

labels from display. Now I think I can replace them, for I have discovered that just such a brush, found at Oostrum, Holland, was displayed in the exhibition *Frisians, Franks and Saxons* at the Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, in 1959.<sup>29</sup> The brush is made up of a tapering tube of sheet bronze, which appears to be in every respect the same as the examples illustrated in FIG. 53, nos. 5-7, and projecting from the broad, open end of the tube is a bunch of black hairs which still survives in position. The brush—perhaps ‘cosmetic brush’ would be a suitable term—was threaded on a ring with an earscoop.

There seems no reason to suppose that all these tapering tubes were not also once filled with bristles. In most soil conditions these have disintegrated, and left the tubes apparently empty as we find them. It remains only to urge future excavators to treat the contents of their tubes with care. Perhaps we shall be able to find out what sort of hair was used and how stiff the brush would have been, and to guess for what it might have been used.<sup>30</sup>

DAVID BROWN

### A SWORD OF THE VIKING PERIOD FROM THE R. LEA AT HERTFORD<sup>31</sup> (PL. XXX, B; FIG. 54)

An early Viking period sword was found, sometime during the first quarter of this century, by Mr. B. J. Gripper of Hertford, at the bottom of his garden opposite Mac-Mullens' Brewery.<sup>32</sup> It came to light when the R. Lea was being dredged, in an area that was then subject to flooding.<sup>33</sup> No other objects seem to have been recovered from there subsequently.

#### *Description*

An iron sword with blade, tang and pommel complete (PL. XXX, B). The length overall is 89 cm. The tapering blade measures 75.1 cm. with a fuller on each face. Below the guard is an area prepared for an inscription, the letters of which decrease in height from 2.8 cm. to 2.00 cm. and are made of twisted billets of metal. Some of the letters are now virtually impossible to discern, but the inscription seems to read: *LEVT[ER] FECIT* (FIG. 54).

The other face of the blade has a similar panel decorated with what appears to be a central lozenge and two terminal triangles (FIG. 54). X-ray photography carried out at St. Albans Museum has shown that the blade is not pattern-welded.

The guard is straight and flat, 13.2 cm. long, and rounded off at either end. Like the pommel it does not appear to have been decorated. The pommel itself is a flat semicircle of metal. The end of the tang is beaten out slightly over the pommel to secure it and, beneath, there is a gap between the tang and its slit in the pommel, indicating a space for the grip which would probably have been of leather or wood.

The sword is now somewhat pitted. It has at some time been cleaned chemically, since there is no corrosion. The blade is slightly bent in two places with a crack running from edge to fuller, some two-thirds of the way down.

<sup>29</sup> Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, exhibition catalogue, *Van Friezen, Franken en Saksen* (1959), item 135b.

<sup>30</sup> I have not attempted a complete list of ‘cosmetic brushes’, but several additional bronze examples are given by J. Werner, *op. cit.* in note 24, and S. C. Hawkes, *Med. Archaeol.*, II (1958), 36. W. Veeck, *Die Alamannen in Württemberg* (Berlin, 1931), 259, Taf. 31, 2, from Gultlingen, looks like another gold example.

<sup>31</sup> I should like to record my gratitude to Mrs. L. E. Webster, Dept. of Medieval and Later Antiquities at the British Museum; Professor D. M. Wilson, Dept. of Scandinavian Studies, University College, London, for answering my questions about the inscription; Miss V. I. Evison, Birkbeck College, London, for help with the typology.

<sup>32</sup> N.G.R. TL 32551280.

<sup>33</sup> O.S. 6 in. map, 2 ed., 1899, Hertfordshire. Mr. Gripper died in 1924. As the map shows the river in an undredged state it may be assumed that the sword was found between 1900 and 1924. The sword is now owned by Mr. Gripper's great-nephew, who has generously allowed it to be examined at Verulamium Museum, St. Albans, through the kind offices of Mr. A. G. Davies, curator of Hertford Museum, where it is now on loan.

