

WARANGJAN

NOJCE

NO 5



EDITORIAL POLICY

"THE VARANGIAN VOICE" is a whenever I get my act together, official newsletter of the NEW VARANGIAN GUARD.

Whenever possible, sources have been listed, and all care taken to ensure credit is given where it belongs.

Should at sometime a readers nickers get in a knot because a date may be wrong, a name misspelt, or some other error made... be assured, no harm was intended...

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Articles are submitted by anyone interested enough to do so, if you do not like whats in it.... put in something better.

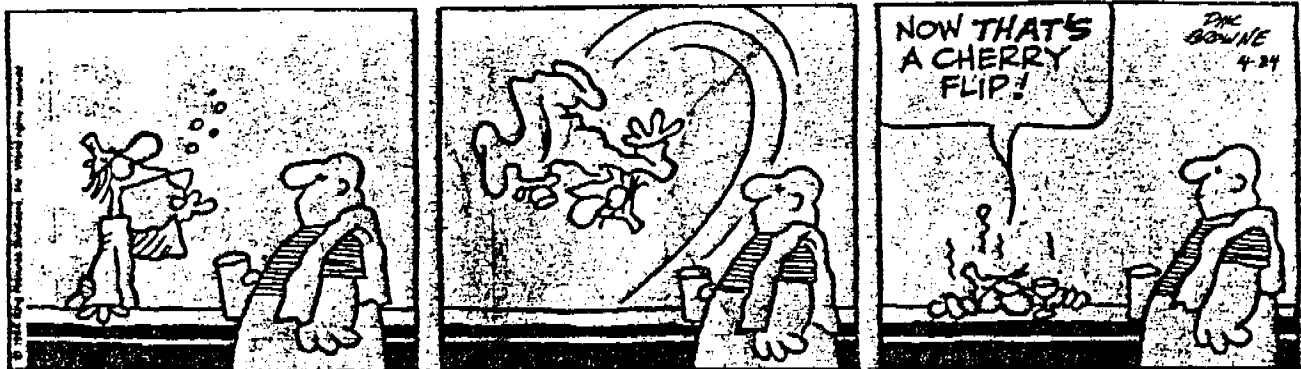
Mailing address: P.O BOX 31 MALDON 3463.

EDITORIAL

The annual general was held at henry street on the 8th of february with a good attendance of members. Several resolutions were passed, including expulsion of members we have not seen or heard in over 12 months. Plus the election of office bearers for the next 12 months. Decisions were taken on activities such as feasts, camping weekends, skiing and combat archery. The N.V.G. has purchased NEW HEDEBY and Margaret Nicoll is going to continue to publish it as well as being editor. Any articles will be much appreciated. The Abbey in prahran is no longer available for feasts so a new venue needs to be found, keep an eye out for churches, halls, warehouses or old factories that would be suitable to our purposes and can be obtained for minimum cost.

The new office bearers for this coming year are listed on the front page

After the meeting everyone or almost everyone ajourned to the Mongolian Bar-B-Que. for a sumtuous evening of stuffing ourselves to capacity. Several people were awed by the chilli and your editor was disappointed at not being able to get bar-b-qued mongolian, it seems it was out of season. After that we went to Mieta's for cocktails where the women spent sometime getting drunk and trying to pin tails on the cocks. Margaret was seen running off down russell street in an ineibriated state. all in all a good time was had by all.



PROPOSED ARCHERY STANDARDS
SUBJECT TO REVIEW IN SIX MONTHS

HEAD PROTECTION..steel helmets of a type already acceptable for combat, with a visor of 3-16ths or 1/4 inch woven mesh of 20 gauge or heavier. It must extend past the temples and below the chin.Neck protection of an aventail and or stiff leather.The aventail must be laced to the visor so that nothing can fit past. (ie: In effect the visor and aventail become one piece.)

A coif may be worn if an arming cap covering head and neck,with a minimum of 1/2 to 1 inch of padding is worn under the coif.

A fencing mask may be worn in conjunction with a coif.

There must be no unprotected skin in the neck and throat area.

THROAT PROTECTION.. minimum protection shall be a padded leather collar covering the larynx and down to the breast bone in one continuous piece. Puncture and thrust resistant padding is also desirable.

BODY ARMOUR.. minimum armour shall be a leather jerkin extending below the crotch and down to the elbow or a gambeson with a minimum of 1/2 inch of padding, extending below the crotch and down to the elbow.

