

# Dusack/Tessak

By Major Eivind Eyvang

## The Norwegian Peasant Arms

From an old age, the Norwegian army was based on some form of military service where the peasantry constituted the most important recruitment base. Mercenaries <<forbidden>> probably existed too, but in smaller numbers and unlike our neighboring countries and Europe, they consisted predominantly of Norwegians.

The farmer was obliged to procure and maintain himself the weapons which he was required to carry with him in war or exercises. It is clear from Heimskringla that weapons duty was introduced under Håkon the Good. According to the oldest lease scheme, the armament was to consist of a spear, ax, sword and bow in some combination. For armour, they had a helmet, armor and shield, but these weapons were probably a voluntary thing to acquire. About the year 1100 comes crossbow additionally. It does not immediately replace the bow, but is used side by side with it. This is also what the armistice of the Gulatings and Frostings Laws is about 1150.

Magnus Lagabøter's National Law of 1276 covers largely the same weapons, except that armor is introduced. And then the duty of arms changes over time, in line with the development of weapons. In the 1400s, the armor disappears, as does the shield. However, the invention of gunpowder has begun to gain entry, so that archabus and muskets eventually take over the bows and crossbows. Both the bow and the crossbow can be found in the setups far out in the 16th century, yes in the more remote districts there are bows that are not an insignificant part of the armament right up to the beginning of the 1600s. The flintlock comes about 1450, wheel locks and snap locks about 100 years later, and thus firearms have become dominant in Europe. In Norway, firearms are believed to have been introduced at the beginning of the 16th century.

In the late Middle Ages there were very bad times in Norway, with great poverty and decline in the population as a result of the Black Death. This also largely went beyond the defense capability, the country's defense lay for a time completely down; the shipyards were not maintained, ships rotted, and the peasants' weapons, and the like, were only held to a small degree. Nor it was easy to get the farmers to volunteer to go to war or to weapons exercises when they were in the middle of the struggle to survive for themselves and their family. An appeal for duty to the fatherland was vain under the ruling relationship. But from the latter half of the 16th century, signs of a slow rise are seen. The real momentum in this upturn will be when King Christian IV assumes power in the two kingdoms (1588-1648). Besides that progress which took place towards the end of the 16th century in the traditional industry.

We are also experiencing new industries, such as mining, shipbuilding and sawmills, flourishing.

But the king looks with growing concern at the outdated and poor educated military setups in the twin kingdoms, and that would do them for relatively easy prey for an attacker. It was troubled one time just before the 30-year war. The defense system was sadly stern, not least compared to neighboring Sweden's very modern and effective defense.

In 1604, the King in his Norwegian Law calls to live again the old decree, view from "Leidangsbalken". And the results are among the first signs of modernization of peasant duty weapons in line with the times weapon technical development: Helmet, armor, armor and shields go off required provisions. As a new weapon is introduced: musket - with matchlock, wheel lock, or snap lock. After that, the farmer's duty of arms includes

- musket
- hellebard or spear (1pike)
- dusack
- Axe

The royal ordinance of January 18, 1628, is the great attempt at restoring the Norwegian army and reorganizing, re-establishing it in modern forms. The new basic provisions would be crucial to the improvement of our military service system (the legal arrangement) and bring the army's effectiveness to a significant extent. But the financial basis for implementation was not present. First in 1641, a way was found to put the scheme to life, and then with it certain changes. It is therefore perhaps the whole of this year that should be the basics of our army's recovery, and not 1628.

The Ordinance of 1628 is based almost entirely on the peasantry as a recruitment basis. And the duty to procure and keep maintenance of certain weapons, depending on the condition and size of the farm, will be sharpened. In the middle of the 17th century, the flintlock was introduced. This one comes about at the same time as Frederik III's. Act of 1653.

The next major change in the duty of arms comes at Christian Vs Norwegian Law of 1687. Now the tessak is replaced by the Karde (Walloon type sword), and the halberd, which was introduced in 1604, is abolished and replaced by half pike.

And this is seen as the development goes on for new weapons to be introduced and the older ones expire, until 1814, when the legal system and thus the duty of arms are abolished and replaced with the new military service system. But even after 1814, according to the concepts of our time, it is clearly unjustified that conscription still applies to the peasantry, and to a very small extent the urban population. This condition was first rectified by the Act of August 26, 1854, when the exemption from the duty of the city population was repealed. From an early age, the legislation contains provisions governing the control of the farmer's weapons at the annual gunfire. These were administered by the king's ombudsman, that is, the layman or the bailiff. Thus we see that Magnus Lagabøter's Land Act of 1274 provides

such provisions in "Uttare or Landværne Balcken", Chapter XII5 "About Vaabenthing", which states, among other things, that the message should go when the armistice was imminent. According to the law, the armistice was held between the torch fair, February 2, and the center. In the case of the Salten, this provision has not been complied with, as the armistice was discontinued in June. There were also penalties for not meeting and not having the weapons that were required: 2 marks of silver for not meeting, 1 marks of silver for each weapon he was to carry.

The pattern report from Salten (see below) shows that the Ombudsman approved that the man from "full" farm had a tessak or ax next to "gun" (rifle), and not both as the law provided. By "half" management, which must have meant what is required of a landlord who sat on a "half redsels," farm, the man should have a "long gun and a tessak". This was also the armament that most people encountered at the Salten thing in 1609, both of "full" and "half" leadership. Whoever met from a "tridings" farm should have a gun and an ax. Only 7 shooters from all over Salten met with this weapon. Anyone who met from a "fierdings" farm should have a halberd with iron rails, 2 cubits long, and a tessak. Of the 684 hellebird attendees, 11 had axes instead of tessak. «2 pd's, 1 pd's and ½ pd's Leding probably corresponds to what the law decides on the deserted farm men. The man of the deserted farms would have "a spear and a hand ax". At the Armed Forces in 1609, all service strands had halberds and tessaks.

There are two complete reports of armistice in Northern Norway. There respectively for Salten and Senjen in 1609 and gives a good picture of the distribution of arms in the region. They are therefore summarized here;

*Salten:*

	Ant.mann (?)	Rør (Rifle?)	Halberd	Spear	Tessack	Axe
Skraagens Vær	17	1	4	12	17	
Tjeldsunds Fjerding	158	35	85	38	146	12
Oftens	142	15	98	29	121	21
Hammero	176	32	104	40	174	2
Engell	103	11	56	36	86	17
Ledings	65	14	36	15	60	5
Folden	99	29	38	32	88	11
Saltens	228	28	94	106	198	30

Gilleskaals	171	32	79	60	159	12
Bodo	183	27	88	68	171	12
Total	1342	224	680	436	1220	122

Sum for the entirety of Saltens Lehn:

217 shooters with Tessacks

7 shooters with Axes

Total: 224 Shooters

673 Halberdiers with Tessacks

11 Halberdiers with Axes

Total: 684 Halberdiers

353 Pikemen with Tessacks

87 Pikemen with Axes

Total: 440 Pikemen

Particularly noteworthy here is the very large number of tessaks, 1220. It is obvious that a considerable part of the weapons introduced of this type have gone to Northern Norway.

The list of the census numbers in Salten shows:

Shooters -	60 of which 57 archers
Pikemen, and also the archers -	<u>167</u>
Total Armed Men -	227
Unarmed Men -	<u>4</u>
Total -	231 men

That is, no one with a halberd, tessak or ax. You see that in this one a portion of the population is still a significant portion using the bow. Parts are, of course, first and foremost an economic issue, but surely also a consequence of the bow being a suitable hunting weapon in the right hand.

Senjen (Senja):

A complete summary gives these figures:

Guns	112
Halberder	411
Javelin	256
Tessak and other side weapons	738
Axes	417

The number of men is not listed here, but as you can see there are relatively few guns in the district. Since Tessaks and other side weapons (Tessaks and verger(?) in the text of the pattern report) are merged, it is not possible to say how many of each.

Unfortunately, it has not been possible to find reports from all over southern Norway. The scattered information available may give some indications, but is really too weak a base material to draw decisive conclusions on the distribution of weapons. They are still included below.

A report from Setesdalen in 1647 shows this distribution:

	Ant.mann	Gun	Halberd	Spear	Tessak	Axe	Bow
Bykle	13	6	3	1	3	11	2
Walle	88	26	11	2	34	81	6
Hyllestad	8	3	1	1	3	6	
Bygland	39	6	5	1	14	30	3
Sandnes	12	2	2		?	7	
Iffuerland (Iveland)	58	2	1		?		
Wegusdal	44	1	1	2	1?	1	1
Omblie	69	13	3	6	4	72	1
Heigrefos	19	6			2	23	1
Froland	6					6	
Giffurdal	19	5	3	8	1	22	1
Wiegaardsheden (Vegårdshei)	47	16	4	11	16	58	
Sum	422	86	34	32	169*)	317	15

\*) Total issues are not correct. This is probably due to the error in the transcript

From the county accounts in Stavanger 1611

«All mentioned Servants and Persoughner(?) were released off Staffangers Lehn in 1611 with Guns, Halberd and Verger(sword?).

Just as the number of men next explains and has happened to the utmost skill and reason as that time was to come after the King. Maijst. and high Øffrighedt Mandates and Breffue. Is that and aff thennd to the ordained Musterschiffer giffuit their Maanidtz Besoldningh 4 Dr. each person about the Month equally after as in the tenth ehr Bleffuer either di ehr Please forloffuitt or reluctantly dismissed ehr as follows. (Untranslated text could not be found to translate)

Sum

Hageschotter (Shooters?)	213
Halbardier	430
Tessak	643

Reports from the Armistice have been held from the Eastern Norway area in 1953 for

- Hallingdal
- Modum og Sigdal
- Nedre Romerike
- Øvre Romerike
- Solør og Odalen
- Hedmark
- Heggen og Frøland
- Moss
- Follo

«Muster roll on Almuens Gevehr in Hallingdalen to Allmindellg Vaabenthing which was held on 21 Martii Anno 1653» shown «Summa Summarum amounts to never mentioned Gevehr Udaff the twentieth Aall and Ness Prestegield in Hallingdalen»:

(Original text seems to be a mix of Latin and Norwegian and does not translate cleanly «Munsterrulle paa Almuens Gevehr udi Hallingdalen till Allmindellg Vaabenthing som bleff holdenn dend 21 Martii Anno 1653»9 visert «Summa Summarum beløber sig ald forbemeldte Gevehr Udaff de tvende Aall och Ness Prestegield udi Hallingdalen» :)

Gun	247
Type of Sword (slagsverd)	2
Axe	51
Piker	212
Walloon Sword (Degener (kårder))	444
Spear	2

«Mandtal's Register offends Modum and Sigdal's Prestegield, according to Almougens Gevehr where the same place is overlooked and the Enrollment on the Guard, as after strict Exel. Mr. Stadtholder's Order was held on February 14, 1653 »showing an inventory of:

Gun	157
Tessak	255
Hallberd	98
Ax	106

«The Mandal Register on the Gevehr Almuen in district of Rommeriges Fougderi at Mønsterplads show up with their guns» these figures:

Flintlock Gun	598
Sword with Belt (Kaarre (kårde) med geheng)	625
Tessak	43

Halberd	25
Picher(?)	38
Spiud(?)	2

From the armory on Øvre Romerike the same date is obtained distribution:

Soga	Ant.mann	Flintlock Gun	Tessak	Other Weapons
Gjerdrum	Full Farm 50	50	50	
	Half » 8	8	8	
	Deserted » 5			5
Ullensaker	Full » 93	93	93	
	Half » 22	22	22	
	Deserted » 48		4	44
Eidsvoll	Full » 77	77	76	
	Half » 26	26	26	
	Deserted » 67		24	Inadequate arming
Nannestad	Full » 86	86	82	
	Half » 23	23	23	
	Deserted » 26			26
	Crofters 4			4
Nes	Full gård 119	119	119	
	Half » 48	48	48	
	Deserted » 32			No
	Crofters 5			>
Total O. Romerike	739	552	575	79

From the Armoury in Solør and Odalen you get these numbers:

Soga	Ant.mann	Gun	Sword	Axe	Pike
Vinger	Full Farm 73	73	73		
	Half » 42	42	42		
	Deserted » 37		37		37
	Crofters 24			24	24
	Tjenestedrenge(?) 6			6	6
Bou(?)	Full Farm 133	133	121		
	Half » 57	57	48		
	Deserted » 37	37	16		
	Rydningsspl. (?) 5	1	1		4
	Tjenestedrenge(?) 2				2
Grue	Full Farm 81	77	77		4
	Half » 53	50	50		3
	Deserted » 49	29	29		19
	Rydningsspl. (?) 6				6
Odalen	Full Farm 64	61	61		
	Half » 40	40	40		
	Deserted » 35		35		35
	Rydningsspl.(?) 20			14	14
Sum Solar and Odalen	764	600	630	44	154

A coat of arms on the Hedemark "on Hele and Halve and Ødeugaarders Gevehr, by which each Farms Names recorded, which the authors met on 14 February 1653", a 24-page report, states, among other things, that "everyone has tessach" . Number of patterned is not clear, but it is clear that most people now have flintlock rifles about. 900. Thus, one must assume that it must have been at Hedmarken at least as many cases, ie 900, a number that is included in the calculation (page 94).



