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NOTES ON THE PROCTOR'S HALBERD AND OTHER INSIGNIA.

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Jesus College, Cambridge.

A lintstock (Plate XXX, Fig. 1, and Plate XXXI, Fig. 2) and a partizan (Fig. 3) come into the possession of the Senior Proctor when he assumes office, the Junior Proctor receiving at the same time an halberd (Fig. 4) and a butter-measure¹.

During their term of office the Proctors are custodians of these objects, which they transmit to their successors at the termination of their appointment. The transference takes place at the commencement of the academical year. When the incoming Vice-Chancellor is to be installed by the outgoing Proctors, the weapons and the measure are brought to the Senate House. Upon this occasion only do they now figure in University ceremonies.

The exact history of the several objects is lost in antiquity, and the only record of which I am aware, and for which I am indebted to the Rev. Dr Stokes, credits a certain John Townsend with having presented the so-called Halberd to the University. This record is as follows :

“In 1591, I find John Townsend, Esq., of Norfolk to give the Senior Proctor's Staff to the University of Cambridge, of which he had been a member in Trinity College, and probably was this Sir John who was knighted for his valour by the Earl of Essex at Cales, in Spain, in 1596.” (Blomefield's *History of Norfolk*, VII. 135.)

In the absence of further information, I was led to endeavour to ascertain whether any information might be afforded by the comparison of the objects themselves with others of known date in various collections.

Thereafter I ventured to appeal for criticism to our greatest authority on such matters. Lord Dillon has been kind enough, not only to correct the several descriptive terms, but also to

¹ The so-called “butter-measure” was described (with a figure) by Mr W. B. Redfern (*C. A. S. Proc. and Comm.* No. XLVI. pp. 221, 222). It is now preserved in the Registry (Ed.).



FIG. 1. The Senior Proctor's men with the Lintstock and Partizan. 1905.



FIG. 2. The blade of the Senior Proctor's Lintstock.



FIG. 3. The Senior Proctor's Partizan, with its caul.

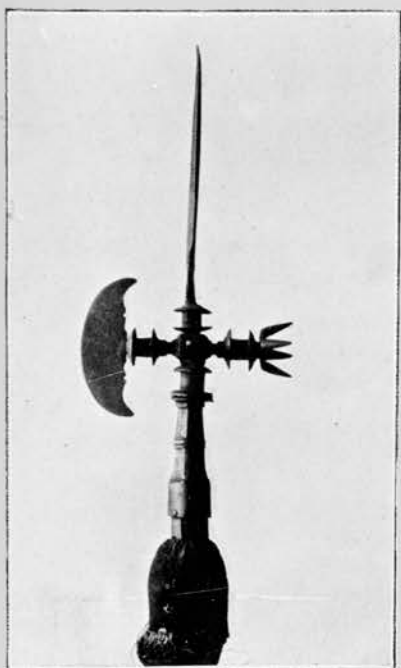


FIG. 4. The Junior Proctor's Halberd with its caul or tassel.

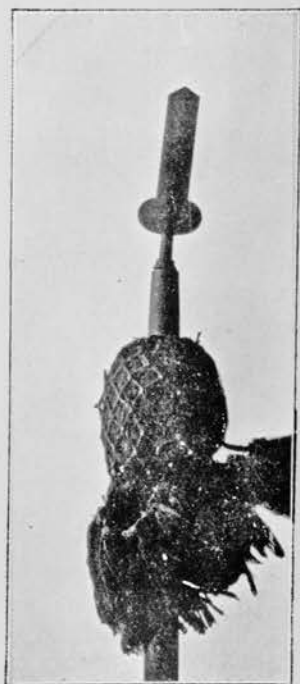


FIG. 16. A "javelin," formerly used in municipal functions at Cambridge. Lord Dillon remarks: "This is evidently a partizan; the blade of which has been broken, and the weapon re-ground to a broad point. Below the blade is the caul, or tassel with its fringe."

add some comments, so interesting and valuable that I have appended them to the present account, in which they appear as part of note (3) and the whole of notes (2) and (4—12) inclusive. For this timely and courteous aid, I desire to tender my cordial thanks.

Regarding the actual proctorial weapons (as shewn in Figs. 2, 3 and 4, Plate XXXI), Lord Dillon remarks: "No. 2 is evidently a lintstock, and belongs, I should think, to the XVIIIth Century.

"No. 3 is a small partizan or spontoon with its caul or tassel.

"No. 4 is an halberd, also having its caul; but this is a ceremonial weapon, and may be of the late XVth or XVIth Century."

In the following paragraphs will be found an attempt to trace the outline of the evolution of some of the forms of shafted weapons, with special reference to the types to which the Cambridge Proctorial specimens belong.