THE BOW.. shall be a long bow or a recurve with a maximum draw weight of 40 pounds at 28 inches of draw. No compounds bows or crossbows will be allowed.

ARROWS.. shall be 28 inches long from nock to the back of the blunt.Wooden shafts of 11/32nds of an inch shall be the excepted minimum standard. Each arrow must be fitted with a rubber blunt a minimum of 3/4 of an inch in diameter.No aluminium or fibreglass arrows will be permitted.

The minimum shooting distance shall be 30 feet.

An archer shall be considered killed by infantry, when he is touched by that warriors weapon. This shall be done with a MINIMUM of force.

An archer can run away from infantry and so maintain his 30 feet minimum shooting distance.

Shields shall be considered proof.

Greaves shall be considered proof.

Steel breast and back plates shall be considered proof.

Archers shall wear a glove on their bow hand.

12

- Fōtum ic fēre, foldan slite,
 grēne wongas, penden ic gæst bere.
 Gif mē feorh losað, fæste binde
 swearte Wēalas, hwilum sēllan men.
 5 Hwilum ic dēorum drincan selle
 beorne of bōsme, hwilum mec brȳd triedeð
 felawlonc fōtum, hwilum feorran brōht
 wonfeax Wāle wegeð and þȳð,
 dol druncmennen deorcum nihtum,
 10 wāted in wætre, wyrmed hwilum
 fægret to fȳre; mē on fæðme sticað
 hygegālan hond, hwyrfeð geneahhe,
 swifeð mē geond sweartne. Saga hwæt ic hātte,
 þe ic lifgende lond rēafige
 15 and æfter dēape dryhtum þeowige.

12. Leather.

14

- Ic wæs wæpenwiga; nū mec wlonc þeceð,
 geong hagostealdmon golde and sylfore,
 wōum wirbogum. Hwilum weras cyssað;
 hwilum ic tō hilde hlēopre bonne
 5 wilgehlēpan; hwilum wygc byreþ
 mec ofer mearce, hwilum merehengest
 fereð ofer flōdas frætsum beorhtne;
 hwilum mægða sum minne gefylleð
 bōsm bēaghroden; hwilum ic bordum sceal,
 10 heard, hēafodlēas, behlȳped licgan;
 hwilum hongige hyrstum frætweð,
 wlitig on wāge, þær weras drincað;
 frēolic fyrdsceorp hwilum folcwigan
 on wigge wegað; þonne ic winde sceal
 15 sincfāg swelgan of sumes bōsme;
 hwilum ic gereordum rincas laðige
 wlonce tō wīne; hwilum wrāpum sceal
 stefne minre forstolen hreddan,
 flȳman fēondsceaþan. Frige hwæt ic hātte.

14. Horn.

14.5. 'splendid' added in translation.

21

- Neb is min niþerweard; nēol ic fēre
 and be grunde græfe, geonge swā mē wisað
 hār holtes fēond; and hlāford min,
 se wōh færeð, weard æt steorte
 5 wriȳaþ on wonge, wegeð mec and þȳð,
 sāweþ on swæð mīn. Ic snyþige forð,
 brungen of bearwe, bunden cræfte,
 wegen on wægne; hæbbe wundra fela.
 Mē biþ gongendre grēne on healfe,
 10 and mīn swæð sweotol sweart on ðpre.
 Mē þurh hrycg wrecen hongap under
 ān orþonc pil, ðper on hēafde
 fæst and forðweard. Fealleþ on sīdan
 þæt ic tōþum tere, gif mē teala þēnaþ
 15 hūndewardre þæt biþ hlāford mīn.

21. Plough.

21.3. *hār holtes fēond* refers to the ploughman, as men chop down trees, or to the iron ploughshare, axes also being of iron.

12

By foot I travel, and I tear the earth,
 The grassy fields, as long as I have life.
 But when my spirit leaves me I bind fast
 The dark Welsh slaves or sometimes better men.
 Sometimes I give a noble warrior
 Drink from my breast; sometimes the haughty bride
 Treads on me. Sometimes the dark-haired Welsh maid
 Brought from afar carries and presses me,
 A foolish drunken girl at dark of night
 Wets me with water, sometimes pleasantly
 Warms me beside the fire, sticks in my bosom
 Her wanton hand, constantly turns me round,
 Strokes me all night. Tell me what I am called,
 That while I live may plunder all the land,
 And after death give service to mankind.