In "Heggen and Frølands Fougderi" , this was kept open result:

Soga	Ant. Mann	Gun	Walloon Type Sword	Axe	Other Weapon
Trøgstad	Entire Farm 78	78	78	78	
	Deserted 24	24			24
Båstad	Entire Farm 53	53	53	53	
	Deserted 11	11			11
Askim	Entire Farm 82	82	82	82	
	Deserted 15				15
Eidsberg	Entire Farm 176	176	176	176	
	Deserted 42				42
Sum Heggen and Froland	481	424	389	424	57

«Anno 1653 den 14. Februar efter excel. hr. Statholderens ordre bleff holdt alment Vaabenting offuer Moss Fougderi och befandtis de her efterschreffne Gevehr.»

Flintlock Gun	24
Snaplock Gun	69
Sword and Belt(Geheng?)	93
Forker(?)	16
Halberd	2
Spiud(?)	2

From Folloug (Follo) Fougderi shows the report of February 14, 1653 these sums:

Feuerlaasbøsser (Matchlock Guns?)	19
Flintlock Guns	370
Walloon Sword	482
Krumb(?) sabers	26
Pike	119
Axes	508

First of all, it is interesting about the arrangements in Eastern Norway large number of flint-lock rifles already in use. Before that one operates with a large number of swords(kårder.). This is before Christian Vs Norwegian Law (1687) which also calls for people instead of tessak, and it is therefore remarkable that it already exists such an overwhelming number of swords(kårder). It is conceivable that very many already replaced the curved blade with a straight blade? Or is it really a matter of home-made peasant weapons, since the Tessak may not have been distributed at all to some districts? Unfortunately, these questions must be left unanswered.

The above weapon counts thus do not give a complete picture of the distribution of weapons on a national basis. In addition, the side weapons are not always specified. There are many indications that a fairly large number of the listed swords are straight-blade tessages. For purely practical reasons, therefore, about half of the farms are thought to be tessaks.

Thus, it is difficult to draw any concrete conclusions showing the distribution of the individual weapons. But it is probable that in the first half of the 17th century the tessak was used as the main weapon for the Norwegian farmer, next to the ax.

Therefore, there has long been a lack of weapons researchers have known that there is so little known about the origin of the tessak and that it has not been possible to find out how it came to the country. I do not pretend to solve this problem, but in the following I try to put together the scattered information so that they may give a probable - but not proven - picture of the prehistory. Furthermore, I will go into a bit more detail on the type of division and what we know about the issues that exist today. However, I must already admit here that the route from the country of origin to Norway has not succeeded.

## Definition of the Tessak

Tessak is a powerful side weapon that can be said to be a mixture of tough and curvy saber, with the attachment having the characteristics of a heavier core, while the blade is a powerful, curved saber blade. There are also a considerable number of weapons with tessak attachment and straight blade. These may have had the right blade permanently, but it seems most likely that most of these originally had curved blades that were later replaced. I'll come back to this.

### Type classification

Some years back, the weapons received by the Army Museum from the Historical Museum, Bergen, which contained, among other things, no less than 57 tessaks, were registered. It then proved to be useful to further divide the previously used type divisions. I therefore prepared a new classification as follows:

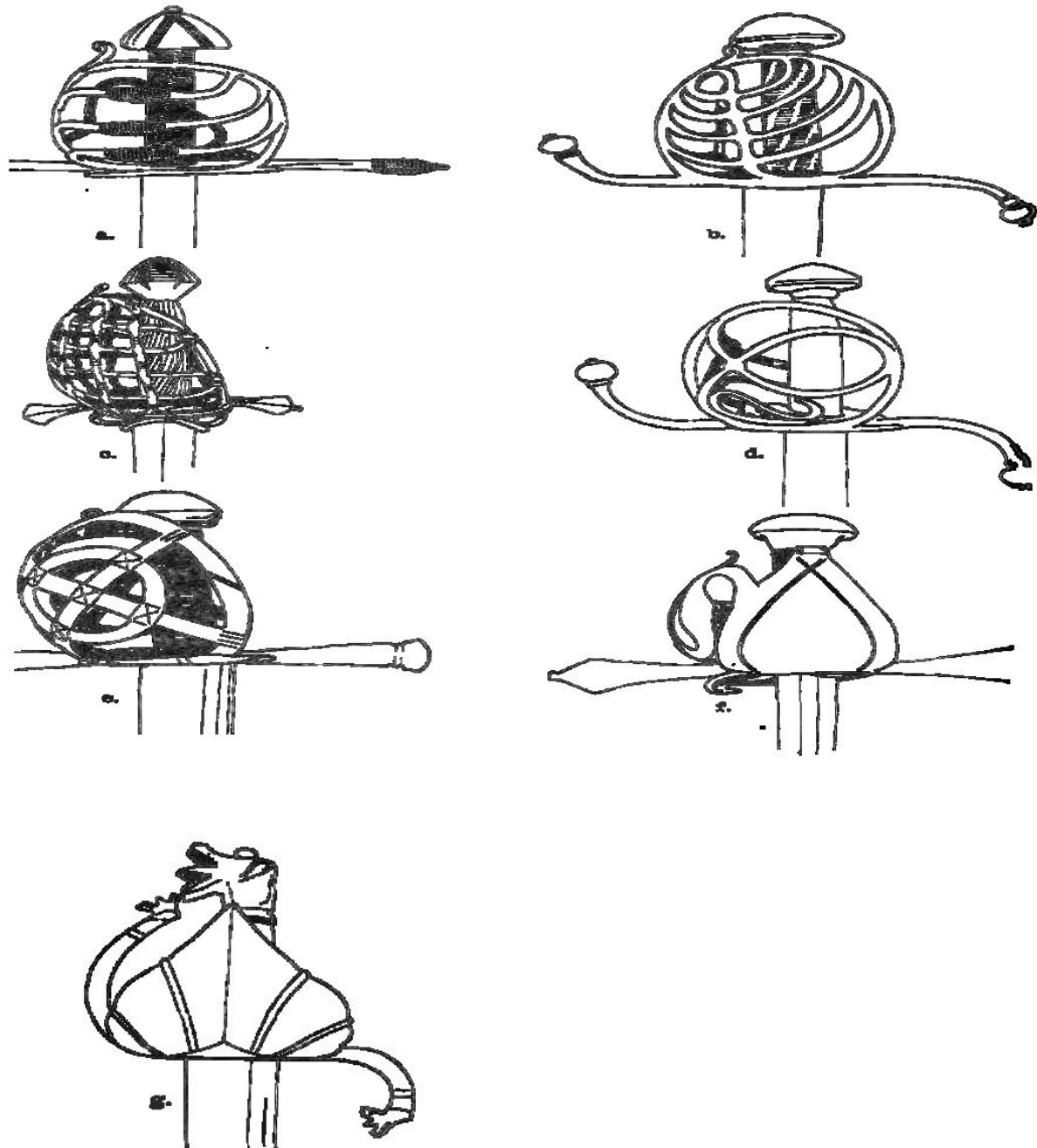


Fig. 1 a- g. Main types of Tessak furniture

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| Type A: Attachment with S-shaped cross braces  | (fig 1A) |
| Type B: Attachment with herringbone pattern  | (fig 1B) |
| Type C: Attachment with lattice pattern  | (fig 1C) |
| Type D: Attachment with other round braces   | (fig 1D) |
| Type E: Attachment with flat braces  | (fig 1E) |
| Type F: Attachment with bent, triangular mating plate and shackles   | (fig 1F) |
| Type G: Attachment with bent, triangular or rounded mating plate<br>and open handband (usually with dragon head on button and<br>end of handband and mating arm) | (fig 1G) |
| Type H: Other attachment types.  | (fig 1H) |

For the sake of order, it should be noted that the type classification as business economist Per T. Norheim describes in his article "Tessakklinger" in the Army Museum's yearbook 1971-1972, does not quite match the one mentioned above and is now used at the museum. But these are not major deviations.

### Curved and straight blades

As can be seen from the above definition, the tessak should have a special type of saber blade. However, there are a considerable number of blades, and there are also a number of other saber and straight blades that are clearly not the original ones. It might therefore be more accurate to call the weapons that have tessak attachment and straight blade edges, but for practical reasons have found to treat all of them as tessaks, thus leaving the designation be crucial. In the Haermuseet artefacts both arms with curved and one blades are placed within the same type of division.

Business economist Norheim has in his article mentioned above provided a very good description and classification of tessaks. I should not, therefore, attach myself too much to this question, but nevertheless express my personal view of the straight and bare blades. For some types there seems to be a certain line when it comes to straight and curved blades. It is striking that type A 1 tessaks have a significantly greater degree than the others with knobby blades. Of the 51 reviewed of this type at the Sandvigske Collections, 50 have curved blades. Of the Hännuse's 43 complete of the type, 31 have straight and 12 curved blades. Nevertheless, this may be due to chance. In their studies, business economist Norheim has found that there is a clear trend towards the tessaks having the straight blades also having the straight pairing bars at parties of a type that otherwise have S-shaped pairing bars.

Several attempts have been made to explain why a large proportion of tessaks have the straight blades. Assuming that all the tessaks were equipped with curved blades when they arrived in Norway, there can be two main reasons for the replacement for straight blades: One is the practical one, namely in the form of use repairs. When the blade was worn or broken, it was replaced with what was available, and then perhaps straight blades. We also see that tessaks have in many cases changed their original blade with another curved blade of later type.

The second reason may be due to Christian V's Norwegian Law of 1687, where it was decided that prisoners should be included in the peasant armament. In order to avoid the huge expense of acquiring a brand new weapon, one instead obtained only a Korde blade that simply made the tessak matter into Kordes. It is probable that special blades may also have been introduced specifically for this.

Business economist Norheim believes in his article to be able to reject the theory that the straight blades were later inserted because of the Norwegian regulations. He claims to have shown that the straight blades are all from the same time as the curved ones, and that from Germany and Austria there are examples of weapons with straight blades in tessak fasteners. This last I can confirm. Furthermore, he points out as a further indication of the

mentioned tendency that the weapons that have the straight blades very often also have the straight pairing bars at fittings of a type that otherwise have S-shaped pairing bars. These seem to be important arguments, but I still doubt that they prove anything. First, it is clear that a blade that can be replaced can be from the same time period as the original tessak blade. There is nothing unusual in that one up here in Norway can either have lying or for a cheap money purchased straight blades from the same time period.

Secondly, reports from the old armaments show that there is a considerable amount of talk about matters, not particularly about other types of side weapons. Had there been a better basis in the form of several reports from the armistice, these would surely have provided firmer evidence.

Thirdly, it can be mentioned that the theory that fasteners with the straight mating rod are usually the straight blade is not easily durable. Both types of blades are also found in such parties, although one can probably agree that there is a striking tendency. The answer lies in the fact that all theories are more or less correct, namely that the right blades in tessak parties

- partly are use compositions (repairs),
- partly a consequence of the king's provision for the use of kard, and
- partly for some specimens, have originally been in the arms.