*Discussion*

Although the Hertford sword is not as elaborately decorated as some swords of the Viking period, its condition and inscription are of considerable interest. The shape of the pommel and guard suggests a 10th-century date, and the sword belongs to Petersen's Type X<sup>34</sup> and Wheeler's Type VII.<sup>35</sup> Shallow grooves characteristic of many swords of this group were vestiges of the 9th-century trilobate pommel, and it may be assumed that more utilitarian swords in the next century omitted the grooves altogether. In fact, most Type X swords found in Britain have pommels decorated in some way. Those with oblique grooves appear mainly S. of the R. Thames, while a second variant, with a horizontal groove below the pommel, has a more northerly distribution. Swords of this latter type come, for example, from the Thames, midway between Bray Mill and Monkey Island, Windsor;<sup>36</sup> and from Farndon Church, Newark, Notts.<sup>37</sup>

Completely plain pommels are of very limited occurrence in Britain, and are mostly found in the N. From York come two identical swords with pommels and straight guards, rectangular in section, like the Hertford sword.<sup>38</sup> A sword from Nottingham,<sup>39</sup> now in the British Museum, came from a grave find, together with a winged spearhead and a second sword of trilobate type. The grave (or graves) was some 3 ft. deep in a field outside the town; skeletal remains were found. The sword is very corroded, but nevertheless the shape is not difficult to discern. It is semicircular, flat in section, with a straight guard and fullered blade.

With such scanty comparative material, little can be learnt about the Hertford sword type in Britain, and its proper identification can only be achieved by looking at Type X swords on the continent. This study suggests that, whoever may have dropped the sword into the Lea, it had not originally been made for either the Anglo-Saxon or Scandinavian market. Both the pommel shape and, more important, the inscription lead to this interpretation.

Petersen<sup>40</sup> quoted examples of plain pommels from the continent, as known in 1919: Norse swords from Eidnes, Ullensvang; and Skeie, Kvinnherred—the latter being found with a Type K axe and spearhead of Type I. Swedish examples included one from Birka; there were three from Denmark, and others from Finland, Schleswig-Holstein, Breslau, now Wrocław in Poland, and Berne, Switzerland.

Since then, other examples have come to light, including one dug up in 1955 from the Abstederdijk, Utrecht—possibly from the bed of an old river.<sup>41</sup> This has an oval pommel and an inscription *INGELERNI* on one side of the blade, while on the other is a decorative panel consisting of a central diagonal cross framed by triangular designs.

A more significant distribution, however, appears in E. Europe. Several examples are recorded from Hungary, and eleven from Poland;<sup>42</sup> among the examples from Russia two are significant in relation to the inscription, rather than the pommel-type. Indeed, it has been suggested<sup>43</sup> that at the end of the 10th century—under Istvan I (997–1038), for example—the Hungarian army included Type X swords in its equipment, as well as swords of Type Y. Swords of Type X also occur in 10th and 11th-century contexts in

<sup>34</sup> J. Petersen, 'De Norske Vikingsverd', *Videnskapsselskapets Skrifter. II, Hist. Filos. Klasse*, 1 (1919), 158, fig. 124.

<sup>35</sup> R. E. M. Wheeler, *London and the Vikings* (1927), 36, fig. 13.

<sup>36</sup> E. A. Barry, *Proc. Soc. Antiq.*, xvi (1897), 392, fig. p. 391. The sword was discovered in 1855.

<sup>37</sup> H. Shetelig, 'Viking Antiquities in England', *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland*, iv (Oslo, 1940), 73, fig. 43. This badly corroded sword is now in the British Museum.

<sup>38</sup> D. M. Waterman, 'Late Saxon, Viking and Early Medieval Finds from York', *Archaeologia*, xcvi (1959), 71, fig. 5, nos. 1 and 2.

<sup>39</sup> J. Sulley, *Archaeol. Jnl.*, viii (1851), 425, and *op. cit.* in note 37, 15, fig. 3.

<sup>40</sup> *Op. cit.* in note 34, 158–67, figs. 127–3.

<sup>41</sup> J. Ypey, 'Two Viking Swords with Inlaid Names', *Berichten van de Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek*, ix (1959), 297, figs. 20–2.

