

II.

NOTICE OF THE SEMPILL SWORD, NOW PRESENTED TO THE MUSEUM
 BY THE BARONESS SEMPILL. BY SIR HENRY DRYDEN, BART.,
 HON. MEM. S.A. SCOT.

This sword, now presented to the Museum by the Baroness Sempill of the Manor House, Moreton Pinkney, Northamptonshire, is said to have belonged to the Sempill family, as hereditary sheriffs of Renfrew, and is said to have been carried before Queen Mary at the battle of Langside in 1568, when the forces of the queen were defeated by those under the Earl of Murray, Regent of Scotland.

The blade is 5 feet $9\frac{3}{8}$ inches long, and $3\frac{3}{16}$ inches wide at the hilt; the guard and hilt together are 2 feet $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches long; total 8 feet $5\frac{1}{8}$ inches. The pommel is of brass, somewhat triangular in form, $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide, $5\frac{3}{8}$ inches long, and $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick in the middle. From the wide end projects a sort of tenon, rectangular in section, $2\frac{1}{8}$ long and $1\frac{1}{16}$ by $\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide. This apparently fitted into a socket, perhaps a fixed socket when not in use, and into a socket attached to a belt hanging from a man's neck when carried. The hilt is oval in section, bulging in the centre of the length, and there 3 by $2\frac{3}{16}$ inches. It is covered with shark's skin twisted diagonally round it, and confined by a brass wire also placed diagonally. At each end is a brass ferule. The guard is flat and curved, 1 foot $5\frac{1}{8}$ inches between its extremities, notched at each end, of brass and lacquered or gilt. The blade has three sections. The tang runs through the hilt to the end of the tenon. On each side is engraving, formed by two chisel-like punches about $\frac{3}{16}$ long and $\frac{1}{8}$ long, and thin; so that the curves are a series of short straight strokes.

The ornament on one side is a conjunction of five pinnacles, three of which are surrounded by crosses, below which (nearer the hilt) is a series of lozenges; farther on, a lion, very rudely cut, and farther still, a letter **y** reversed. The other side has a conjunction of four pinnacles, two of which are surmounted by crosses, below which are two ovals interlaced; farther on a lion, smaller than the last; and farther still, a **y** reversed, also smaller than the last.

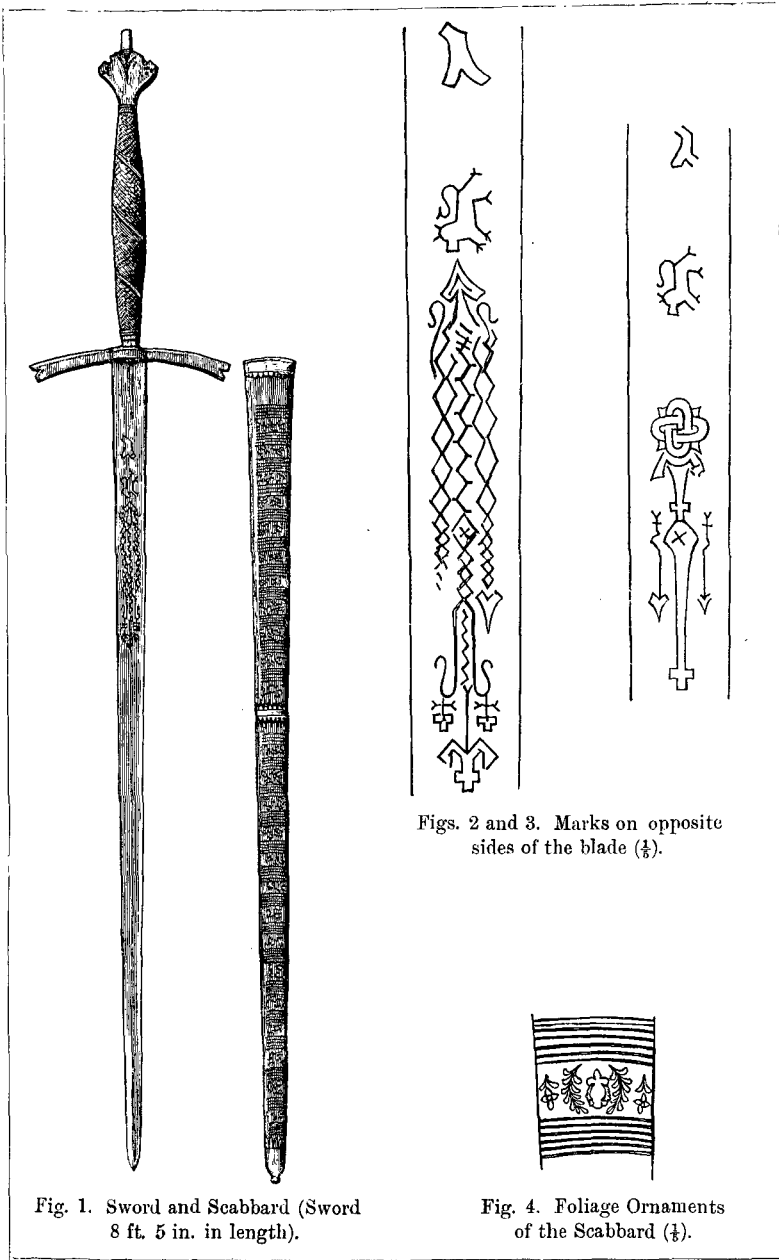


Fig. 1. Sword and Scabbard (Sword 8 ft. 5 in. in length).

Figs. 2 and 3. Marks on opposite sides of the blade ($\frac{1}{2}$).

Fig. 4. Foliage Ornaments of the Scabbard ($\frac{1}{4}$).

The Sempill Sword.

The engraving is obliterated in some parts, and it is probable that at some time the sword has been allowed to be rusty, and has since been cleaned and polished, and reduced in the process. The sword weighs $24\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.

The scabbard is of black leather, ornamented with bands of five, six, or seven small rolls at intervals, between each pair of which bands are four foliage ornaments, of which there are two varieties.

The chape and the two locketts are of brass, lacquered, or gilt, scolloped at the edges. The locketts have no rings, which fact, with the tenon on the hilt, shows that the sword was carried point upwards.

The scabbard has been patched in two or three places. It weighs 3 lbs.

The date of this sword must be arrived at by comparison with others. It is not certain that the scabbard is contemporary with the sword.