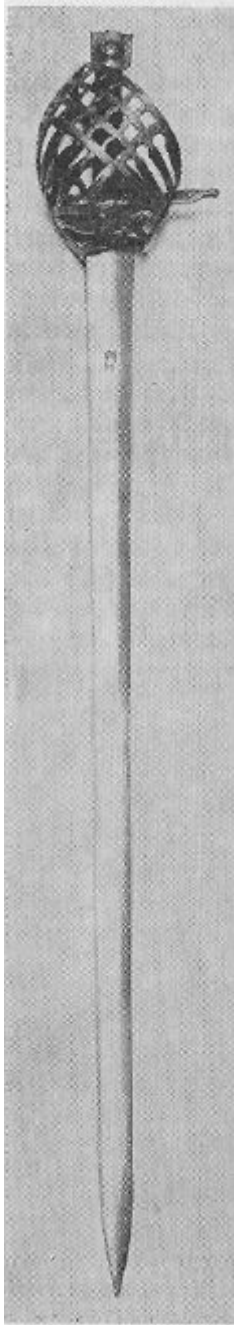
## Origin

There are many indications that the tea case was produced in the middle or in the latter half of the 16th century, in southern Germany and Austria. Here it is said to have been a



Fig. 2. Fencing with Dussacks (J. Meyer, Gründliche Beschreibung der freyen ritterlichen und adelichen Kunst des Fechtens. Strassburg 1570).

common weapon of citizens and farmers to personal protection. It must also be used militarily by the troops at the border with Turkey. It is difficult to provide irrefutable evidence that the case originated in these areas. However, if you look at other weapons that we know originate from the south-eastern part of Europe, we find certain typological commonalities.



In the 15th century there was a peculiar weapon of arms that probably does not exist in the collections of the Army Museum. It had the term tessak or a related version of the word. It actually consisted of a roughly processed curved blade which, instead of its own basket hilt, had an oblong hole in its hand in a smudged extension of the blade itself

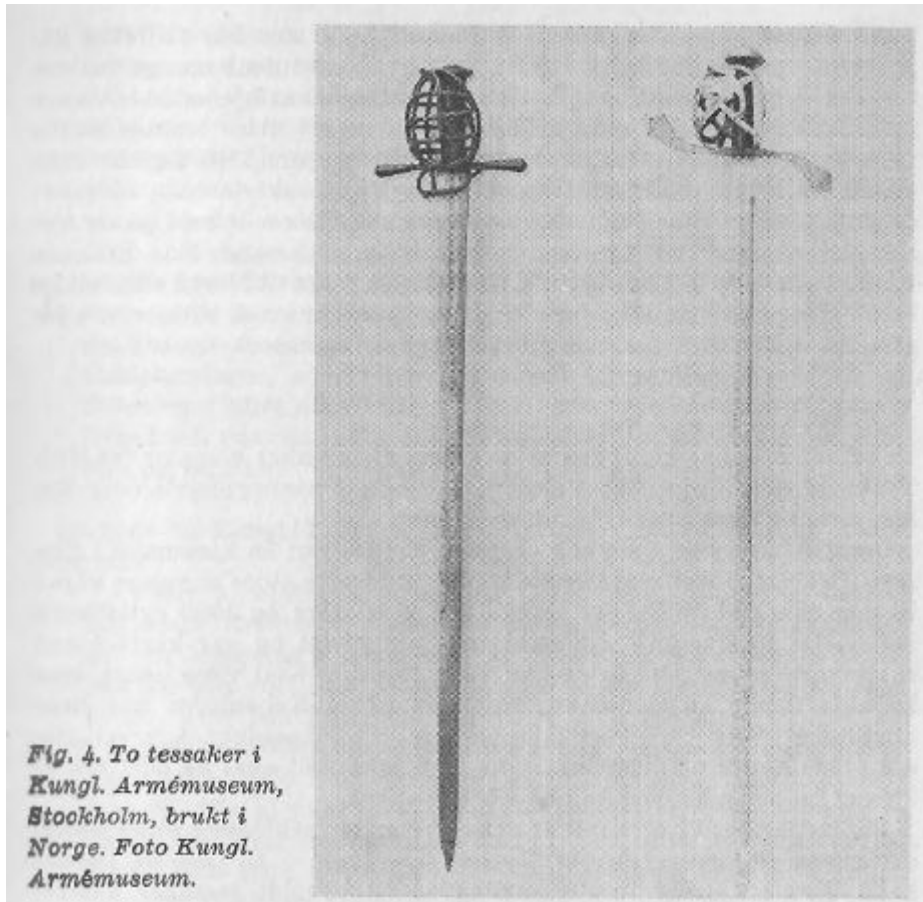
This weapon was probably used significantly as a saber. In a book from 1570 on the art of fencing, written by fencer Master Joachim Meyer, is depicted a fencing scene where this weapon is used (fig. 2). But, as you can see from the figure, this weapon had little in common with the subjects discussed here.

The Swiss saber is a distinctive side weapon that - regardless of its oriental influence - mainly occurs in Switzerland as the name suggests. The characteristic feature of the weapon is the slightly curved unicorn blade, besides its special shape. The fittings of the older types (from about the year 1530-40) have a design similar to that of the sword, but they can also bring thought to the tessak. There are certain features here that are repeated in certain types of tessak parties. But eventually the attachment to the Swiss saber becomes more and more similar to that of the saber, and thus the weapon glides over another direction of development.

The Schiavona (fig. 3) dates from ca. 1570 and comes from the part of the Venetian footmen recruited from Dalmatia. It has the right blade and can be characterized as a chop and shock weapon. The Schiavona's mount has certain similarities to the Type C tessak.

In his article "Deutschgefasste Sabel" Gerhard Seifert describes a number of saber types that developed in the south and south-eastern parts of Germany and Austria in the 16th century. Within these types of sabers are also the saber he calls the "Sinclair sable" (incidentally an erroneous international designation of the tessak, evidenced by previously believed to have been used by the Scots at Kringen Gudbrandsdalen in 1612. See p. 111). Especially one of the weapons

Seifert describes is very similar to the tessak, in terms of the shape of the party. The blade is significantly less curved than the tessak (arrow height 11 mm).



*Fig. 4. To tessaker i Kungl. Armémuseum, Stockholm, brukat i Norge. Foto Kungl. Armémuseum.*

Two swords in the Royal. Armemuseum, Stockholm (fig. 4) is described by Dr. Phil. Heribert Seitz.<sup>12</sup> They both have Tessak basket hilts, but are fitted with the straight blades. They have been used in Norway. The one on the left of these has Andrea Ferrara's mark on the blade. Ferrara (1555-1593) worked in Belluna, northeastern Italy. All in all, you see features of the aforementioned weapons that have a common character that also goes back to the case of the tessak, with its many variants. It therefore seems clear that the seat of the tessak business must be in Southeastern Europe. When visiting museums in these districts, one would expect to find large quantities of the weapon type. But then you are disappointed. In Zeughaus Graz, there are only a few "Norwegian" tessaks, and otherwise only specimens are found at the various museums in Austria, Switzerland and southern Germany. Could the reason be that there are no more left after they were sold to Norway or other countries? Or have you not found the weapon type "nice" enough to preserve for posterity, as you have done with the guns?

### The Tessak comes to Norway

We must therefore be able to assume that the "Norwegian" issues come from southern Germany or Austria. The road to Norway probably goes over Copenhagen, and also over Dutch ports.

In his book "Blank Weapons", Josef Alm mentions that in Bremen, Gregorius Kettvig, in the years 1607-10, supplied large quantities of weapons to the Danish krone, including 6,366 swords and 1000 cavalry swords. The former were reserved for the infantry and were shorter



than cavalry swords. Whether this may be a matter of course should be unspoken, but perhaps partly a possibility. The Tøjhus Museum in Copenhagen has some sword classes of a type that do not even resemble tessaks. Still, the sheer number and timing makes it impossible to completely ignore that at least some of them may have been tessaks. Certainly, it is at least that relatively large quantities of weapons - rifles and iron-sided weapons - have arrived at the port of Oslo and Bergen. The probably first sending which contained tessaks dates to 1589, ie the year after Christian IV came to power. In a letter from the king, dated July 30, 1589, to Peder Thott, this order "- - was to purchase for a cheap host the pipes and ferries which Nils Bild had ordered from Germany for the peasant's needs in Bergenhuus Len, and form for the same value and payment among the peasants out there in the loan "(expire = pay out?).

This consignment was distributed among the farmers in the county, as commanded by the king, but it is likely that some of the weapons have also found their way down the valleys of eastern Norway.

Furthermore, we see that a larger collection of weapons came to Oslo in 1617. Enevold Kruse and Knut Urne receive a letter on this, dated Skanderborg 15 January 1617 «Know that since a rather number of muskets and sidewalks for the Odels farmers need to be printed together our Kingdom of Norway, and we have now, for this need, been allowed to act (and) negotiate with this letterwinner Michel Gynther, hopeful to Schoell, that he will supply 2000 Muskets with all the Accessories and 2000 Sideverger (Sidearms?) with the most attractive Apartment in our Copenhagen Oslo Sideverger also with his accessories, we ask you and wanted that when he with the same Muskets and Sideverger did up to our Copenhagen Oslo arrives, that you then old 2000 Muskets and 2000 Sideverger let him accept, content and pay him for each piece of the Muskets 2 Rigsdaler and ½ Ort, and for each Sideverge 1 Rigsdaler and 1 Ort, consider that we have thus agreed with him, and that you later obey the Odel farmers, who are printed and the same Muskets and Sidearms are distributed to, that they repay and pay to you again, if you have paid for and paid for the former Muskets and Sidearms. "

A letter to Enevold Kruse from Copenhagen, dated July 18, 1617 sounds like this: «Know that since we most urgently had to order and condition this Letterman, Johan de Villum, Citizen and Resident here in our City of Copenhagen, would have to supply 2000 Muskets, each at 2 Rigsdaler, with our most prestigious Apartment at our Castle Akershus ½ Place, 2000 Side guns, each for 1 Rigsdaler, 2000 Gehang and Lifeguard, each Piece for 9 Skilling Lybsk, 2000 Bandeler, Piece 12 Skill. Lybsk, then we pray you and would that when he gives you the muskets, sub-guns and banditels survivors, that you then repay his rifle on our behalf after this tax, let them pay, and then the Odels farmers out there in Akershuus county, who for Soldiers are printed and the same Rifle is distributed to them again to pay and pay you, if at Old Muskets and Rifles are thus the expense was paid. "

Here we find the order in more detail, and the prices are also specified. Along with muskets, tessaken is seen coming to Norway over the two largest ports Bergen and Osilo. It is possible that there have also been several consignments, but this has not yet been brought to light.



## Provenance and distribution of existing tessakers

Today, large quantities of tessak are available at the following museums:

- The Sandvigske Collections, Lillehammer	123
- Nordic Museum, Stockholm	214
- Norwegian Folk Museum, Oslo	10
- Glåmdalsmuseet, Elverum approx.	20
- The Science Society, Trondheim	6
- Stavanger Museum	4
- Army Museum, Oslo	143 *)
Sum approx.	520

Approximately of loose attachment curves are found

- The Sandvigske Collections	ca 5
- The science company	7
- The Army Museum	20
- Elsewhere	10
Sum approx.	42

\*) Of which 57 from the History Museum, Bergen.

At other museums around the country there may be approx. 30-50 tessaks. In addition, a considerable number are in private hands, both at collectors and on various farms. How many of these can be combined is impossible to say, even approximate.

It turns out to be partly sparse information about the tessak found in Norwegian museums. In the case of the Army, this applies to both those who have had the museum for a long time and the 57 from the Historical Museum Bergen and who came in 1964-65. The tessaks in the Sandvigske Collections are partly from the University's Old Collection, and partly from the surrounding settlements, but here too is sparse with information on provenance. The items in the Nordiska Museum have been carefully described and, unlike in Norwegian museums, the importance of writing down the provenance information has been realized. The reason for this is that at the end of the last century, the museum's founder and first director, Dr. Arthur Hazelius, organized and carried out large purchases of objects from the peasant culture in Norway, including a large number of weapons. Both for the sake of payment to the individual and because they were already aware at that time of the significance of the provenance information for the object research, the registration cards here are provided with information about farm, place and year. Therefore, this collection, along with the sparse information we have about the other topics, can give us one little indication of how the tessaks in Norway were distributed, and possibly concentrated. This, of course, must be seen with the weapons reports.