In Western Europe the most primitive form of these "shafted" weapons is that of a scythe-blade attached to a staff. This "War-scythe"¹ (Fig. 5) was in use from the IXth Century onwards, becoming obsolete in the XVIIIth Century. It was supplemented later by a weapon styled the "Guisarme" (Fig. 6), in which a spear-head, attached to the scythe-blade, provided for thrusting as well as for hewing².

The "Bill" (Fig. 7) is supposed to have been invented in Italy³ during the XIIth Century⁴. The Halberd proper (Fig. 8) appears to be an evolutionary modification of the Guisarme.

¹ The illustrations 5—15 inclusive are here reproduced (by the kind permission of E. C. Brett, Esq.) from drawings in the late Mr Brett's *Arms and Armour*.

³ It is noteworthy that although England supplied the best sword-blades in the earlier part of the Middle Ages even as late as the IXth Century, the armourer's craft was subsequently lost, later medieval armour, etc., being imported from the continent. It is on record that King Henry the VIIIth caused armourers to come from Germany to instruct artisans in this country. Lord Dillon adds the following comment: "I expect the *English-made* arms were only the bills and the various forms of partizans. Henry VIII. imported not only armour and arms from abroad, but also bows. The last, which we like to consider the national weapon, he imported from Venice and Danzig, 40,000 at a time."