<sup>42</sup> K. Bakay, 'Archaeologische Studien zur Frage der ungarischen Staatsgründung', *Acta Archaeologica ... Hungarica*, xix (1967), 105, distribution map, 111.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

modern Russia, suggesting that the type was most favoured in central and E. Europe, especially Hungary. They were utilitarian in design, and could well have been a fairly regular army issue. The type was, of course, directly influenced by Viking swords—the development from well known Viking types of the 9th century, outlined above, makes this obvious. Perhaps the flat, undecorated pommels were a local variant.

It is easy to assume that any sword of Viking type found in this country must have belonged to a Scandinavian, since the historical evidence of Viking raids and settlements looms so large in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Indeed, it is tempting to attribute the Hertford sword to Danish activity described in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 894<sup>44</sup> etc. Not only would this date be too early for a sword of Type X, but the distribution of the type must rule out a connexion between the events described in the Chronicle and the loss of the sword.

*The Inscription* (FIG. 54)

The word *LEV[T]ER*, executed in Roman lettering, almost certainly refers to the smith who fashioned the blade. The philology of the word, however, is made difficult by the ambiguous fourth and fifth letters, and since the other examples of this name on sword blades are also imprecise, one definite name has yet to emerge from the group. Nevertheless, the first element of the name undoubtedly reads *LEU* which seems to eliminate the Anglo-Saxon recorded name *Leodfrid*. The fourth letter suggests *T*, because the down stroke does not appear to continue farther, while there appears to be a cross-bar above. The fifth letter seems to suggest an *L* but the sloping piece above more strongly suggests a badly formed *F* or *E*. The last letter may perhaps be read as a badly formed *R*, although the diagonal line appears merely as a triangle near the upright line. The name then reads as a corrupt version of *Leutfrit* or *Leutfred*. The latter is a known Germanic name.<sup>45</sup> The alternative name would be *Leutril*. It is apparent that other readings are quite possible, indeed inevitable, given the incidence of corrosion and the apparent high rate of illiteracy among European sword-smiths in this period. The *fecit* has a shortened *I*, but is otherwise clear.

Only three other swords with this name are known—one comes from the R. Witham, one from Estonia, and the third from Al'met'evo on the Volga in modern Russia. The Witham sword,<sup>46</sup> now in the British Museum, was found in 1848. It is 91.4 cm. long, complete, and is fullered. The inscription reads *LEUTL[F?]RIT*—the last letter being either an *L* or inverted *T*.<sup>47</sup> There is a trilobate pommel, with downward curving guard decorated with an inlay of copper lozenges each surrounded by a border in bronze. The reverse face of the blade is decorated with a double scroll motif.

The inscription on the sword from Al'met'evo<sup>48</sup> is nearer to the Hertford name. The last *I* is the right way up, although the first is inverted; the next letter has a horizontal stroke above, suggesting an *F*.<sup>49</sup> Kirpichnikov<sup>50</sup> suggests that the name is Old German, rather than Saxon or Scandinavian. Again, the letters are of iron welded into the blade, a technique which had become common by c. 1100 in E. Europe. The hammering, which the technique involves, could have resulted in letter overlapping, thereby creating the ambiguities mentioned above.

No novel features are presented by the decorative panel on the Hertford blade. Triangles and lozenges occur on sword hilts and blades, as well as knives, spearheads

<sup>44</sup> *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (trans. D. Whitelock et al., Cambridge, 1961), 56, 62.

<sup>45</sup> E. Forstemann, *Altdeutsches Namenbuch*, 1, *Personennamen*, (2 ed., Bonn, 1900), col. 1039.

<sup>46</sup> H. Maryon, 'A Sword of the Viking Period from the River Witham', *Antiq. Jnl.*, xxx (1950), 175.

<sup>47</sup> D. M. Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork, 700-1100 A.D.*, in the *British Museum* (British Museum, 1964), 90, 142.

<sup>48</sup> A. N. Kirpichnikov, 'Drevne rusekoye Oruzhiye', *Arkheologiya SSSR Svod arkheologicheskikh istochnikov*, Vypusk El xxxvi (1966), 39, p. 6, xix 1:2.

<sup>49</sup> As read also by V. I. Evison, 'A Sword from the Thames at Wallingford Bridge', *Archaeol. Jnl.*, cxxxiv (1967), 180.