Of the Sandvigske Samlingsers 123 tessaks, I have reviewed the cards for and studied the 86. Of these, only 9 had provenance information or assumptions. All of these were from or

believed to be from Gudbrandsdalen. Although a substantial part, as mentioned above, is a deposit from the Oldsaksamlingen in Oslo, and therefore may as well be able to write from other places, it should not be so wrong to suggest the possibility that these matters come from the Gudbrandsdalen or adjacent valleys.

Also regarding the Bergen collection's issues are largely missing provenance information. Nevertheless, it should be assumed that these weapons are of the cargo that was shipped to Bergen and distributed in the western part of the country, in other words that they have entered the museum from the western parts of the west.

Below I have grouped the items at the Nordic Museum by area and then get the following distribution:

Østlandet:

Gudbrandsdalen	15	
Valdres	6	
Hallingdal	9	
Numedal	11	
Toten	6	
Hedmark	1	48
	--	

Sørlandet og Telemark:

Telemark	11	
Aust-Agder	2	13
	--	

Vestlandet:

Rogaland	5	
Hordaland	24	
Sogn og Fjordane	24	
Sunnmøre	1	
Romsdalen	11	65
	--	

Trøndelag:

Orkdalen	6	
Sør-Trøndelag for øvrig	2	8
	--	

Nord-Norge:

Sør-Hålogaland (Nordland)	48	
(herav Salten 40)		
Nord-Hålogaland (Troms)	3	51
		--
Total		185
No Number		29
		--

Total Nordiska Museum 214

If we see this distribution in relation to the largest collections in our museums (see page 92), we find this regional distribution of the known items:

	Sandv. Saml.	Nord. mus.	Norsk folkemus.	Glomdals mus.	Vitsk.-selsk.	Hær-mus.	Stvgr. mus.	Sum
Østlandet	128*)	48	10	20		96*)		302
Sørlandet (Telemark og Aust-Agder)		13					4	13
Syd-Vestlandet (Rogaland, V.-Agder)		5						9
Vestlandet (Hordaland, Sogn og Fjordane, Sunnmøre)		49				67*)		116
Midt-Norge (Trøndelag, Romsdal)		19			13			32
Nord-Norge		51						51
Sum	128	185	10	20	13	163	4	523
Uten nummer v/Nordiska museet								29
*) Inkl. løse festekurver.								552

If you compare this distribution with the pre-mentioned sample reports from the armaments, you get this distribution:

	Opptalt på våpenting	Registrert på museer
Østlandet	ca. 2700*)	302
Sørlandet (Telemark og Aust-Agder)	169**)	13
Syd-Vestlandet (Rogaland, Vest-Agder)	643	9
Vestlandet (Hordaland, Sogn og Fjordane, Sunnmøre)		116
Midt-Norge (Trøndelag og Romsdal)		32
Nord-Norge	ca. 1750***)	51
Sum	ca. 5350	523

\*) Where tessaks are not specified, approx. half of the side weapons are believed to be cases.

\*\* ) Only Setesdal, therefore weak comparative basis.

\*\*\* ) The number from the Senja armament, 738 cases and other side weapons, is not specified. Therefore, only an estimated part is included in the figure 1750.

Of the approx. 5350 tessaks that existed in the 17th century are thus only somewhere between 523 and 600 registered in the museums. How many exist outside these is impossible to say.

### Typical distribution of tessaks in museums

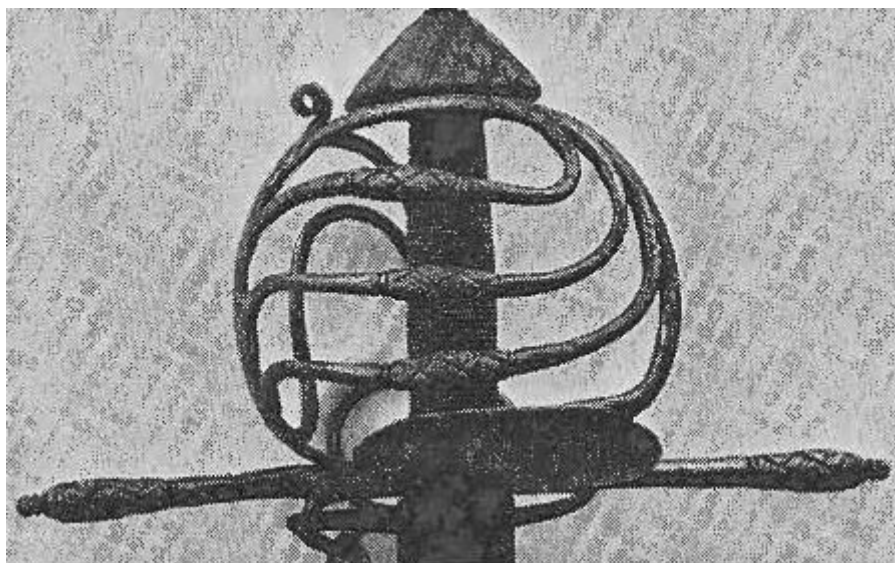
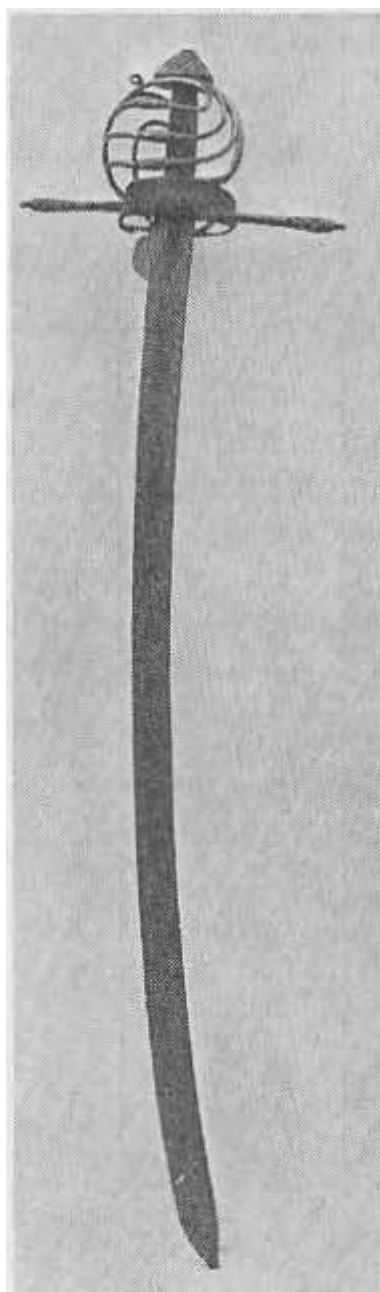
It may be of some interest to see how the registered tessaks with: straight and curved blades are typically distributed at the individual museums. Below is one such overview, distributed among the museums that have the most important collections of Norway. They probably would have been much more valuable if they had included the items in the Nordic Museum, but unfortunately I did not have such a comparison in mind when I went through this collection.

Type	Blade	Sandv. Saml.	Vitsk. selsk.	Army Museum	Sum
A	straight			12	13
	curve	1		31	83
	just basket	50	2	10	10
B	straight			4	5
	curve	1		2	3
	just basket	1	2	6	8
C	straight		1	5	10
	curve	4		5	6
	just basket	1	2	1	3
D	straight	1	1	1	
	curve	0	1	5	6
	just basket	0	1	1	2
E	straight			5	8
	curve	3		8	16
	just basket	8	1	8	9
F	straight			4	6
	curve	2		12	19
	just basket	7	1	2	3
G	straight				
	curve	2		2	4
	just basket	4		10	14
H (Other)	straight	0	0		
	curve	1	1	5	5
	just basket	0	0	12	14

Should any conclusion be drawn from this overview, it would be worse to say that, apart from Type A, there is no obvious trend in the direction that weapons with the right blades are to be found within specific type groups. This may support the theory that any replacement of curved blades rightly has not been intentionally reserved for any particular types. That the vast majority of Type A weapons have jagged blades, I think for the same reason is just a coincidence. This question has also been dealt with before (p. 85).

## Some examples of issues within the individual type groups

The following is a description of some of the issues that are representative of the individual types. They are all taken from the Hrrermuseet's collection, though substantially from the weapons deposited from the History Museum, Bergen. The latter is marked with the letter B after the Hao number.



### Type A

As can be seen from the above schematic presentation, this is by far the largest existing group of tessaks. The S-shaped protuberances that connect the palm rest to a rear axle and thereby form the basket fastener are the group's typical characteristic. Usually there are three such cases, but there are also tessaks with four. The front bowls have a more or less marked thickness in the middle.

HAO 19581 B (fig. 5) has the handle wrapped with iron wire in a smooth and braided pattern. The winding is not original, but of a later date. Blades on the blade indicate that this one is from Solingen and that the bladesmith is Peter Weyersberg. See also HAO 19646 B. Blade type I according to Norheim's type classification. Total length 101 cm, blade length 87 cm, blade width 3.6 cm, arrow height 3.5 cm. Weight 1.46 kg. No provenance information.



HAO 19601 B (fig. 5) has the handle wrapped with smooth and braided iron wire in pattern and turquoise heads. Blacksmith on the blade:



*Fig. 6. HAO 19601 B.*

This forging mark also appears on two other tessesages in the Museum's collection, namely HAO 19588 B and 19642 B, MR may mean that the blacksmith is Mart. Rotschmied from Nuremberg. He died in 1597. The two crowned "stools" are more ornamental than actual

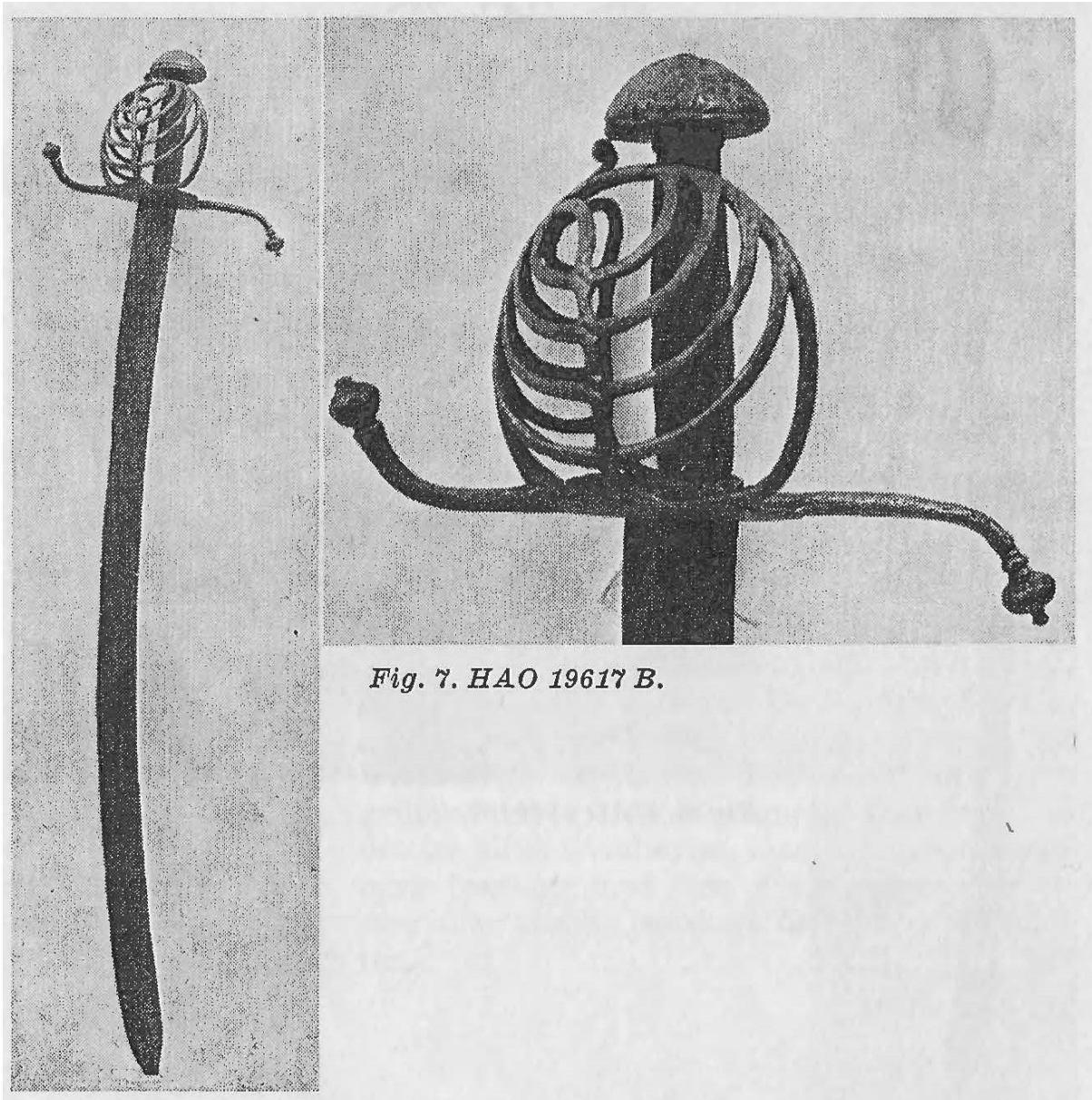


smith marks. Such labeling goes back to a number of blades from around the 17th century and was used by Milanese blacksmiths. The blade can therefore be Italian. Blade type I. Very good constitution. Total length 91.5 cm, blade length 77.5 cm, blade width 3.6 cm, arrow height 3.8 cm. Weight 1.27 kg. No provenance information.