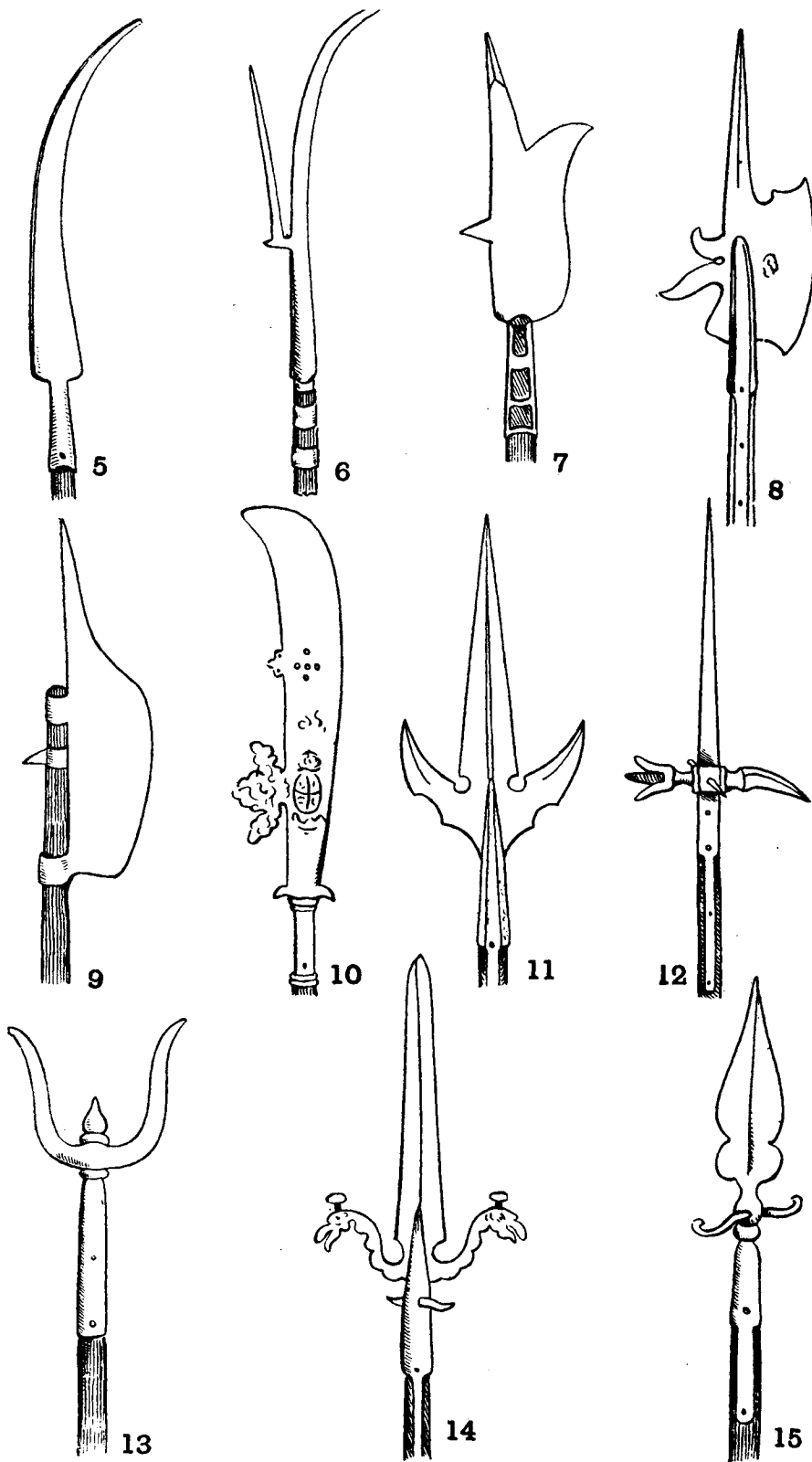


FIG. 5. A War-scythe. FIG. 6. A Guisarme. FIG. 7. A Bill.
 FIG. 8. A Halberd. FIG. 9. A Voulge or Jedburgh axe. FIG. 10. A
 Couse, sometimes styled Glaive. FIG. 11. A Corsêque. FIG. 12. A Pole-
 axe, sometimes styled a "Lucerne hammer." FIG. 13. A Musket-rest.
 FIG. 14. A Lintstock. FIG. 15. A Partizan.

The Halberd seems to have come into use in the xivth Century, and it quickly became subject to many alterations in detail. These eventually rendered it unsuitable for use, so that it degenerated as regards its original function, though persisting with various modifications down to the xviiith Century, or even later⁵.

The "Voulge" (Fig. 9) is a simplified form of the halberd, which was in use, chiefly in Central Europe, from the xivth to the xviiith Century⁶.

The "Couse" (Fig. 10) dates from the xvith Century. It is almost certainly a derivative of the voulge or halberd, but lacks a thrusting point. Like the halberd, the couse has undergone many modifications, with similar results as regards its utility⁷.

The weapon called by Brett a "Partizan" (Fig. 11) seems to have been derived from the spear or lance, rather than from the war-scythe⁸. It is mentioned here because the Senior Proctor's weapon (cf. Figs. 1 and 2) is provided with appendages (to the central blade) resembling the lateral blades of the partizan, from which I thought at first that it was derived. But further investigations have caused some modification of this opinion.

The "Lucerne Hammer" (Fig. 12) first occurs among the weapons of the xvith Century. The Junior Proctor's halberd (Fig. 3) is clearly a derivative of this type, by which to some extent its date is indicated. Very similar weapons are still carried by the Gentlemen-at-Arms at Levees, and Court receptions⁹.

In the xviiith Century, a variety styled by Brett the "military fork" (Fig. 13) made its appearance. Though this might seem to be the parent form of the Senior Proctor's weapon, I am inclined to think that such is not the case, but that the military fork was produced to supply the demand for a rest for a musket or similar fire-arm¹⁰.

Among the xvith Century weapons there is, however, one of particular interest in the present connection, viz. the "Lintstock" (Fig. 14) used by artillery-men, then styled "cannoniers." The lateral branches served to support and fix

the tow or lint by means of which the cannonier discharged his piece, the central spear-head providing a means of defence¹¹.

The "Partizan," termed by Brett a "Spontoorn" (Fig. 15), was a much-modified lintstock, and is only mentioned here because it was still in use in the xviiith Century¹².

On the whole then, it appears that the origin of the type of the Senior Proctor's weapon must be sought in the xvth Century lintstock, though it may well be that both weapons own an origin in common with the partizan.

There can be no doubt that the Senior Proctor's weapon is of an unusual type. Nothing resembling it appears in a remarkable series of sketches of shafted weapons by Leonardo da Vinci, preserved in the Academy of Fine Arts at Venice. No similar specimen exists in the extensive collections of the "Salle des Armes" at Geneva, or in the large collection at the Arsenal at Morges. Smaller collections at Lausanne, and in the Ariana Museum at Geneva, contain no comparable examples. Nor was my search in the very large collections at Venice (in the Museo Civico and the Arsenal) attended with success. The Wallace Collection certainly contains some lintstocks, but none of the exact form for which I sought. It was not till I had almost come to the end of the Horse-Armoury in the Tower of London, that I discovered a specimen closely resembling the Cambridge weapon, from which it differs chiefly in possessing a smaller blade, and shorter shaft. It is in a case with others, labelled "Halberds of the Seventeenth Century." As we have already seen, however, Lord Dillon considers that the Cambridge specimen is probably of later date.

I have thus failed to establish the identity of the existing lintstock (the Senior Proctor's weapon) with John Townsend's gift in 1591. It occurs to me that, as there is evidence that the Junior Proctor's weapon, the halberd, may be of the xvth Century, the record in Blomefield's "Norfolk" may refer to this. Or the Junior Proctor may now receive the weapon at one time allotted to his senior colleague. But all this must remain mere surmise. It is perhaps worthy of remark that the Junior Proctor's halberd has a shaft composed not of the wood of an English tree, but of bamboo.

