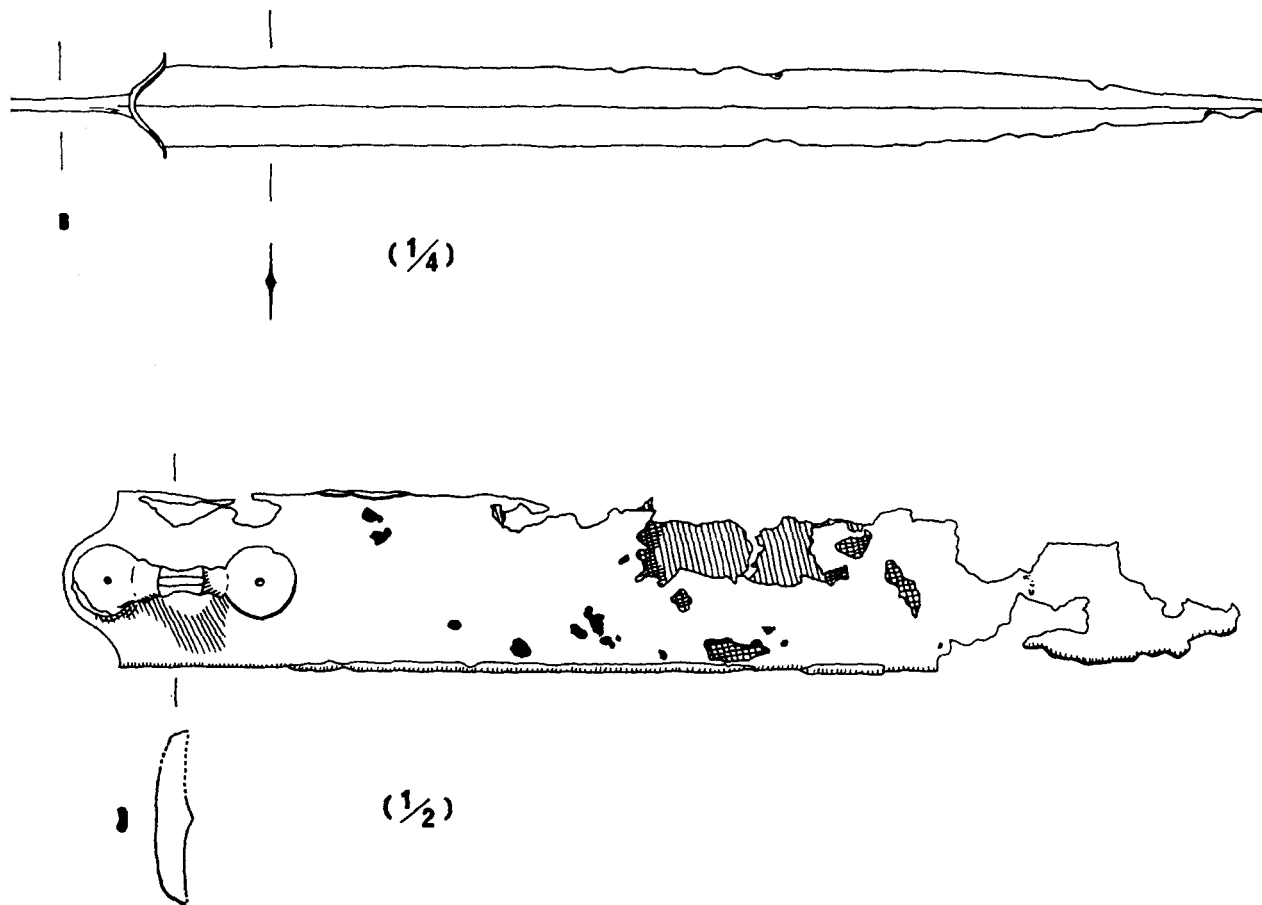


TWO WEAPONS FROM THE THAMES

BY NICHOLAS FARRANT

During the past three years Wandsworth Historical Society has been conducting a number of organised "mudlarks". In addition to various features and groups of interesting finds, these have produced a number of outstanding artifacts. Two such items which were found on the Thames foreshore of the London Borough of Wandsworth, are described below; the details of their exact find spots have been deposited with the London Museum.

IRON AGE SWORD



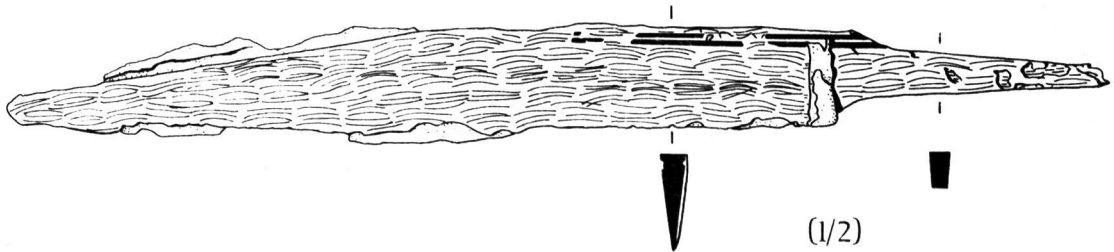
The sword which was found in its iron sheath, is remarkably well preserved; in many places the original surface of the blade is still extant. This is probably due to the protection afforded by the scabbard, the lower part of which has corroded away.

The sword is 71 cms (28 ins) long and 4 cms wide. The slender double-edged blade with its fine mid-rib has a fairly flimsy bell-shaped guard which was presumably originally held in position by the bone (or similar material) handle, now missing.

The mouth of the scabbard mirrors the shape of the guard while on the reverse the belt loop remains in an excellent condition. The shape of the guard suggests a date of the third century B.C.

The fact that the sword was in its scabbard and that it was found near the mouth of a tributary to the Thames perhaps gives further weight to the theory that many objects found in the river are votive offerings.

SEAX



When found the seax still retained the remains of its scabbard, which seems to have been made of leather. This has now been stripped off to expose one side of the badly corroded iron blade.

The seax is 29 cms ($11\frac{1}{2}$ ins) long with two blood grooves occurring on one face and one on the other. At the base of the tang what appears to have been a slight guard still remains. The seax dates to the 7th to 9th centuries A.D.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the members of the Wandsworth Historical Society for the many hours spent on the field trips which resulted, *inter alia*, in the discovery of these finds; Mr. Stan Warren for sticking to his guns that the seax was not a modern artifact; London Museum for the conservation work on the sword; Mrs. L. E. Webster of the British Museum for dating the seax; and Mr. Paul Arthur for drawing the finds.

This note is published with the aid of a grant from the Wandsworth Historical Society.