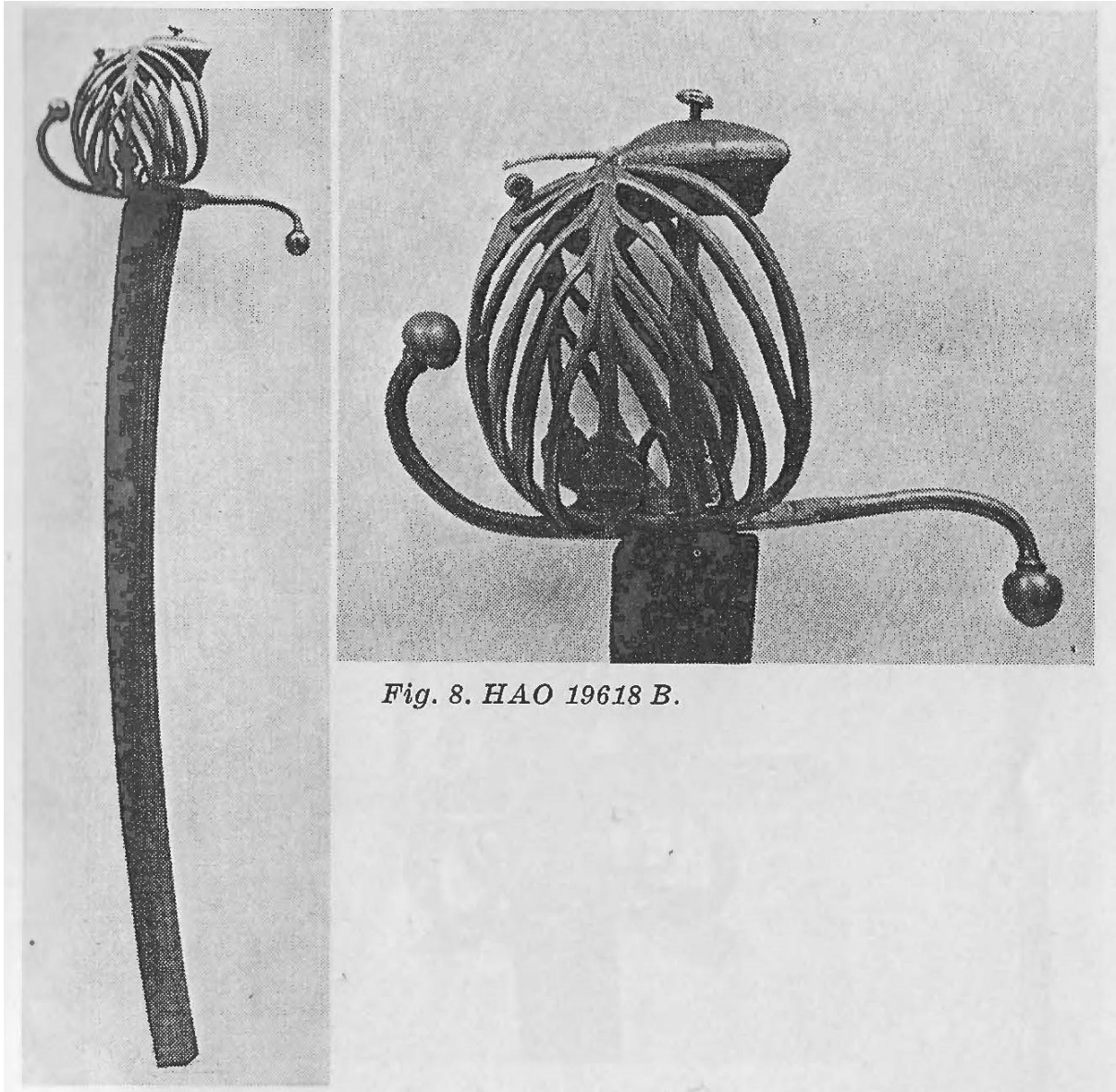
#### Type B

This type of character is the basket leg or sternum pattern of the basket.

HAO 19617 B (fig. 7) has a helical handle wrapped with a twist iron thread in fishbone patterns and turkey heads. The blade that is somewhat attacked by rust has no visible smith marks. Total length 93 cm, blade length 88.7 cm, blade width 3.6 cm, arrow height 3.2 cm. Weight 1.22 kg. Blade type 1. No provenance information.



R110 19618 B (fig. 8) had no grip when it came to the Army Museum, but a new grip of wood was refurbished and fitted in 1971. The blade which is disconnected (outer part is missing) has no visible smith marks and is of type II. 19 Total length 79 cm, blade length 66.7 cm, blade width 4.5 cm. Weight 1.3 kg. No provisional information.



*Fig. 8. HAO 19618 B.*

#### Type C

This is the type that has similarities to the schiavona. The grid-shaped curve bracket varies greatly, so that the number of routes formed by the vertically and horizontally moving front bends can be very different. Very many of the type have the right mating rod, but since it also exists a not insignificant number of s-shaped pairing rod, this should not be decisive for the type. There are copies of both with straight or curved blades.

HAO 1427 (fig. 9) has the handle wrapped with twisted iron wire. The blade is forged on both sides (crowned head) and is of blade type II. Total length 92 cm, blade length 79 cm, blade

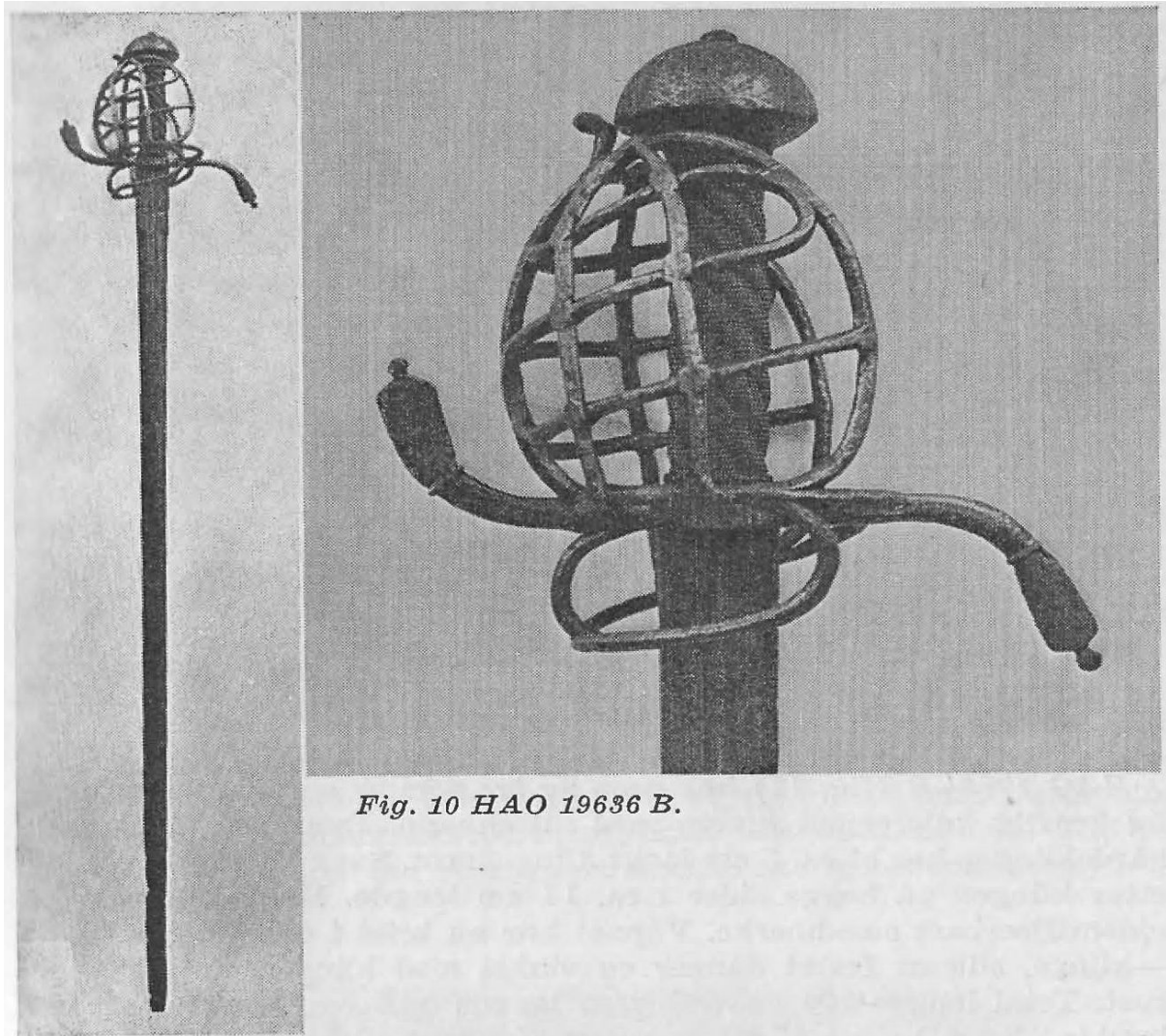


length. maximum width 3 cm, arrow height 3.2 cm. Weight: 1.16 kg. No provenance information.