14

I was a soldier armed; but now a proud
 Young warrior covers me with gold and silver,
 With twisted rings of wire. Sometimes men kiss me;
 Sometimes by voice I summon to the battle
 The loyal friends; sometimes a splendid steed
 Bears me across the mark; sometimes a sea-horse
 Gay in its colours ferries me across
 The waters; or a maiden, ring-adorned,
 Fills up my bosom; sometimes on the tables
 I have to lie, hard, stripped, without my head;
 Or sometimes beautiful, bedecked with trappings,
 I hang upon the wall where heroes drink.
 Sometimes when warriors wear their noble war-gear
 On horseback, then must I, adorned with treasure,
 Swallow the wind puffed out from some man's breast;
 Sometimes I summon by my proclamation
 Proud men to wine; sometimes my voice must rescue
 The stolen property from enemies,
 Put foes to flight. Now find out what I am.

21

My beak points downwards, and I travel low
 And dig along the ground, move forward as
 The wood's old foe propels me; and my lord
 And guardian walks stooping at my tail,
 Pushes and moves and drives me on the field,
 Sows in my track. I sniff along the ground,
 Brought from the forest, firmly bound, and borne
 Upon the wagon; I have many wonders.
 And as I move on one side there is green
 And my clear track is dark upon the other.
 A well made point is driven through my back
 And hangs beneath, and through my head another,
 Firm, pointing forwards; what my teeth tear up
 Falls down beside me, if he serves me well
 Who, as my lord, controls me from behind.

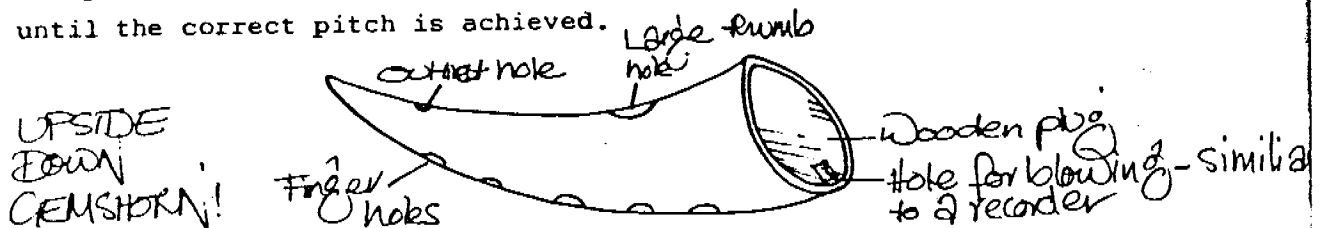
On Sunday March 9th, the Guard practise was forshortened by the advent of rain. All sojourned to Alison and Michael's and feasted on the leftovers of Steve's (N) nephew's 21st. party from the night before - champagne included!

It was unanimously agreed upon to then stay in costume and proceed to St. Mary's church in North Melbourne for a recital of Medieval music performed by 'Acord'. English, French and Italian music was represented, ranging from late C12th to C14th. The instruments were a fascinating collection - organetto, medieval fiddles, rebec, psaltery, gemshorn (homemade), harp and sinfoyne (hurdy-gurdy), as well as a superb female voice!

The music has to different from what we hear today, basically because of the difference in instruments. Sounds are less clear - or pure and seem to have a short range, perhaps an octave. The background droning of the fiddles is due to the fact that the bridge is flat, or only slightly curved, which means that the strings are all played together. As instruments were improved with time, the bridge became quite curved as they are now on a modern violin.



The hurdy-gurdy was the loudest instrument and reminded me of bagpipes (in sound). The gemshorn was very soft sounding, but, as trying to keep a wriggling redhead quiet meant frequent trips outside, I didn't hear as much of this instrument as I would have liked. Apparently, the size of the holes is as, or more, important than the positioning. When making one, it's more a matter of making small holes, starting at the bottom, where they feel comfortable for your reach of fingers, then gradually increasing the size until the correct pitch is achieved.



There will be further concerts throughout the year - dates given on the following page. The church would be a wonderful venue for a feast-bluesotne; beams; stained glass windows etc. but God (or the minister) might object! Please still keep on the lookout for a N.V.G. venue, somewhere to go on a rainy day! Seriously though, the Guard needs a home.

