bogen (bow) under his left shoulder. Then immediately step back again and strike or thrust to his body.



Hold yourself like this at the closing with this technique: step in with your right leg and do a powerful low thrust to his groin with your Rappier.

If he thrusts low towards you like this and you stand with your left foot opposite him, then set this aside with your Dagger to your left side and during the parry do a powerful thrust with your Rappier from above to his face or chest such that the long edge is turned upward.

If he thrusts high towards you like this, then drive upward with your Dagger to his Rappier and with that take his thrust away on your left side (as in illustration).

If he has taken you aside like this, then yank your Rappier up quickly away from his Dagger and thrust low to his body.

If he thrusts low at you like this, then step back with your right leg and take this aside with the long edge of your Rappier. Then immediately quickly step in once again and strike or thrust to his head. With that yank yourself back from him into a good Versazung (parry position).



It happens like this at the closing with this technique: he stands opposite you with his right foot and fires an Oberhaw at you. So step in with your left leg opposite him and set this aside with your Dagger and Rappier blades crosswise in the Scheer (scissors) (as in illustration). Then immediately yank your Rappier up away from his Rappier's blade and thrust low to his body.

If he thrusts low towards you like this, then step back with your right leg and drop your Dagger onto his Rappier's blade and with that take his thrust away to your left side. Then immediately step in quickly with your right leg once again and thrust to his groin.

If he thrusts low towards you like this, then step back with your left leg and take this aside with your Dagger to your left side. Then immediately step outward again quickly and strike or thrust to his head. With that step back away from him.



Hold yourself like this with this technique: grasp your Dagger in the left hand and your Rappier in the right and step in with your left leg to immediately strike with your strong to his head and with your Dagger thrust over his right arm to his body.

If he strikes and thrusts towards you like this, then take his strike away with the long edge of your Rappier (as in illustration), set your Dagger inside on his left arm, and with that shove away from you to your right side. Thus you also take away his Dagger thrust. Then immediately step back with your left leg and yank your Rappier above you and wind a thrust from below to his groin.

If he thrusts low towards you like this, then strike his thrust away with an Unterhaw and immediately follow outward with your right leg and thrust to his body. With that strike back away from him.



It happens like this at the closing with this technique: step in opposite him with your left leg and wind a Rappier thrust from below with strength to his body.

If he thrusts low towards you like this and you also stand opposite him with your left foot, then drop the crossguard of your Dagger onto his Rappier's blade and with that take his thrust out to your left side.

If he has set aside your low thrust like this, then thrust with your Dagger to his chest (as in illustration).

If he has also thrust towards you like this with his Dagger, step back with your left leg and go up with your Dagger and with that take him aside to your right side. Then immediately step in quickly once again with your left leg and thrust with your Rappier out of the Bogen with strength from above to his face or chest.

If he thrusts high towards you like this, set this aside with the long edge of your Rappier and then immediately yank your left leg back and thrust low to his body. With that step back from him into a good Versazung.



Hold yourself like this with this technique at the closing: step in opposite him with your right leg and fire a low thrust with your Rappier to his body.

If he thrusts low towards you like this, then drop your Dagger onto his Rappier's blade and with that take him away to your left side. At the same time strike with an Oberhaw to his head.

If he strikes high towards you like this, step in with your left leg and parry his strike with your Dagger up high. Then immediately drop your left arm over his Rappier's blade and with that wind it under your left shoulder. If he then intends to thrust you high with his Dagger, take this aside with your Rappier to your left side. Then immediately step back with your left leg and thrust with your Rappier from below to his body.

If he thrusts you from below like this, then strike the thrust away with your Rappier and immediately step in the triangle on your left side and thrust to his right side. With that yank yourself back away from him.



It happens like this with this technique at the closing: step in opposite him with your right leg and hold your Dagger in your left hand behind your body and at the same time wind the Concealed Point from your right side to your left behind your head forward to his face or chest.

If he thrusts towards you like this and you stand opposite him with your left leg, then take this away with Dagger and Rappier crosswise to your right side (as in illustration). Then immediately yank your Rappier up away from his Rappier's blade and thrust low to his body, but remain with the Dagger on his Rappier. With that he can injure you knowing to thrust.

If he thrusts low towards you like this, then yank your Dagger forward, drop it well forward on his Rappier's blade and take his thrust away. Then immediately step back with your right leg and thrust again low to his body. Thus you avoid injury and may once again come together with him to work.



Hold yourself like this with this technique: stand with your right foot opposite him and hold your Dagger with your left hand behind your body. He then also stands with his right foot opposite you and fires a high thrust out of the Bogen towards your face or chest. So drive up with your Rappier onto his Rappier's blade, and with that take his high thrust away to your left side. Then immediately you will strike him similarly from above so that he must parry high with his Dagger. You then thrust to the opening on his body. Then yank your Dagger forward with your left hand such that the pommel stands on the ball (of the thumb) and the fingers directly on the hilt. Then immediately throw your Dagger with strength at his body (as in illustration). Thus you throw him to the ground.