*Fig. 9. HAO 1427.*

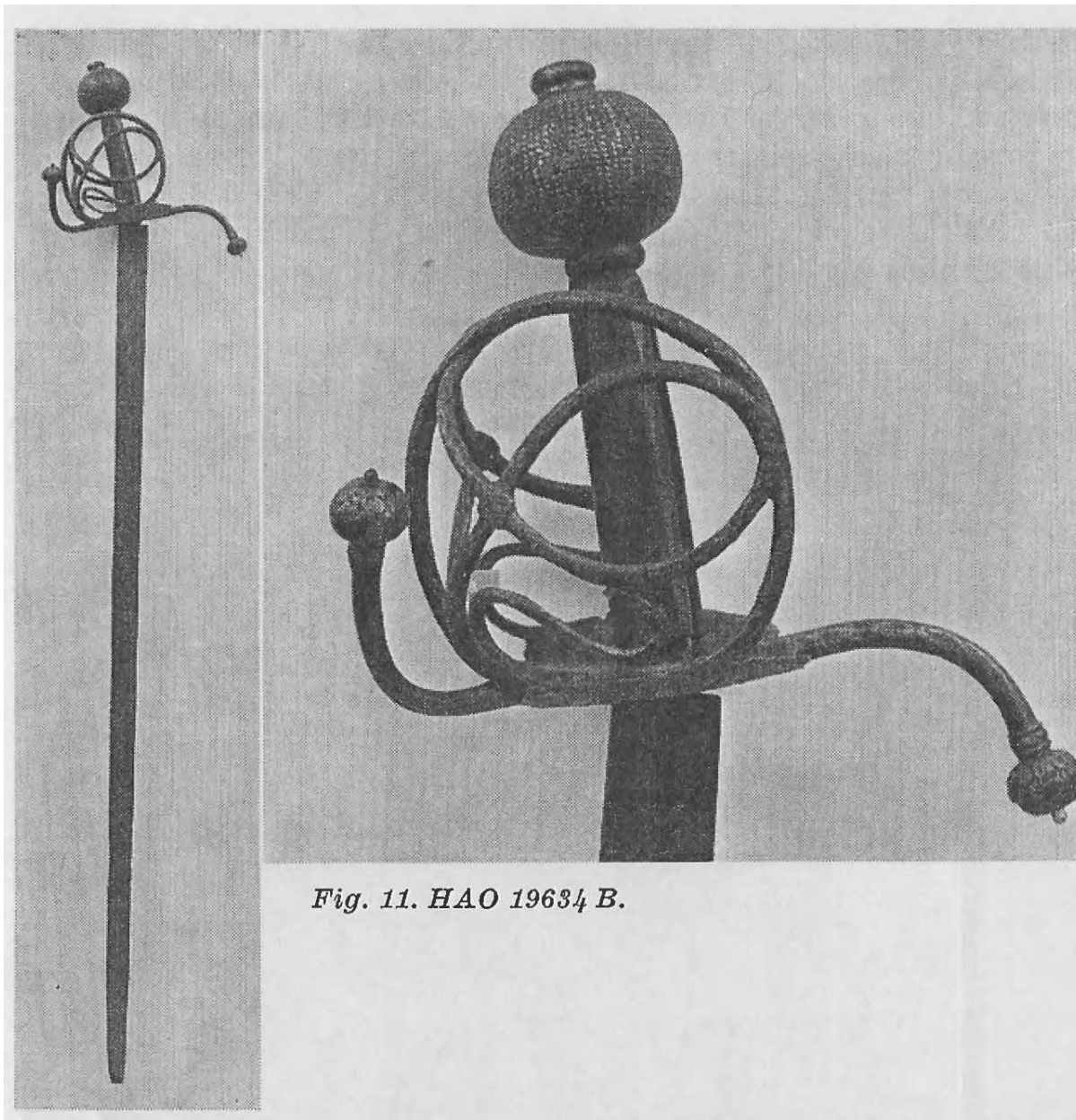
HAO 19636 B (fig. 10) has a helical handle wrapped with iron wire in a fishbone pattern and turkey heads. Straight, double-edged cutting blade with heavy blade, approx. 7 cm long. Something including rust and no visible smith marks. The tip aborted. Total length 104 cm, blade length 88.8 cm, blade width 3.2 cm. Weight 1.3 kg. According to the historical museum, Bergen, «From Vauldsjø, Skandehavns (?) Pgd. Dahl's Collection no. 12 ".



*Fig. 10 HAO 19636 B.*

Type D

The round braces that the grip consists of form a mixture of onion and s-shaped patterns. There seems to be relationships, so few things of this kind.

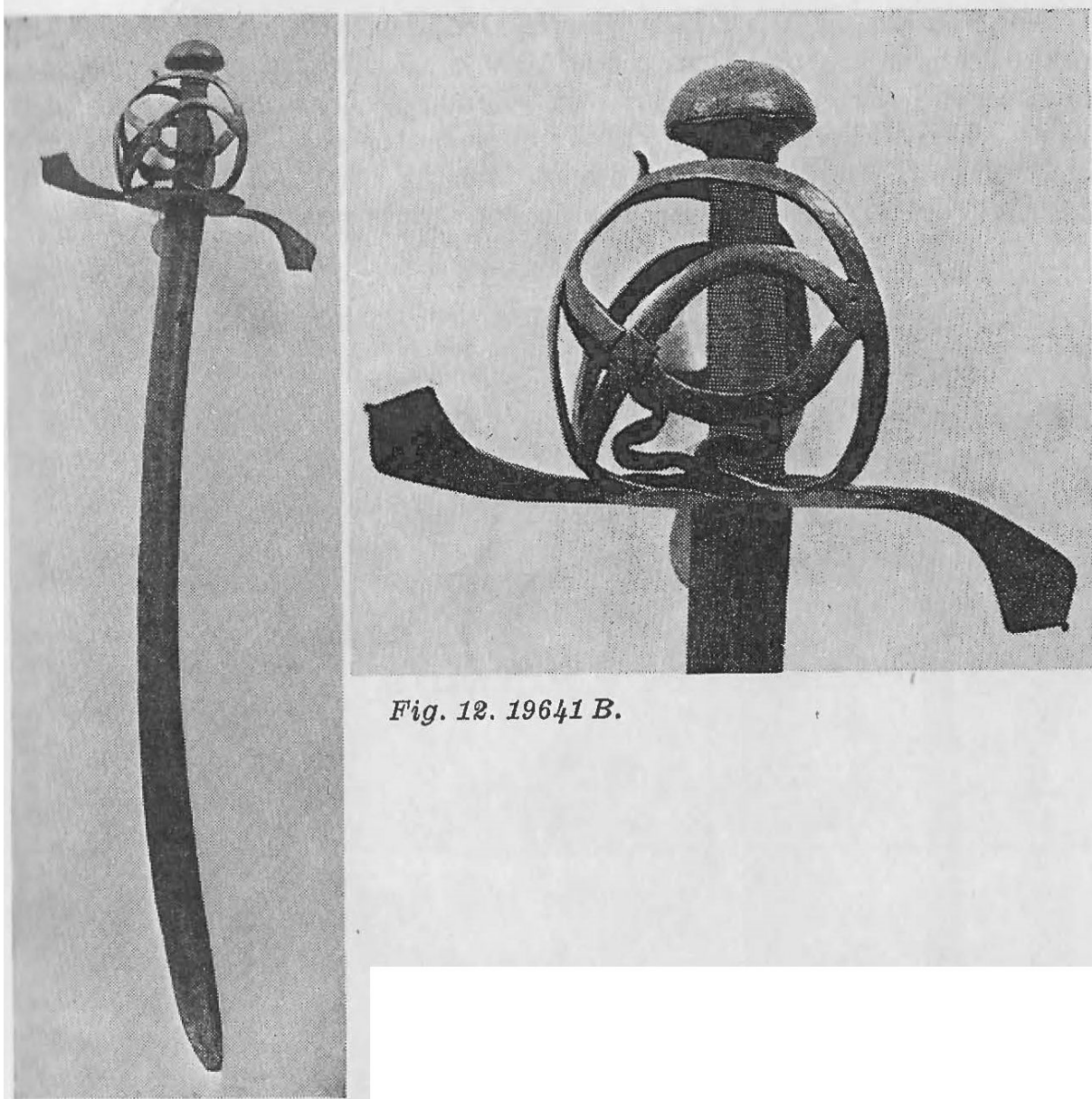


*Fig. 11. HAO 19634 B.*

HAO 19634 B (fig. 11) has a handle of cracked wood. Exceptionally powerful spherical button with rivet button. The right, double-edged trout has an approx. 5 cm long blade breast. Slight hollow sanding seals the blade on both sides for approx. 17 cm length. Very indistinct and unidentifiable forge mark. The weapon has a defect in the tang blade, so that the attachment forms an angle to the blade. The attack of rust. Total length 104 cm, blade length 86.5 cm, blade width 3.2 cm. Weight 1.45 kg. No provenance information.

Type E

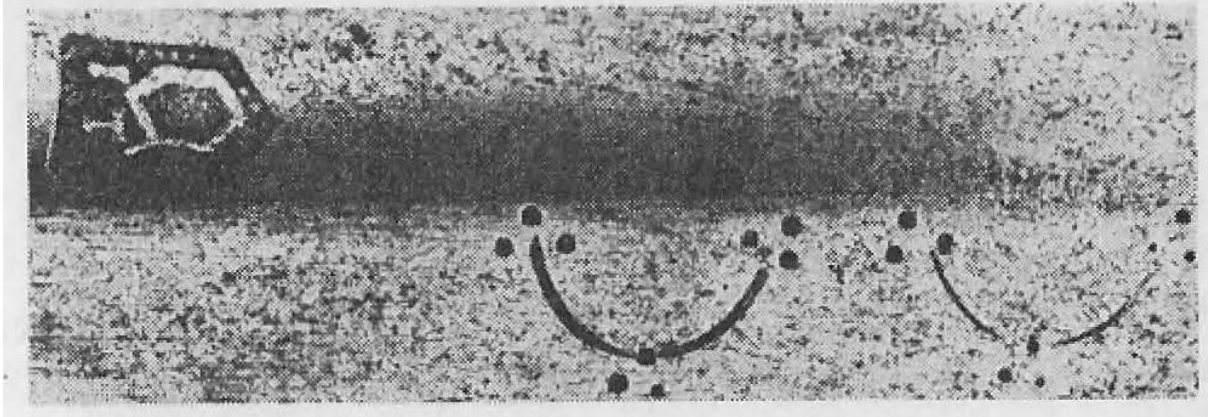
Here are grouped tea bags with flat hooks in specific patterns. For the most typical, the front bumps form essentially the same pattern as most of the type D's. Jlfr. HAO 19634 B.



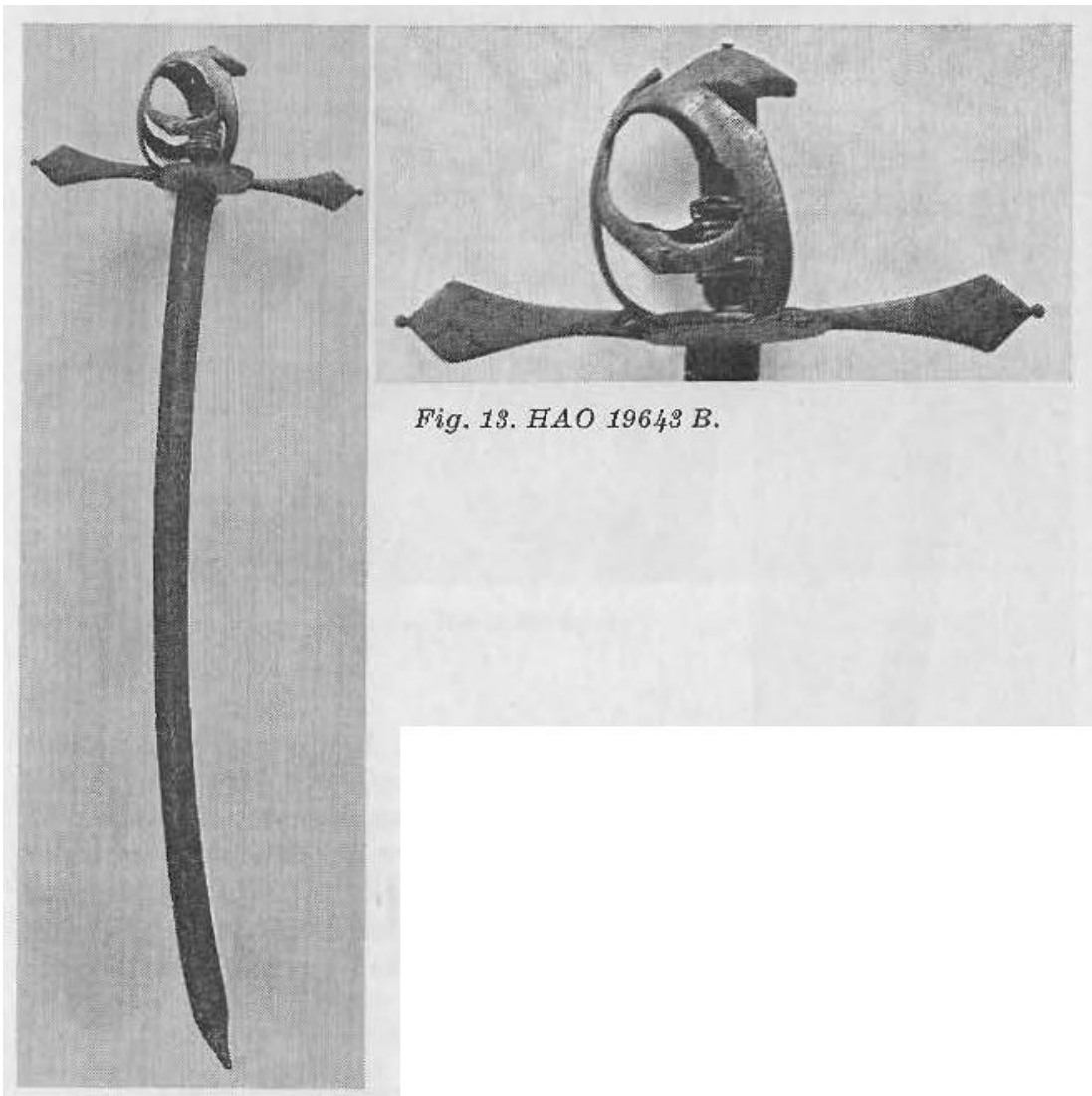
*Fig. 12. 19641 B.*

HAO 19641 B (fig. 12) has handles wrapped with iron wire and turkey heads. The blade is not one of the most common tessak blades in that it does not have the sharp, bent yelman. Furthermore, on both sides it has approx. 1.5 - 1.3 cm wide hole cut along the back. This hollow chipping stops where the yelman normally begins, in this case approx. 22.5 cm from the tip. The blade has a marked forging mark and ornamentation.