The music finally put Tarran to sleep andrevved Bree up to full pitch. But an interesting afternoons entertainment was had by all. Afterwoods, enmasse, we retired to A & M's for coffee and relax- Steve W was leavng iron filings everywhere refusing to de-mail! Then yours truly decided to escape the city and head for the 'hill'.

- Margie.



ENGLISH, FRENCH AND ITALIAN MEDIEVAL SONGS AND DANCES

SAINT MARY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, NTH. MELBOURNE

Sunday, March 9, 1986. 2.30p.m.



Margaret Arnold - voice, organetto.

Richard Excell - medieval fiddles, rebec, psaltery, gemshc

Carol Williams - harp.

with special guest

Stevie Wishart - sinfonye (hurdy-gurdy), medieval fiddle.

ENGLISH

His kit methuer de ma

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Bryd one brere | anon. c. 1300 |
| 2. Ductia | anon. c. 1300 |
| 3. Worldes blis have god day | anon. c. 1300 |
| 4. Ductia | anon. c. 1300 |
| 5. Edi beo thu | anon. 14th C. |
| 6. Me lykyth ever | anon. c. 1400 |

FRENCH

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 7. Kalenda maya | Raimbault de Vaqueiras (late 12th C) |
| 8. a) Parti de mal | anon. 13th C |
| b) Conforz me | anon. 13th C |
| c) Chanson envoisie | Guillaume le Vinier 13th C |
| 9. Gente m'est | Richard de Fournival (1201-1260) |
| 10. Onques n'amai | Richard de Fournival |
| 11. La quarte estampie royale | anon. 13th C |
| 12. Lonc tans | Richard de Fournival |

ITALIAN

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 13. Istampitta Ghaetta | anon. 14th C |
| 14. Questa fançull'amor | Francesco Landini (c. 1325-1397) |
| 15. La Manfredina and Rotta | anon. 14th C |
| 16. Que pena è quest'al cor | Francesco Landini |
| 17. Lamento di Tristano and Rotta | anon. 14th C |

If you would like to receive information about ACORD's future concerts, please leave your name and address at the door.



SUNDAY SUBSCRIPTION SERIES 1986

MEDIEVAL MIDDAY MUSIC

on

the last Sunday in May, June and July
at noon.

KOOYONG ROAD UNITING CHURCH, ARMADALE
(corner Clarendon Street)

CONCERT ONE MAY 25

MEDIEVAL WOMEN : The voices of medieval women from the castle to the cloister, from the hot-blooded passion of the Comtessa de Dia to the intense mysticism of Saint Hildegard von Bingen. Other notable women whose words and music will be heard are Marie de France, Christine de Pizan, and Maroie de Dregnau de Lille.

CONCERT TWO JUNE 29

A ROSE BY ANOTHER NAME : Not the Roman de la Rose which featured in ACORD'S 1985 programme, but the Roman de la Rose ou de Guillaume de Dole, a delightful romance by Jean Renart in which the entertaining narrative is interspersed with songs by such outstanding troubadours and trouveres as Bernart de Ventadorn and Grace Brule.

CONCERT THREE JULY 27

HATCHED, MATCHED AND DISPATCHED - MEDIEVAL STYLE : Some of the most spectacular music of the Middle Ages was written to commemorate the great events in the lives of the powerful and famous. Among the composers to be featured in this concert are Gaucem Faidit, Jacop da Bologna, Johannes Ciconia, Nicholas da Radom and Guillaume Dufay.

ACORD

Margaret Arnold - voice, organetto
Richard Excell - vielles, rebec, psaltery, gemshorn.
Carol Williams - harp, rebec.

with
Susan Tweg - reader.

SUBSCRIPTION TICKETS : \$15 (\$7 concession)
INDIVIDUAL CONCERTS ; \$7 (\$.33 concession)

BOOKINGS AND ENQUIRIES : 817.2000 or 568.2597 (a.h.)

Some Activities For "86"

March 22nd Medieval food night.

Bring a plate or dish of an authentic medieval food to Frenchie, and Joannes at flat 3 35 Mc AURTHUR PLACE MALVERN.

Come in costume.

March 23 Archery starts at the Hawthorn Archers at Swinburne Tech. opposite Harold St. map ref.45 h2 melways. from 12-30 pm till 2-30 pm. With a breack for easter, then resumes on April 6th and goes for five weeks.

All equipment supplied. Cost 30 dollars per head.

April 12th and 13th Camping weekend to the Grampians.

BYO everything. Additional details as they come to hand.