<sup>50</sup> *Op. cit.* in note 48, 39.

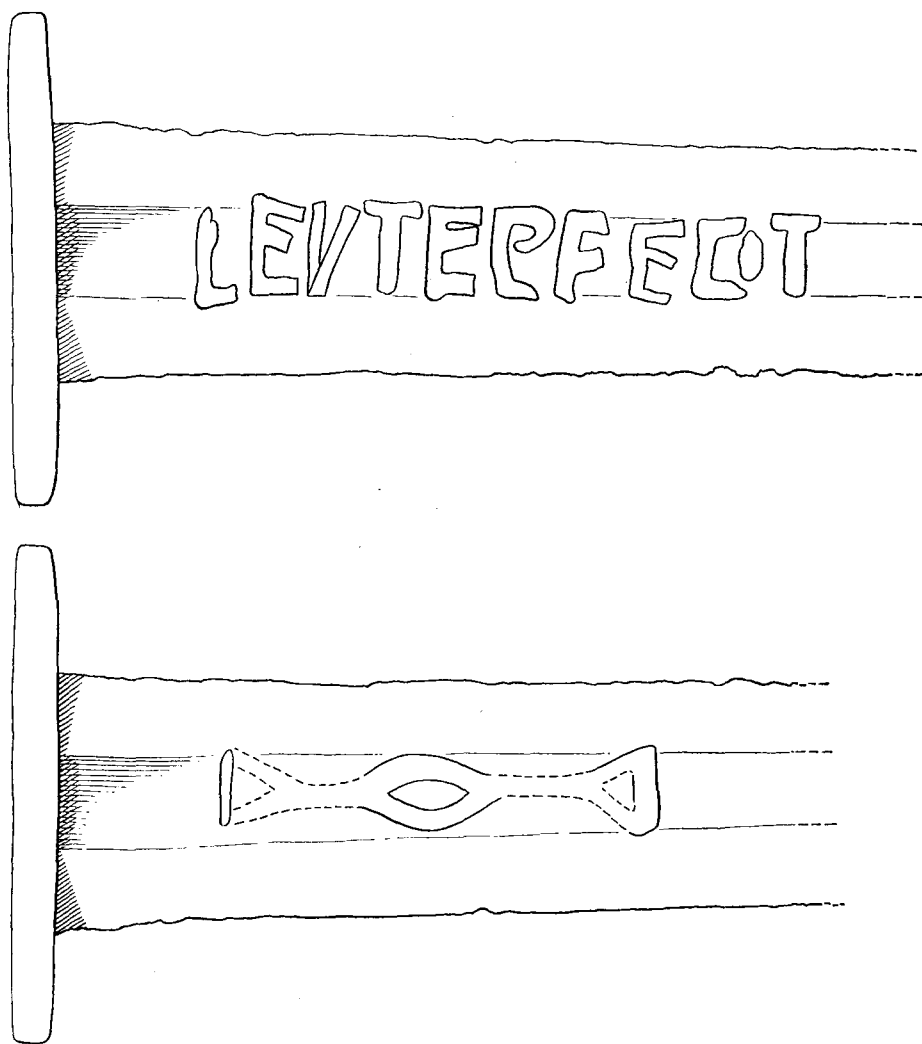


FIG. 54

SWORD FROM R. LEA AT HERTFORD (pp. 154, 156 ff.). Sc. 1:2

Details of inscription and decorative motif inlaid on blade

and stirrups, in the Viking period.<sup>51</sup> The sword from Utrecht, described above, included the motif, and it also occurs, for example, on a sword in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, from the Thames at Battersea.<sup>52</sup> This may be an *Ingelri* sword of the 10th or early 11th century, and the decoration consists of a central lozenge flanked by two inward pointing triangles. A sword in the Layton Collection at the London Museum (no. 2113), also dated 10th or 11th century, incorporates the motif, except that the central lozenge

<sup>51</sup> *Op. cit.* in note 47, 39, for a list.