The forging mark has not been identified. The ornamentation is found on a number of blades from about 1560 to 1600 and often occurs with the words "Fringia", "Ferara" and "Genoa". These blades can be German, Italian and Hungarian or Teutonic. Total length 87.5 cm, blade length 73 cm, blade's largest width 3.9 cm, arrow height 3.2 cm. Weight 1.52 kg. No provenance information.



*Fig. 13. HAO 19643 B.*

HAO 19643 B (Fig. 13) has a defective grip of wood with residual winding. The blade has forging marks like on HAO 19601 B (see above) and is of type I. Total length 90 cm, blade length 76.5 cm, blade's largest width 3.4 cm, arrow height 3.5 cm. Weight: 1.29 kg. Hydroblast processed at the Army Museum 1967. No provenance information.

#### Type F

The marked upward-facing mating plate is typical of this group. The shape of the mating plate varies greatly and in some cases additionally has a system of protruding bars which follow the side edges of the mating plate. Otherwise it is the mating plate is often perforated, with one or more slots or holes in the pattern.

HAO 19646 B (fig. 14) has a handle wrapped with coarse string inserted with pitch. The blade has the Weyersberg blacksmith family:

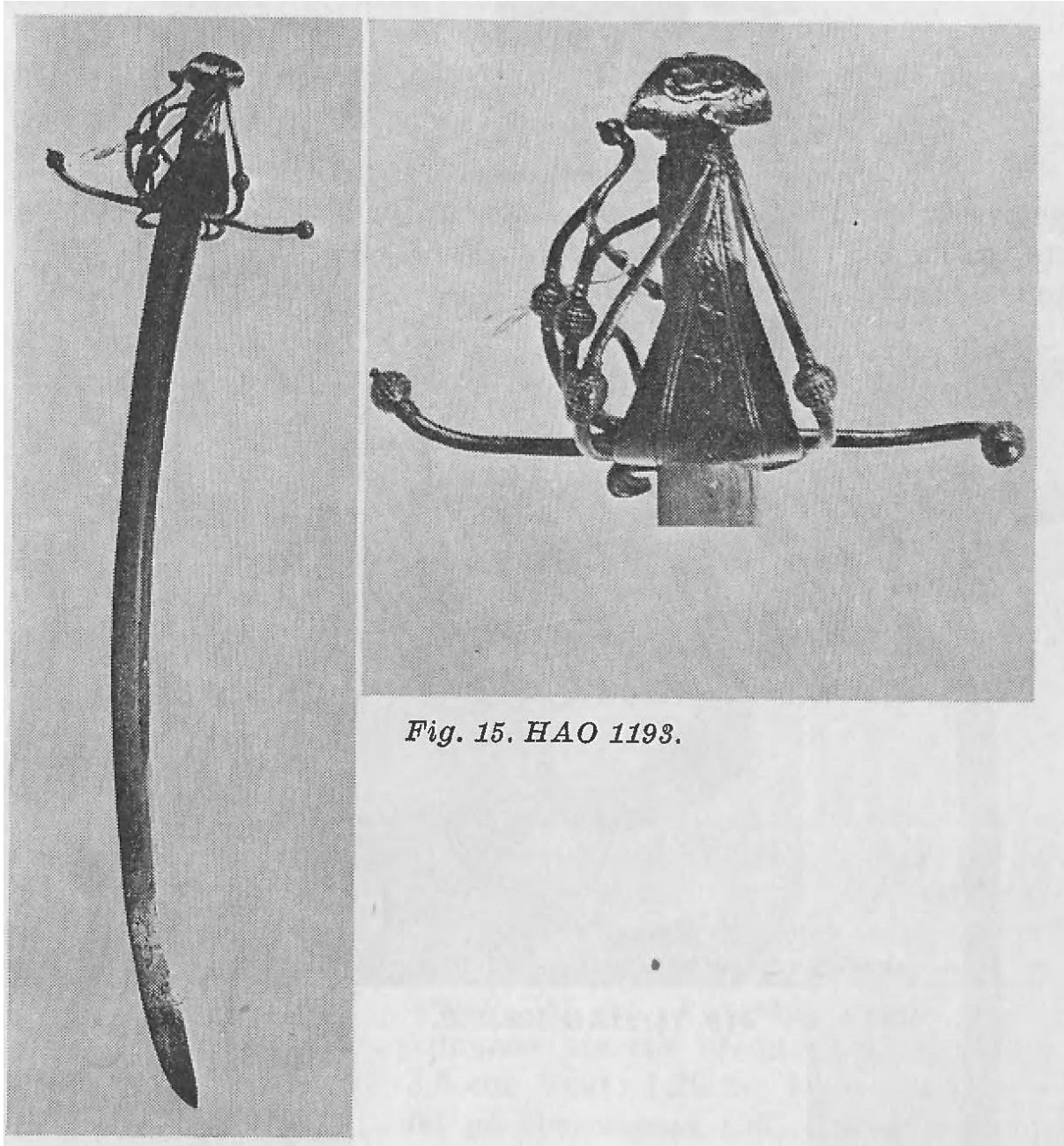


Blade type I. Total length 96.5 cm, blade length 82.5 cm, blade's largest width 3.8 cm, arrow height 3.3 cm. Weight 1.64 kg. No provenance information.



*Fig. 14. HAO 19646 B.*

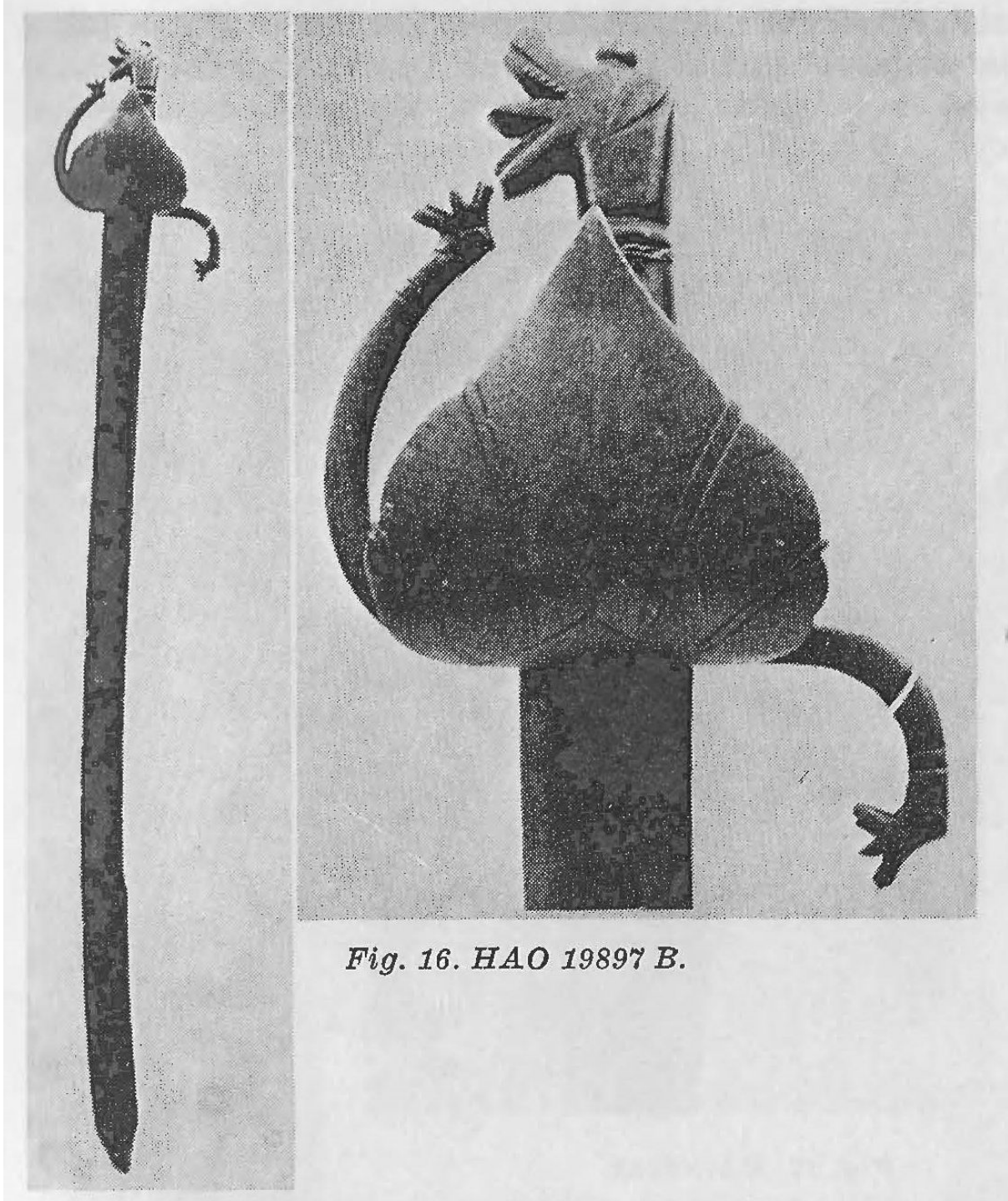
HAO 1193 (fig. 15) has a wooden handle with leather. The blade has an indistinct blacksmith mark and is mostly of type II, but the yelman is not bent and the blood / hole sanding is very weak. Total length 92 cm, blade length 78.3 cm, blade width 3.9 cm, arrow height 4.5 cm. Weight 1.42 kg. No provenance information.



*Fig. 15. HAO 1193.*

Type G

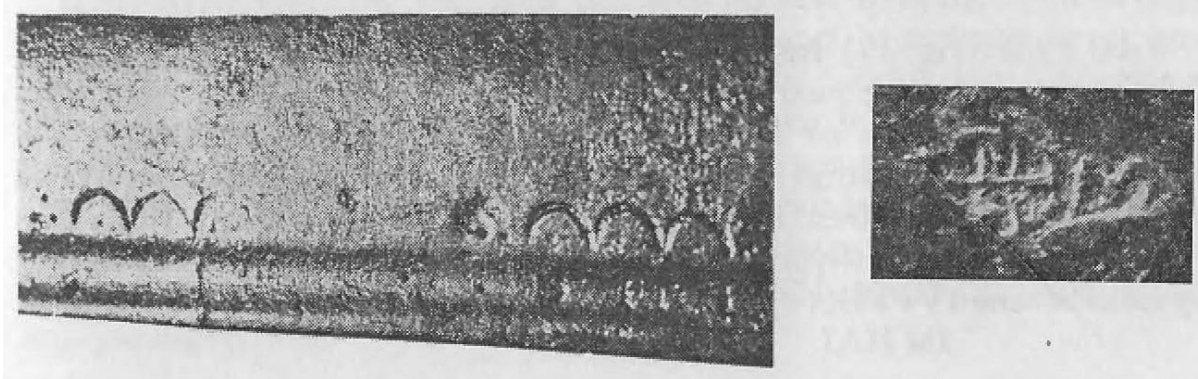
Typically, first are the dragon heads that make up the button and the ends of the paring rod / open handband. Furthermore, the type has a leaf-shaped, bent mating plate.



*Fig. 16. HAO 19897 B.*

HAO 19891 B (fig. 16) has a grip of wood that lacks winding, but the Turk's heads are attached. Dumbbell is missing. The blade is type II, and with a smithy mark that may belong to the Toledosmith Sebastian Hernandez d. (1599-1637).<sup>23</sup> He worked in Madrid, Berlin, Vienna and Dresden. Furthermore, the blade has ornaments (with IHS):





These are more typical of Italian blades (cf. HAO 19641 B). Still, the blade is most likely to be German. It is attacked by rust. Overall length 89 cm, blade length 74.2 cm, blade's largest width 3.7 cm, arrow height 1.9 cm. Weight 0.92 kg. No provenance information.



