

## II.

NOTICE OF A BRONZE SWORD AND SOCKETED AXE BELIEVED TO BE PART OF A HOARD FOUND WHEN DIGGING THE FOUNDATIONS OF HOUSES IN GROSVENOR CRESCENT, EDINBURGH, ABOUT THE YEAR 1869. BY JAMES E. CREE, F.S.A.Scot.

A few years ago I employed an Edinburgh firm of heating engineers to overhaul the system of central heating in my house at North Berwick. The foreman employed on the work, noticing a collection of objects of antiquarian interest in a case in one of my rooms, mentioned that in his house an old sword and a "mounting" had been on his mantelpiece for many years. I suggested to the man that he might bring the objects down with him from Edinburgh and submit them to me for inspection. Accordingly a day or two afterwards he brought me the following articles wrapped in a piece of newspaper—a bronze sword, a bronze socketed axe, and a brass box—the latter probably of late Italian manufacture.

Making enquiries regarding the sword and axe, I was told that they had been found many years ago while digging the foundations of a house in Grosvenor Crescent, Edinburgh. The man's father, who was a bricklayer, had been employed at the work and had acquired the objects, in what manner I did not inquire.

The man informed me that his father had died many years ago, but the objects had been in the possession of his family ever since they were found. I ascertained that he attached no particular interest to them and purchased them from him at an agreed price.

Recollecting that a hoard of bronze swords and other objects had been found at the place mentioned, I at once looked up the *Proceedings of the Society* and found an account of the discovery, written by the late Dr Joseph Anderson and published in vol. xiii. p. 320 *et seq.* It is of considerable interest to note that Dr Anderson mentions "the number of swords is said to have been about 14 or 15, and they are much covered with verdigris and some presenting the remains of the scabbard and hilt. One is said to have found its way into the possession of a labourer and is lost. . . ." It thus would appear that, by a curious coincidence, the sword now in my possession may be the one to which Dr Anderson alluded. The sword is shown in fig. 1, No. 5, along with five others from this hoard preserved in the National Museum. It is imperfect, the hilt-plate and pommel being wanting,

also about  $3\frac{3}{8}$  inches of the point of the blade. The portion of the blade remaining measures about 17 inches in length from below the wing-plates to the fractured end. At its narrowest part between the wing-plates and the swelling of the blade it measures  $1\frac{5}{16}$  inch in

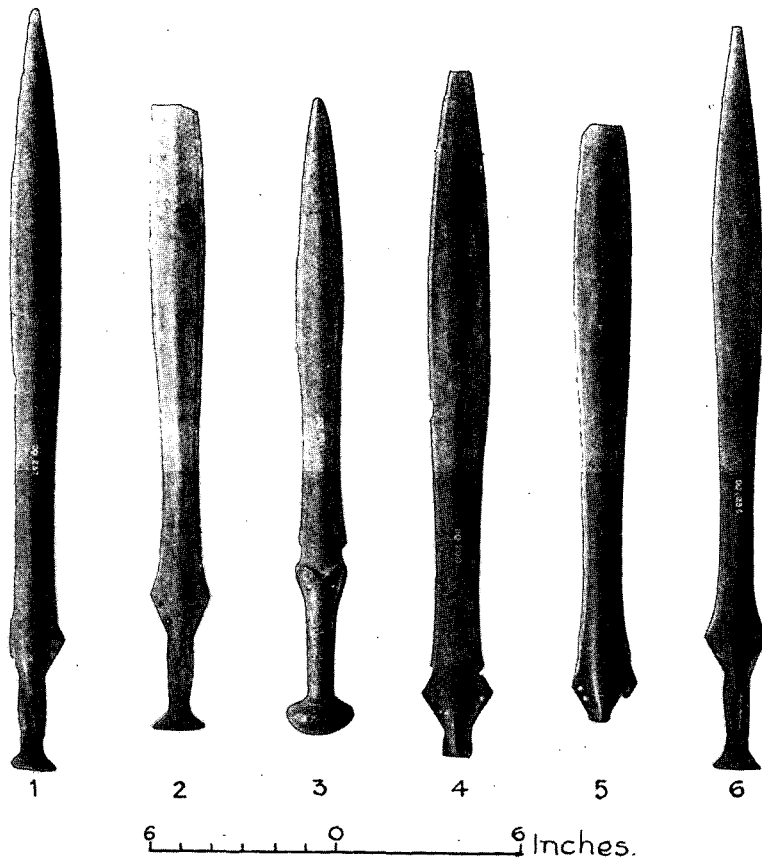


Fig. 1. Bronze Swords from the Grosvenor Crescent hoard.

breadth, and at the broadest part the blade measures  $1\frac{7}{8}$  inch. The wing-plates are pierced for two rivets on each side.

The socketed axe (fig. 2, No. 4), which is illustrated with three objects, a pin-head, a ring of hollow semi-circular section, and an armlet from the Grosvenor Crescent find, now in the National Museum, is in very good condition and measures about  $2\frac{7}{8}$  inches in

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length. The socket, which is slightly oval, measures  $1\frac{1}{16}$  inch by  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch in external diameter. Across the cutting edge, which is much rounded, it measures  $1\frac{3}{16}$  inch. A flat moulding  $\frac{3}{16}$  inch in breadth encircles the

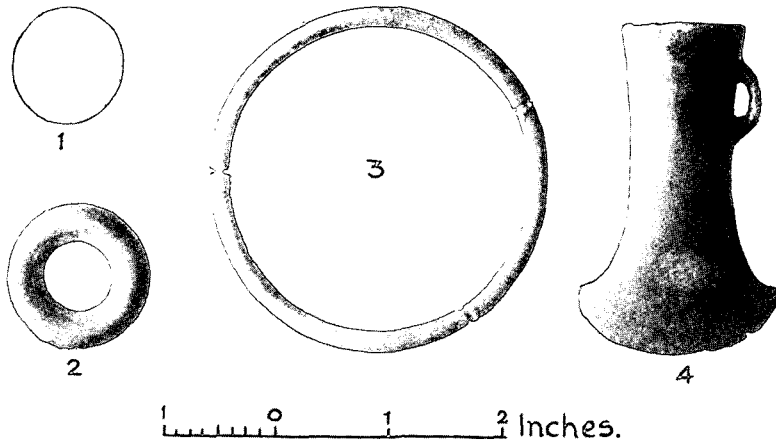


Fig. 2. Bronze Objects from the Grosvenor Crescent Hoard.

socket at the top, and this is followed by a similar moulding  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch further down. Between the upper and lower mouldings is a depressed band about  $\frac{9}{32}$  inch in breadth, and below the second moulding is another depressed band of similar dimensions. As far as can be ascertained, no bronze axe is recorded as having been found in the hoard, and the one above mentioned has no exact parallel in the National collection.