<sup>52</sup> D. M. Wilson, 'Some neglected late Anglo-Saxon Swords', *Med. Archaeol.*, ix (1965), 32.

surrounds an inner lozenge and overlaps the flanking triangles. The inlay here is copper. Since this motif also occurs on Anglo-Saxon material at this period, it is impossible to determine its origin in England, Scandinavia or central Europe.<sup>53</sup> Finally, the inlaid pattern on the sword from Al'met'evo may be interpreted as a badly worked zig-zag trellis pattern,<sup>54</sup> rather than the running animal suggested by Kirpichnikov.<sup>55</sup> Animal motifs are in any case rare on swords of this period, although they do become more common after c. 1100.

The sword from the Lea at Hertford, in short, falls into a sub-group of 10th and 11th-century Viking swords, decorated in a way found throughout Europe, although itself of a more easterly distribution. The possibility that central European mercenaries were present in Viking or Saxon armies should not be rejected. There are indeed connexions between the Anglo-Saxons and central Europe—for example, the son of Edmund Ironside, the ill-fated Edward Atheling, who died mysteriously in England in 1057, had spent most of his life as an exile in the area. Also, the *Ulfberht* and *Ingelri* swords found in England are of continental German origin, not Viking. A more definite interpretation, however, must await future work on the provenance and distribution of the work of each smith.

All that can be said at present is that the Hertford sword confirms the name *Leut* —, with various bungled suffixes,<sup>56</sup> as that of a swordsmith whose products were very widely dispersed. Indeed, it may well be that we know today as much—or as little—about the name as that smith himself.

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#### A BOAT BURIAL FROM COUNTY ANTRIM

There is a possibly Viking ship burial from Ballywillin, co. Antrim, which was omitted from Shetelig's list of those known from the British Isles.<sup>57</sup> Some of the sixteen ship burials quoted by him are of doubtful authenticity<sup>58</sup>. This one, however, is certainly a buried ship, though its contents and age are unknown.

The following description is taken from a newscutting in one of the notebooks of T. Crofton Croker:<sup>59</sup>

"*Glenvale August 25th.*<sup>60</sup> The remains of a vessel were lately discovered in Ballywilliam Bog<sup>61</sup> about a mile from Portrush in the liberties of Coleraine. From the examination of the size and form of the ribs and boards, it has been conjectured that she carried at least 40 or 50 tons. Notwithstanding the injuries of time, the outside boards still measure an inch and a quarter in thickness; of them, however, only small pieces could be discovered. Some of the ribs were 8 inches broad, 5 inches deep and 7 to 8 feet long. Many of them exceeded this measurement considerably. Neither the keel nor the mast was

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>54</sup> *Op. cit.* in note 49, 180 n.

<sup>55</sup> *Op. cit.* in note 48, 39.

<sup>56</sup> See also H. R. E. Davidson, *The Sword in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1962), 45.

<sup>57</sup> A. W. Brogger and H. Shetelig, *The Viking Ships* (Oslo, 1954), 95.

<sup>58</sup> G. Bersu and D. M. Wilson, *Three Viking Graves in the Isle of Man* (Soc. Med. Archaeol., monograph series, no. 2, 1966), 92.

<sup>59</sup> The present account derives from Joly Mss. 21, National Library of Ireland. For a short biographical account of Croker see G. Eogan, 'The Mull Hoard', *Antiquity*, xli (1957), 57.

<sup>60</sup> Glenvale, near Newry, co. Armagh, was the home of Isaac Glenny, a well-known antiquary, whose collection is mentioned by John O'Donovan in an account in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, iv (1835), 97-8; and by William Gray, 'The Glenny Collection', *Jnl. Roy. Hist. and Archaeol. Assoc. of Ireland*, vii, 4 ser. (1887), 162. Glenny died in 1853. There seems to have been some confusion in the mind of Adams (*op. cit.* in note 65) about this address since there is another Glenvale just to the SW. of Portrush at N.G.R. C 857393.

<sup>61</sup> Ballywilliam is apparently the old name for the townland since this is the name which appears on the map of 1694 [S. Molyneux, 'The Giants Causeway', *Phil. Trans.* (1694), 212, 169-182]. Ballywillin may have come into use to avoid confusion with Ballywilliam, co. Derry, no more than 10 miles away.