May 17th and 18th Weekend at " Four Winds" fort battles, archery, games, merrymaking and a banquet.

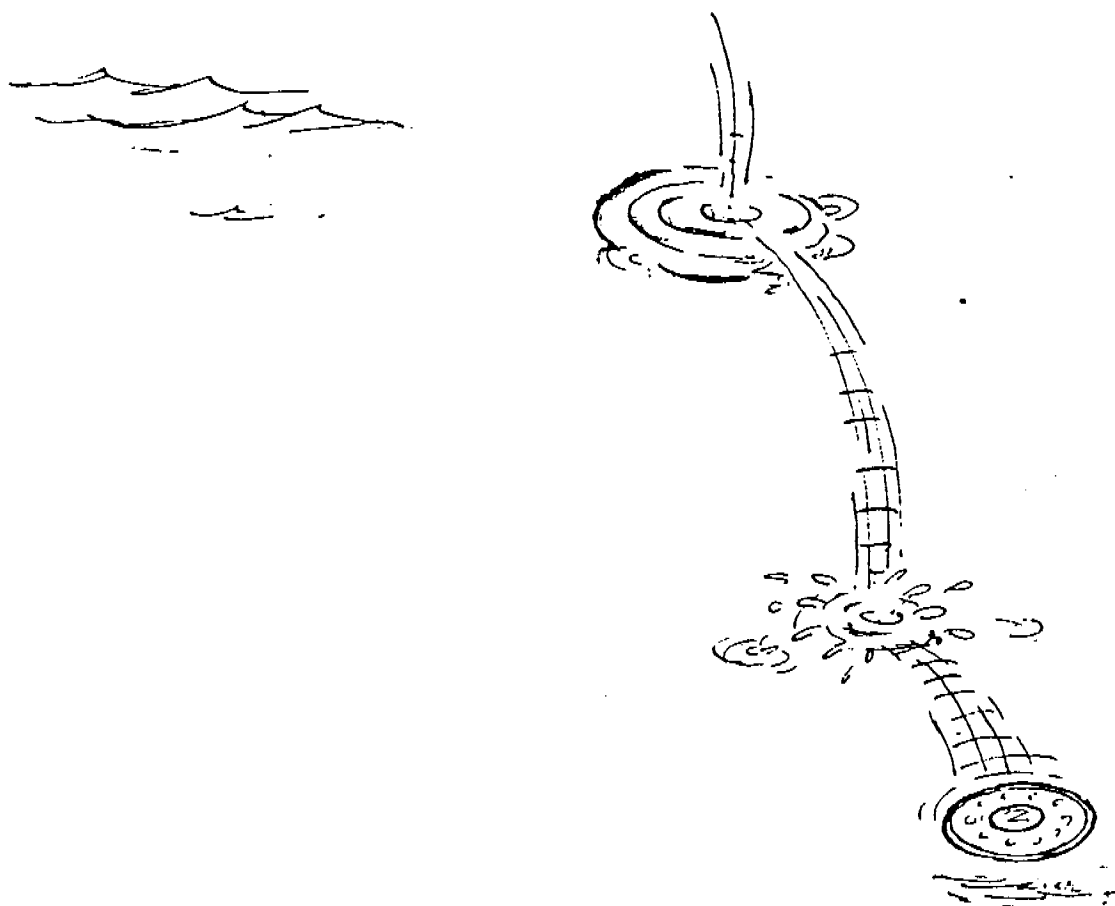
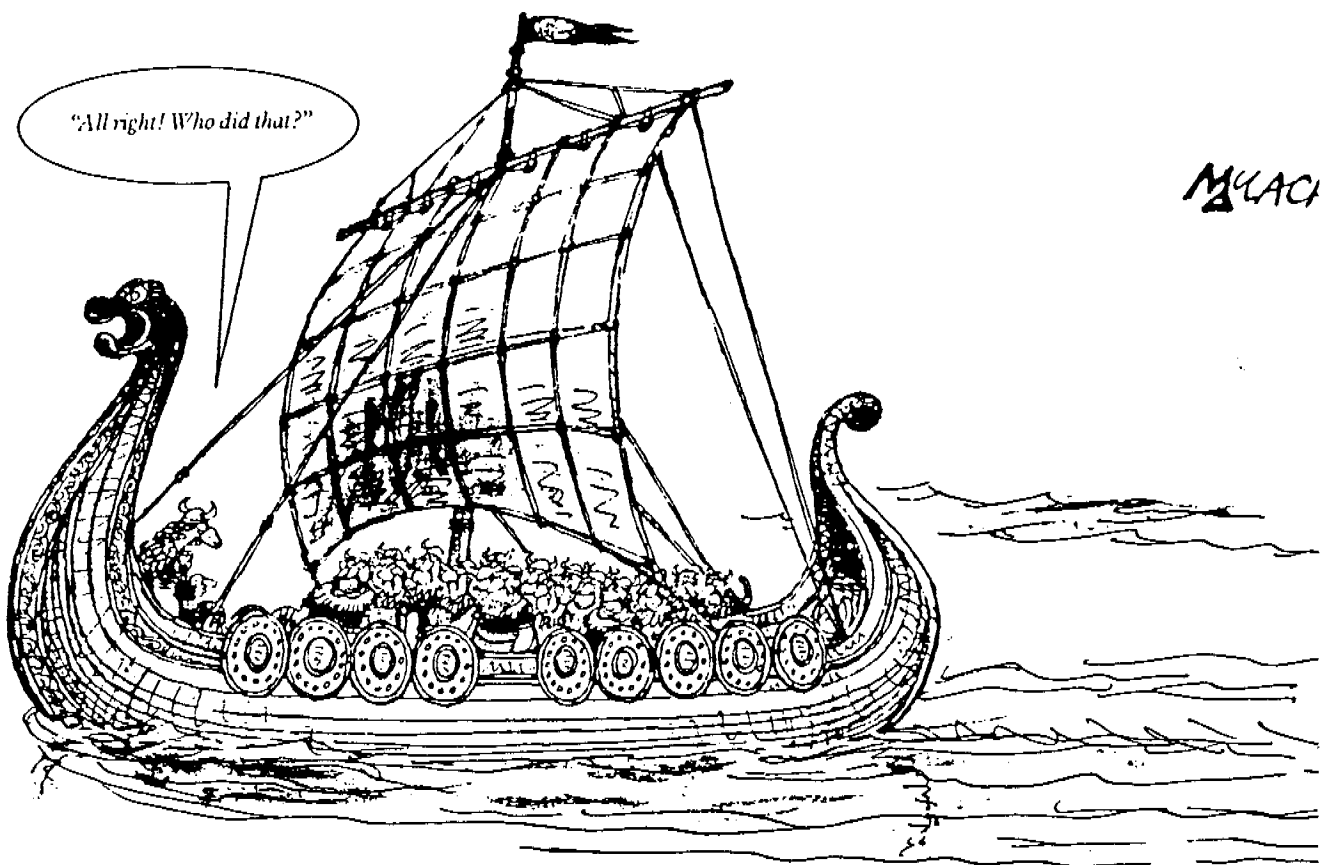
Committee meeting. Anyone with a bitch take note'Your representatives are Steve Wylie and Steve Nicoll.