*Fig. 17. HAO 1232.*

HAO 1232 (Fig. 17) has a helical handle wrapped with iron wire in a fishbone pattern and with turkey heads. Rear mating plate is disconnected and missing. The type II blade, but despite being uneven, has an approx. 5 cm long blade chest which on one side goes into the back side of the blade. It can be said to have certain similarities to Norheim's type III. It has various ornaments, including the Passau wolf and the letters IVFFIK (?) on one side and IM HAI on the other.

Total length 93 cm, blade length 76.5 cm, blade's largest width 3.7 cm, arrow height 2.2 cm. Weight 0.92 kg. No provenance information.



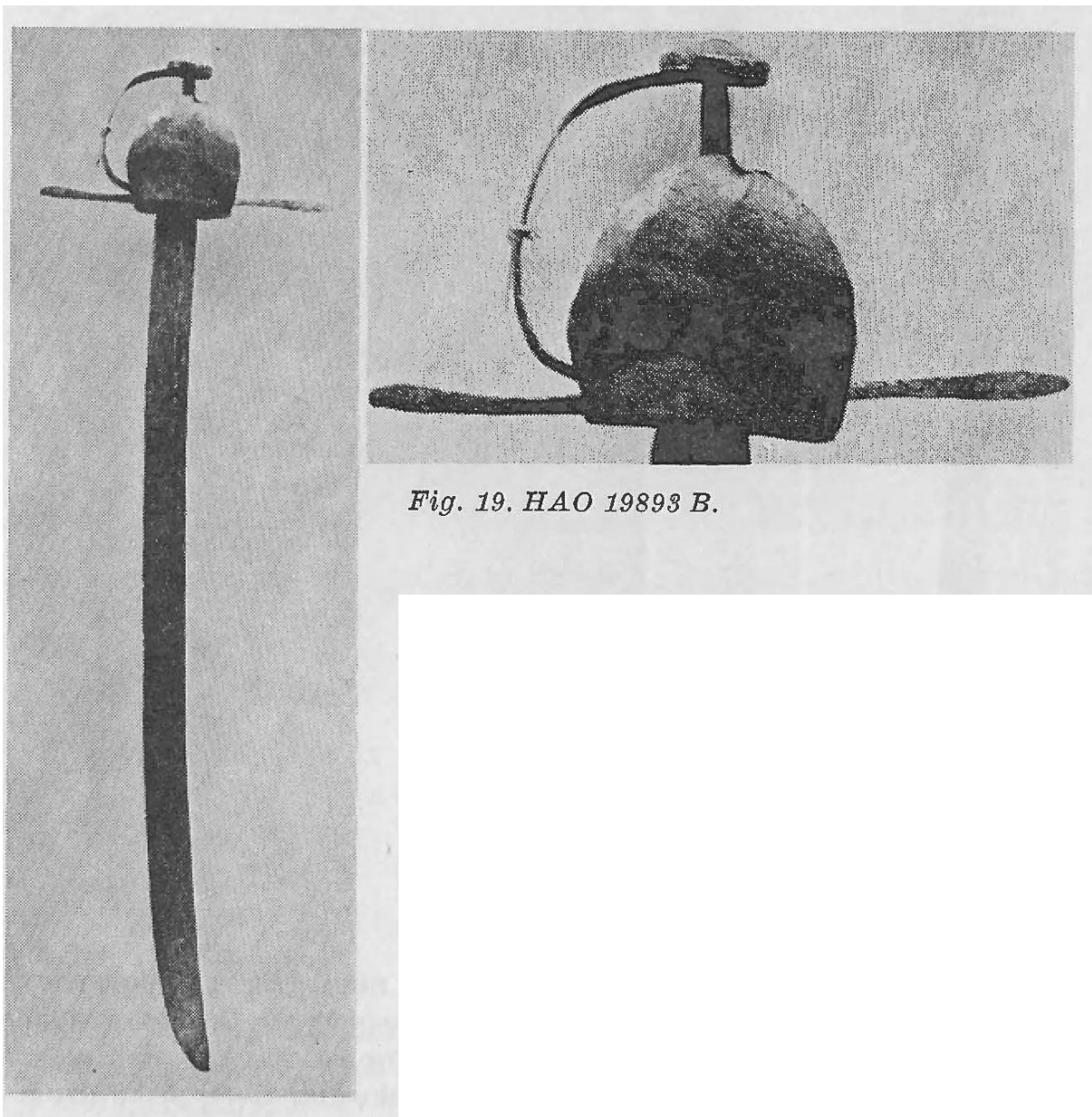
*Fig. 18. HAO 4132.*

HAO 4132 (Fig. 18) has, as seen, a somewhat unusual upwardly bent mating plate, passing into a narrow portion flattened from the sides and ending in a kind of forwardly bent hook. As

far as it can be said to be some kind of "outsider" as it does not have the typical dragon heads. Still, it belongs best in this group. The handle is made of wood, without winding. The blade that is somewhat truncated is of type I and with no visible smith marks. Total length 82 cm, blade length 70.2 cm, blade's largest width 4 cm, arrow height 2.8 cm. Weight 1.15 kg. No provenance information.

#### Type H

This group includes those tessaks which cannot be classified among the above. There may be weapons where only the rolling pin, a piece of the wafer plate and the button are left, so that it is not possible to find out what type it belongs to, and there may be weapons that are homemade with the tessak as a model. Should a tessak with a fastener not fit into any of the A-G type groups, it will be placed here.



*Fig. 19. HAO 19893 B.*

HAO 19893 B (fig. 19) has homemade fastening, roughly executed. The original grip is missing, but the Army Museum has prepared a reconstruction in 1971. It does not have a yelman but a normal back all the way to the tip. Total length 94 cm, blade length 80 cm, blade's largest width 4 cm, arrow height 1.9 cm. Weight 1.25 kg. According to the Historical Museum, Bergen, the weapon is found in a burial mound on the farm Urke, Jøringfjord's pgd., Sunnmøre.

## Concluding remarks

With this, I have tried to give a presentation of the information I have gradually collected about the Norwegian subjects, and what one should be able to extract from them. The information is scattered and, to some extent, very lacking, and therefore many pieces are missing to give a clear picture of the tessak's path to Norway and its further distribution across the countryside. More information, reports of armistice would have been invaluable in this context, but unfortunately has not been found.

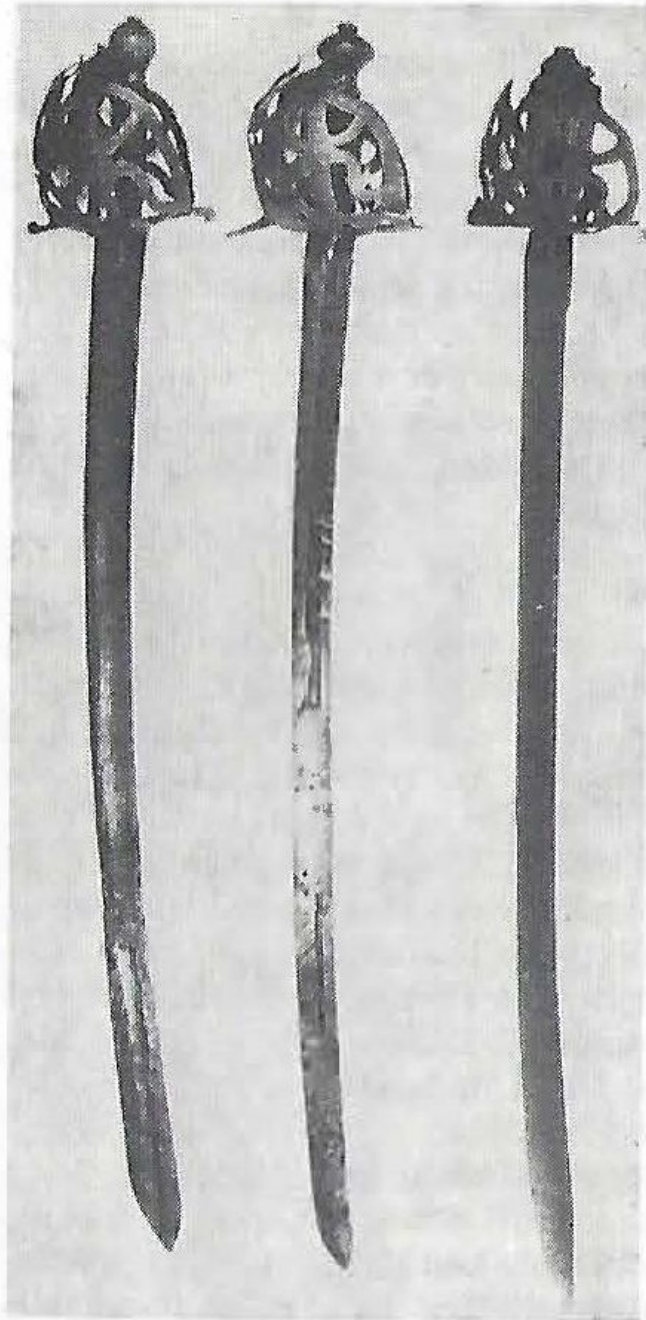
Furthermore, the lack of provenance information is a major concern, which has resulted in the fact that the review of the existing copies has largely not yielded the desired results. But certain indications may well have provided the above information.

A completely different side of the problem is the view previously held of the tea case's arrival in Norway, which is expressed in the name "Sinclair saber", a term that the Norwegian tessaks have been given and that is used internationally to this day. The explanation is obvious, they were thought to be wars of the "Scottish train" and the meeting at the Circuit in 1612, where some of the place's farmers attacked and annihilated the Scottish branch of approx. 300 men who were on their way to Sweden to participate in the Kalmark War on the Swedish side. No reliable information has been found on the Scots' armament. Although it is now clear that the teassak was introduced to Norway to strengthen the farmer's armament, one should not completely ignore the possibility that the Scots may have had the tessak. As well as being sold to Denmark-Norway, lots may be sold to the UK. This is supported by the fact that there are items on display in British museums.

Traditional family-to-family transfers in some farms in Gudbrandsdalen, where tessaks are privately owned, are taken from the Scots of the ancestors who fought at Kringen. Although these representations may seem questionable by what we now know, one should not completely blow the stories as long as one cannot prove that the Scots were differently armed.

There are three side weapons at the Army Museum that have an older broadsword type bracket (fig. 20). One of these has a tessak blade, while the other two have slightly weaker curved saber blade. They belong temporally during the period in question, but the museum has no information that can shed light on its origin. The unusual thing about these is of course the curved blades, broad-swords usually have the right blades. It is therefore most likely that they have been replaced as utility repairs in Norway. Still, it is tempting to suggest

the possibility that these three weapons in their original form may have been Scottish armament by the Kringen.



*Fig. 20.  
HAO 1245, 1244 og 19639 B.*

There are several theories about the Arms' armament. One of them builds on the way soldiers were "recruited" into the UK, as did Europe at the time. In some cases, they were simply assaulted while sitting on their knees, or simply taken out of their homes, and brought down to the ships, where they were stowed together and subjected to a rather harsh treatment. The military training took place under the most rigorous guarding, but often the ships left at sea when they had received the required number, without any prior training, and over to the place where the troops were to be used. In such cases, it might seem risky to give the men some weapons at all, as they could be aimed at those who had committed the abuses. There is therefore much to suggest that the Scots at the Kringen were not armed at

all. They must then have been an easy prey for the farmers, and the existing tessaks must in that case all be Norwegian. The three aforementioned broad-swords may have been commander weapons if they originated from the bulkhead.

The Army's first post-war commander, Colonel Fritz C. Skaar, has explained these theories about the Scots in an article in the Norwegian Military Journal 1951.

Back to the import and distribution of tea cases in Norway. Therefore, a larger base material and more secure information is needed to give a clearer picture. I would think that on a number of farms and with other private individuals there are things about which you may have well-founded provenance information. The Army Museum will be very grateful for such information, as will other parts of the Farmer's Arms.