

ART. III.—*Bronze Age Swords and Daggers of Cumberland, Westmorland, and Lancashire North of the Sands.*
A Note by M. C. FAIR.

THE writer is in course of compiling a Corpus of the Bronze Weapons and Implements for the above district, but the Swords and Daggers are so few, the Axes and Spearheads so many and will take so long a time to deal with adequately, that it seemed advisable to put on record, as an interim note, what has been discovered of the lamentably few Swords and Daggers of which our Society's district can boast.

Halberds. Two only.

1. From Maryport. 2. From Haberwain near Crosby Ravensworth. These two weapons are described by Miss Clare Fell in these *Transactions*, N.S. xl, 119, so need not be repeated here.

Daggers. Two as at present known.

No. 1. *Furness. Page Bank, Rampside. Ibid.* N.S. vii, 39. With illustration (H. Swainson Cowper, F.S.A.). The circumstances of find are not recorded: the weapon is in the City Museum at Lancaster with the Swainson-Cowper Collection. It is an excellent example of its type, the dagger evolving to the longer, finer rapier, very closely resembling the type example in the Blackgate Museum, Newcastle, illustrated (No. 6) by Mr. Parker Brewis, F.S.A. in his Monograph *The Bronze Sword in Great Britain* (*Archaeologia*, Vol. lxxiii). It is $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, the greatest width, near the rivet-holes, is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and at 6 inches from the point $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. There are two rivet holes for attaching to the haft. Neither rivet now remains.

No. 2a. *Levens*. Stakes Moss, Foulshaw, Westmorland. This dagger has provided a somewhat intriguing problem as at first it appeared two weapons were concerned. Thanks however to assistance given it now seems fairly certain the two records refer to only one weapon, which Miss G. Ainsley has ascertained from Mr. R. H. Inman, Hon. Curator, is now in Kendal Museum, Case 86, Central Gallery. Mr. Inman's report from his record of the dagger says it was "found in 1885 at a depth of about 6 ft. in Stakes Moss, Foulshaw, Levens, by Nicholas Gibson of Beathwaite Green. *Report*, 1932 from British Association Committee—"Ogival Dagger dating from closing phase of the Early Bronze Age, c. 1600 to 1500 B.C." Exhibited Society of Antiquaries, Somerset House Meeting, March, 1864, by R. N. Gandy, and at Canterbury Archaeological Society's Meeting, 1875."

No. 2b. *Kendal*, Helsington Moss, Westmorland. Miss Clare Fell, these *Transactions*, N.S. xl, p. 120, mentions "A Bronze Dagger from Helsington Moss, 5½ inches long, tanged with engraved Vandyke at base. (*Proceedings*, Society of Antiquaries, New Series II, p. 370). Whereabouts unknown.

Mr. Philip Corder, F.S.A. was good enough however to provide the following information from his Society's records: "The dagger was found in 1855 by Nicholas Gibson of Brathwaite Green in Helsington Moss at about 6 feet from the surface. The short, broad tang has one large rivet hole. It was exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries by the Rev. R. N. Gandy, March 17th, 1864."

The details of both finds are so identical it appears one weapon only is involved. Helsington Moss is a mile or two north of Stakes Moss.

Swords. *Five* are recorded, four being from a hoard at Ambleside.

No. 1. This fine weapon I am glad to say is still extant and its present location known. It was acquired by the

late Mr. Wadham of Millwood, Dalton, and Mr. Wadham's grand-daughter, Mrs. William Walker of Greenlands, Holmrook informs us that it is now at Barrow-in-Furness Museum. It is described and illustrated in these *Transactions*, o.s., xv, 161, by Mr. Harper Gaythorpe. The weapon was found in 1874, with a spear head, at Butts Beck Quarry, Dalton-in-Furness. It has a leaf shaped blade of the typical Native British form as described by Mr. J. D. Cowen, M.A. (*Archaeologia Aeliana*, Series 4, Vol. X, p. 190, with illustrations). The blade has unfortunately been broken and repaired with a modern copper fish plate. Its present length is $24\frac{7}{8}$ inches. weight 1 lb. 9 oz. The blade has a hollow fluting running close to and parallel with its edges, extending from near the hilt to within 11 inches from the point of blade where it is bevelled. The thickest part of the blade is in the centre. The edge of the fluted parts, where not worn, is very sharp. It has originally been longer and is much corroded at the point. The hilt has been attached to the tang by bronze rivets nearly $\frac{3}{16}$ th in. thick passing through 6 round holes. The tang expands into the so-called fish-tail termination. The patina is dark green. The careful illustration shows a slight notched *ricasso* below the wings of the butt. The weapon bears a strong resemblance to Mr. Cowen's No. 2 from Ewart Park, Wooler, Northumberland.

Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5. *The Ambleside Hoard*. For a long time I could find no details concerning this hoard (Evans, A. B. I, pp. 285 and 465), but Mr. E. T. Leeds, F.S.A. of the Ashmolean Museum having ascertained it had been exhibited at Spalding suggested reference to the Museum there, and Mr. G. W. Bailey, F.R.S.A., its Curator took great trouble to provide all available details, looking up a careful Minute under date 1741 when the hoard had been exhibited to the Spalding Gentlemen's Society (founded 1710) by Mr. Peregrine Bertie. The Minute Book also

boasted a drawing of the objects exhibited for discussion a tracing of which Mr. Bailey enclosed with the copy of the Minute.

The Hoard (obviously a Bronze-smith's stock-in-trade), comprised four swords, a socketed spearhead without loop, and a looped bronze axe having the loop low down about the centre, instead of under the rim. This form of axe is an unusual one in our district. The Minute says "They were found all together in a kind of bundle, two feet deep in a peat moss at Ambleside in Westmorland (Amboglana) at the upper Corner of the famous Winder Mere. The ruined remains of some great and very ancient city. The Romans, says our learned correspondent had fabrications at Azines (I think he means Ashness in Borrowdale), near this great station and this being near Keswick where (he says) are the richest copper mines in this Island. They are all cast and have some marks of the Mould. He judges them to be Roman."

The swords are not, as shown in the drawing, of the typical Native British Leaf-bladed form.

No. 1 is a fine weapon, 2 lbs. in weight, length unfortunately not stated. The blade is straight, the hilt indeterminate.

No. 2. Might be an uncertainly drawn leaf blade; it has a short-tang with two rivet holes, side by side, and a faint suggestion of butt-plates.

No. 3 has a slender, pointed blade suggesting a rapier; its hilt is indeterminate.

No. 4 has a slender, pointed, rapier-like blade and indeterminate hilt. The blade appears to be in a sheath. It is much the shortest of these four swords.

The whereabouts of the hoard is still to seek; Mr. Kendrick, F.S.A., of the British Museum suggested they were possibly at Lancaster with the Swainson-Cowper Collection, but Mr. Bland, F.S.A., of the City of Lancaster Museum informs me they are not there. I shall be

grateful for any suggestion which may result in locating this most valuable hoard.

A "*Bronze Blade*" (character not stated) is stated to have been found at Helton Dale, Askham, Westmorland, and exhibited at Carlisle in 1859. Information as to this or suggestions for search is greatly desired.

It will be noticed that even with so meagre a list of swords and daggers, Cumberland with but one halberd cuts but a poor figure. Dalton and Ambleside though in Furness and Westmorland respectively, are not far away from each other. Did the Bronzsmith of Ambleside cast the Dalton sword perchance ?

(I have to acknowledge with very grateful thanks, the great help and advice I have received from the undermentioned authorities, without whose co-operation and assistance this note could not have been made.

Messrs. E. T. Leeds, F.S.A., Deputy Keeper of the Antiquities (Prehistoric), The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; Philip Corder, F.S.A., The Society of Antiquaries of London; T. D. Kendrick, F.S.A., British Museum; G. W. Bailey, F.R.S.A., Spalding Museum; G. M. Bland, F.S.A., City of Lancaster Museum; R. H. Inman, Kendal Museum; T. Gray, F.S.A., Tullie House, Carlisle; Miss G. Ainsley, Kendal, and Mrs. William Walker, Holmrook.

I should be most grateful for any information regarding further local weapons of the Bronze Age.)