July 19th Mid Winter Feast.

At a venue yet to be announced, as we at the moment do not have one. So everyone please look for a suitable place. We will be inviting other clubs as well as members of the general public. A technology fine will be in effect so no bottles or cans on the tables please. We will need some kitchen staff and servitors, volunteers please.

August 30th. Skiing excursion to Lake Mountain in costume.





THE SAXON SHIELD

The shield, a basic and effective form of defence against any edge or early projectile weapon, and many different styles were produced for specific needs. While outdated by firearms, they continued to be used outside Europe for many years as an essential part of armour. The shield is still in use even in this day and age. (eg. internal security forces, U.K.)

Until the 11th. century the shields of the Saxons were round, varying in diameter from 30 to 76cm. Traces of shields are rare and these figures cannot be used to give an average size, but assuming the diameter was twice the length of the forearm, a figure of around 60cm would be reasonable. According to the rivets found these shields varied in thickness from 12 to 30mm. A hole in the centre provided room for the hand to clasp an iron grip across the inner face of the hole, and this hole was protected by a metal boss about 15cm wide, usually hammered out of a single piece of iron, though occasionally a flat sheet was merely bent to form a cone. A strap for the forearm may also have been used on the larger shields.

However most shields would have been a simple construction of Linden wood, often painted red, or faced with one or more layers of oxen hide. Those of the peasants may have had only the leather to protect the grip or the cheaper cone boss.