Improvement in the mechanism of fire-arms was almost certainly the cause of the disuse of these shafted weapons by infantry¹³. But their imposing appearance led to their retention as ceremonial objects long after they had been thus superseded. As an instance of this, I may refer to an old print (in the possession of Colonel E. D. J. O'Brien, 14th King's Hussars) in which a Sergeant of the old XLth Regt. is represented with a pike or halberd. The date is given as 1792¹².

As ceremonial objects too, they have been preserved even in the XXth Century, as in the case of the proctorial insignia, the javelins of a few civic authorities (Fig. 16, Plate XXXI), or the weapons of the Yeomen of the Guard or the Gentlemen-at-Arms.

The proctorial insignia thus seem to date from the XVth Century at earliest, with the exception of the "Butter-Measure," which is probably of greater antiquity.

The first illustration (Plate XXX) shews the Senior Proctor's men in their cloaks of office, and bearing the lintstock and partizan. The book contains the Elizabethan Statutes of the University.

¹³ The Jesus College Library contains an interesting little volume, entitled "A Warre-like Treatise of the Pike, or Some Experimental Resolves for lessening the number, and disabling the use of the Pike in Warre. With the praise of the Musquet and Halfe-Pike." The author (a certain Donald Lupton) wrote in the year 1642, and the title of his essay suffices to shew that the improvements in fire-arms were at that date tending to the disappearance of the older weapons, and rendering obsolete the long-shafted halberd and pike. The latter was retained till but a few years ago on our men-of-war.

Notes by Lord Dillon on the various types of weapon represented in Figs. 5—15.

² A scythe-blade fixed on the end of a staff was a weapon often seen in revolts. At the Tower of London are two taken from the rebels at Sedgemoor in 1685.

⁴ This weapon (the bill) was an English arm, and we are told that in the XVth Century, "Bills and Bows" was an alarm or rallying cry for the troops.

⁵ Fig. 8 is an halberd of somewhat early type. It was originally a Swiss weapon, and later on was common to most European nations, but the axe-blade lost its strong simple form, and was pierced and made much lighter.

In the XVIIth Century it became so degraded that we find the axe and flock (a beak) made out of a thin flat piece of metal and passed through the

staff. It was then only a ceremonial weapon. The popularity of the bill was owing to its being of use in peace times as we see now in the bill-hook, which is the old bill cut short, and without its back spike or top spike. (In Sweden, "bill" is the name for a ploughshare. W. L. H. D.) The halberd would never make a tool, but the bill would. As regards the ceremonial halberds, fancy ran riot in the shapes given to those weapons, and many of them were quite unfit for the battlefield.

⁶ Fig. 9 is of the Jedburgh and Lochaber axe type, and is also seen in Russia and Poland as the Bardicke. Like some Indian weapons, the axe-blade is attached by one or more bands to the staff, as well as by the main ring.

⁷ Fig. 10 is the couse, a purely ceremonial weapon, and seen in great variety of detail in Italian and German body-guards.

⁸ Fig. 11 is called by Meyrick a "Corsèque." In some foreign collections it goes by various other names, but it is not an English arm.

⁹ Fig. 12 is a pole-axe, and the form is seen in the picture of Queen Elizabeth in a progress, where the Gentlemen Pensioners carry such an arm.

¹⁰ Fig. 13 is a musket-rest of the xvth and xvith Centuries: often combined with a long concealed blade springing out between the horns.

¹¹ Fig. 14 is a lintstock, in which we find the partizan combined with two necks each furnished with a screw to tighten their jaws, when the lint or match is placed in them. The lintstock is a gunner's arm, combining defence with the tool for fixing the cannon.

¹² Fig. 15 is a partizan. This clumsy weapon may be described as a pike with a broad blade instead of a spear-point. It is hard to say where the division is between the xvth Century form of partizan and the spontoon or half-pike. It was carried by officers, and in later times by sergeants, who as late as 1830 carried them in some regiments.

The spontoon, partizan, or half-pike is also in later days often called a halberd, though, as I have said above, the halberd has an axe-blade. The expression to "give a man a halberd" was used to express promotion to non-commissioned rank, while to *bring* him to the halberds was to flog him, the triangles to which the subject was tied being often formed of three halberds. The small cross-bar to the weapon was introduced after Culloden, when an officer, driving his weapon too far into a Highlander, could not disengage himself and was cut down.

ON SOME OLD PLAYING-CARDS FOUND IN TRINITY COLLEGE.

By W. M. FLETCHER, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College.

In the summer of 1902 the staircase A, leading to the rooms which the writer then happened to occupy in the north-west corner of the Great Court of Trinity College, was under repair. It is a spiral staircase, of oaken steps set round a central oak newel-post; the headway is plastered. As the

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