



Supplementary Note on the Antiquities of Sleswick

Mr. Worsaae

To cite this article: Mr. Worsaae (1866) Supplementary Note on the Antiquities of Sleswick, Archaeological Journal, 23:1, 291-292, DOI: [10.1080/00665983.1866.10851351](https://doi.org/10.1080/00665983.1866.10851351)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00665983.1866.10851351>



Published online: 11 Jul 2014.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View related articles [↗](#)

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE ON THE ANTIQUITIES OF SLESWICK.

By MR. WORSAAE.

SINCE my remarks were written (see page 189, *ante*), a very remarkable testimony in favor of my explanation of the so-called Moss-finds in Denmark has been found in the writings of Orosius (a historian living in the fifth century), and brought out by M. E. Beauvois in a review of Mr. Engelhardt's work on Nydam in the French newspaper "L'Illustration," for 1866, (p. 264, No. 1236.)

After having stated (*Historia Adversus Paganos*, lib. v. ch. xvi. ed. Colonia, 1561, p. cci.) that the defeat sustained by the Romans, in the year 111, B.C. in the battle against the Cimbri and other nations near Arausio (now Orange), in the South of France, was so decisive that only a few escaped with their lives, Orosius gives the following striking account of the manner in which the victors treated the spoils: "Hostes binis castris atque ingenti præda potiti, nova quadam atque insolita *exsecratione* cuncta quæ ceperant pessum dederunt; *vestis discissa et projecta est, aurum argentumque in flumen abjectum, lorica virorum concisa, phaleræ equorum disperditæ, equi ipsi gurgitibus immersi*, homines laqueis collo inditis ex arboribus suspensi sunt, ita ut nihil prædæ victor, nihil misericordiæ victus, agnosceret. Maximus tunc Romæ non solum luctus, verum etiam metus fuit, ne confectim Cimbri Alpes transgrederentur Italiamque delerent."

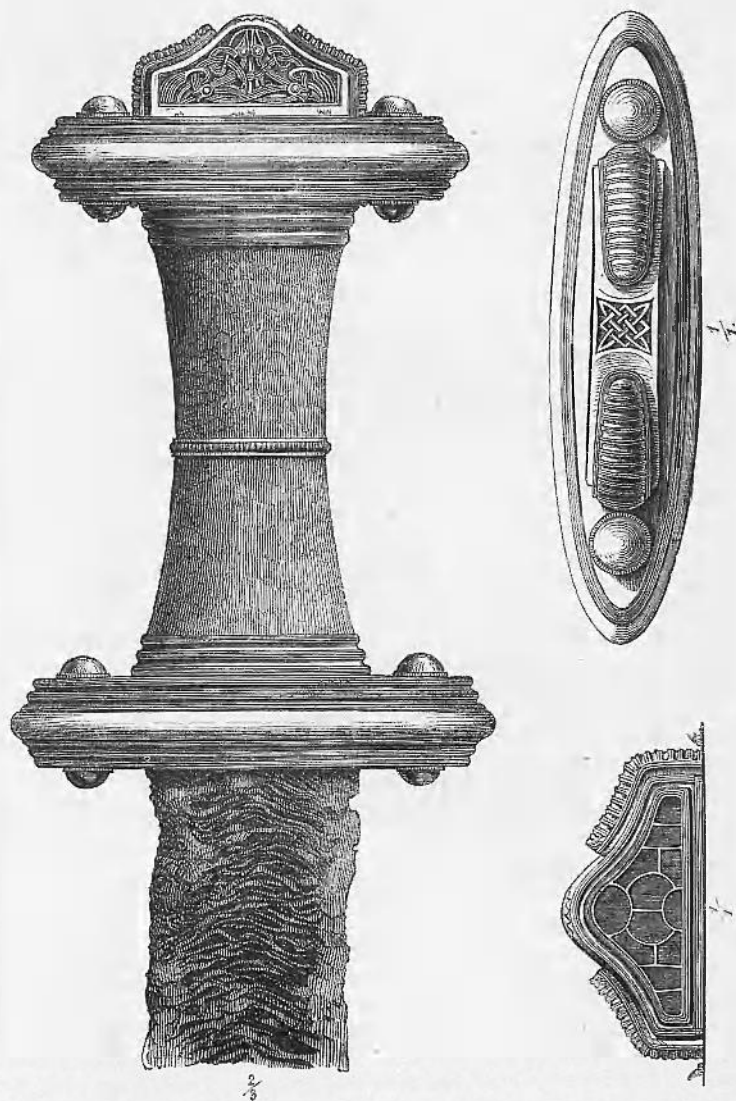
Remembering how systematically the objects discovered in our mosses in such large hoards have been destroyed, cut and torn asunder, before being deposited, and also to what degree warlike accoutrements predominate in the moss-finds—in some places (as in Vimose), largely interspersed with remains of horsetrappings and of the horses themselves—it seems impossible to look upon this passage otherwise than as containing a description of the very process to which these remarkable moss deposits owe their existence. It

cannot be supposed that the treatment to which the spoils from the Roman camp and the battlefield in this case were subjected, formed an exception to the rule, something peculiar to that occasion. What the "Barbarians" did was no doubt done in obedience to a custom of theirs, which bade them sacrifice the spoils of war by rendering them useless (*exsecratione nova*, etc.), and then immersing them in water, either in sacred lakes, rivers or outlets from the sea, or in the nearest suitable localities; and the testimony of Orosius, adduced by M. Beauvois, therefore appears to afford so strong a support to the explanation I have suggested and advocated in the text above, that this theory now seems almost to have acquired scientific certainty. It is so much the more striking, though I do not wish to lay undue stress on the circumstance, as the account of Orosius expressly refers to the Cimbri after whom the ancients gave the name of the Cimbrian peninsula to the peninsula of Jutland, in which these remarkable moss deposits were first discovered.¹

The sword represented by the cuts opposite has not been found in South Jutland, but may serve to illustrate the style of its time—the first division of the late Iron age—when compared with those of the early Iron age figured in Engelhardt's work and those of the conclusion of the Iron age figured above (p. 182). Almost all the objects of that period show similar serpent ornaments.

¹ With regard to the statement, that the men were suspended by the neck from the trees, Mr. Engelhardt observes that this was precisely the mode in which victims sacrificed to Odin were

killed; whence perhaps his surname, "The Lord of those that are hung," (Kragehul Mosefund, p. 18). Translator's note.



Sword found at Bildsømoose in Fyen. (Late Iron Age.)

Scale, of the sword handle, two-thirds original size details, same size as the original.