Sometimes two or three layers of wood were used in strips, laid cross grained as in modern plywood, to give greater strength. There is insufficient evidence as yet to confirm that the shields were curved rather than flat, but the manuscripts indicate curved shields were used and the plywood construction would have made this possible. Again the peasant class would have been using the simpler form.

In battle the shield was initially carried at arms length in order to break in order to break the force of any weapon striking the shield and to keep away from the body any weapon which pierced it. For in fighting it was held close to the body so that it not easily be knocked aside. And was used both to parry blows and as an offensive weapon. The edge was often used to strike at a spear shaft to break the head off or to knock the spear aside. And the boss was forcibly thrust into an opponent's face or chest to throw him off balance. It was not unusual for a shield to be hacked to pieces early in a fight, but the boss could still be used as an armoured fist.

THE BOW

Together with the sling the bow ranks as the oldest projectile weapon used by man. It combines simple components and simple manufacture with ease of supply of the materials. Bows are rarely found on archaeological sites because of the decay of the wood, but archers are well represented in manuscripts, and the saga of Beowulf gives ample evidence for the use of the bow as a weapon of war by the Anglo-Saxons ancestors. Several traces of bows have been found and these would indicate a length of about 150cm. However, surviving examples found in Germany may be taken as typical of Anglo-Saxon bows, and although these range in length from 120 to 320cm....., 180 to 210cm seems to be an average length.

The development of the "English" longbow owes much to the Welsh. It was noted that the Welsh bows were made from elm, where the bows of the English or Normans were made of ash or yew. The Welsh bows were also renowned for their stiffness and size and it was said that not only could their arrows pierce an oak door four inches thick (siege of Abergavenny castle, 1184.) but that they were more than a match for existing armour.

Arrow heads are more commonly found than bows but can be confused with the small heads of throwing spears. They appear to have been leaf shaped and some were barbed, with a long tang or socket for the shaft. Shafts which have survived are about 60cm long, somewhat thicker towards the point and had four flights. As armour changed to combat the arrow, so the heads became less leaf shaped and more acutely pointed to pierce armour or to penetrate the target between the joints.

Quivers which have survived also point to a short arrow of about 60cm, the quivers were cylindrical and carried over the right shoulder or on the left hip.

THE SCRAMASAX

All warriors from the lowest to the highest, also carried a single edged knife known as a scamasax. This was used to finish off a felled opponent, and in the case of the peasant classes took the case of the sword. Its length therefore varied with its role, and examples found range from 7.5 to 75cm in length.

THE SCAMASAX CONT.

However the average size for most found is around 15cm from hilt to point. This was probably the knife usually referred to as the hadseax, the extremely long examples were sometimes called langseax.

The main characteristics of the sramasax despite the difference in local manufacture and of course length, was the shape. The back of the blade did not run parallel to the cutting edge but broadened out from the hilt for just over half its length and then turned inwards to meet the cutting edge at the point. The guard, if any was insignificant, the grip of wood and the tang usually was without a pommel. Some of the longest knives have a grip long enough to be clasped with both hands.

Steve Wylie.

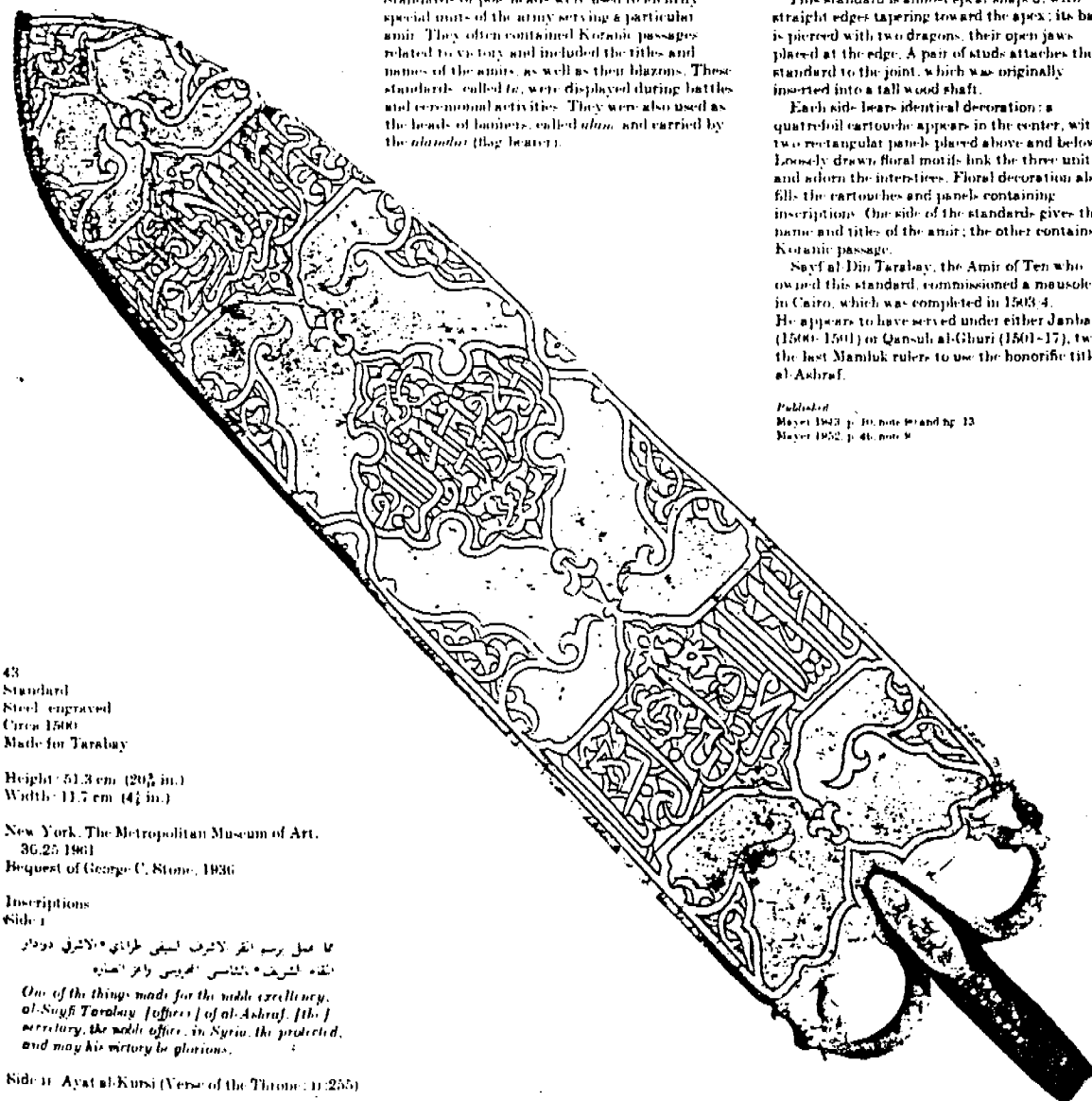
Standards or pole heads were used to identify special units of the army serving a particular amir. They often contained Koranic passages related to victory and included the titles and names of the amirs, as well as their blazons. These standards, called *ta*, were displayed during battles and ceremonial activities. They were also used as the heads of banners, called *alam*, and carried by the *alamdar* (flag bearer).

This standard is almost spear shaped, with straight edges tapering toward the apex; its base is pierced with two dragons, their open jaws placed at the edge. A pair of studs attaches the standard to the point, which was originally inserted into a tall wood shaft.

Each side bears identical decoration: a quatrefoil cartouche appears in the center, with two rectangular panels placed above and below. Loosely drawn floral motifs flank the three units and adorn the interstices. Floral decoration also fills the cartouches and panels containing inscriptions. One side of the standards gives the name and titles of the amir; the other contains a Koranic passage.

Sayf al-Din Tarabai, the Amir of Ten who owned this standard, commissioned a mausoleum in Cairo, which was completed in 1503-4. He appears to have served under either Janbalat (1500-1501) or Qansuh al-Ghuri (1501-17), two of the last Mamluk rulers, to use the honorific title al-Ashraf.

Published
Mayer 1943, p. 10, note 19 and fig. 13
Mayer 1952, p. 46, note 8



43
Standard
Steel, engraved
Circa 1500
Made for Tarabai

Height: 51.3 cm (20 1/8 in.)
Width: 11.7 cm (4 1/2 in.)

New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
36.25.1961
Bequest of George C. Stone, 1936

Inscriptions
Side 1

ما عمل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في حربه
فقد انتصر في كل حربه. اللهم انصر الأمير
القائد الشريف، الشاهي، محمد بن أبي العلاء

One of the things made for the noble excellency,
al-Sayf Tarabai [effendi] of al-Ashraf [the]
secretary, the noble officer, in Syria, the protected,
and may his victory be glorious.

Side II: Ayat al-Kursi (Verse of the Throne: 1:255)