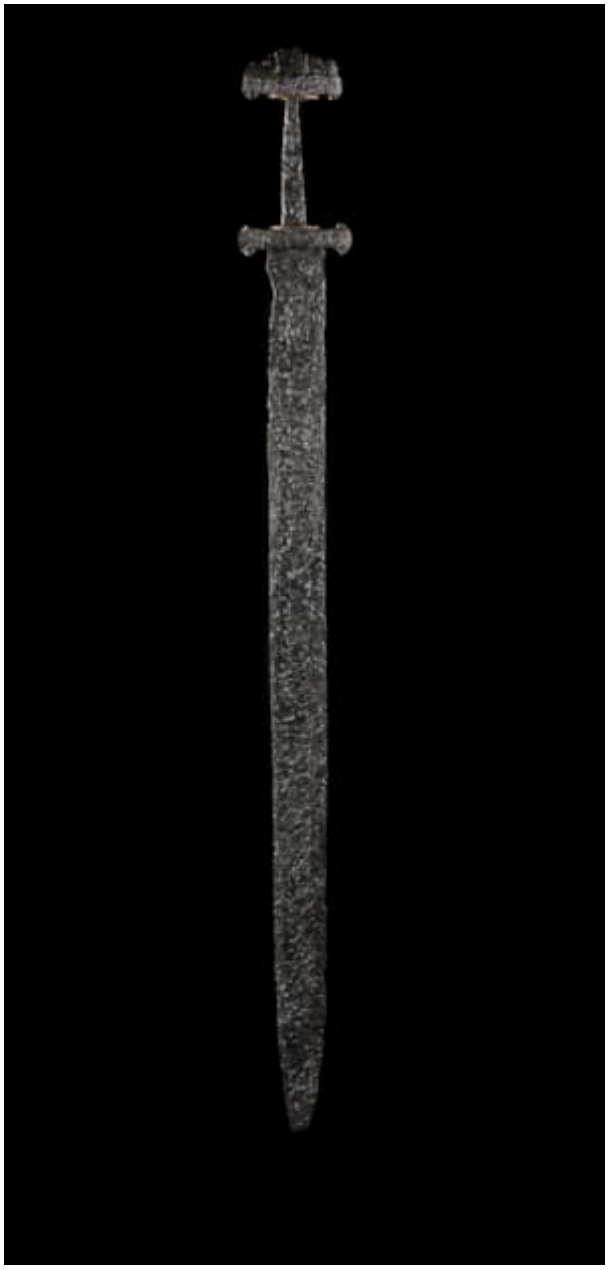


Viking Sword of Petersen Type D

Viking

9th - 10th Century A.D.

Iron

L: 88.7cm

This magnificent double-edged sword has a shallow fuller (central shallow rivet) over nearly its entire length, along both sides to the point. The hilt comprises of a thick ovoid cross-guard, which is intricately decorated with an incised scrolling pattern, with a dome-headed rivet on copper-alloy washers, flat tapering tang retaining the original ovoidal copper-alloy grip mounts above and below and with notched borders. The pommel is trilobed with the central section being the largest, copper-alloy mounts en suite including small circles on each side forming eyes. All these features place the present sword into Petersen's typology as type 'D', which comprises some of the largest examples of Viking swords. It is

believed that many of the blades found on Viking swords from the 9th and 10th centuries were made and imported from regions such as the Frankish Rhineland where the quality of iron and skill in working it was highly regarded. From about the 8th century onwards swords featured a groove, or fuller, which ran down the length of the blade and is sometimes referred to as the blood-channel. The true function of the fuller was to give a deeper backing to the tapered edges of the blade without increasing its weight or decreasing the weapons flexibility. The average weight of Viking swords was from 1-2 kg, with most at the lower end of this range. The lightness of the sword with a point of balance towards the hilt allowed it to be wielded with ease and made it capable of delivering the devastating, limb-severing blows frequently described in sagas. The fuller on this sword is shallow but visible and is approximately 3cm in width near the cross-guard, narrowing gradually as it parallels the taper of the blade to its point. The sword blade most closely resembles type '2' from Geibig's classification of double-edged Viking swords. Type 2 blades appear in the middle of the 8th century and continued into the 10th century and averaged in length from 74 to 84 cm. The Viking people were originally from southern Scandinavia (present-day Denmark, Norway and Sweden). From the late 8th to late 11th centuries they traded, raided, and settled over Europe, as far west as North America and as far east as parts of Russia, modern day Turkey and even Arabia. A result of their warlike ways was a large canon of highly developed weaponry, including swords, battle-axes and shields. Often these items were buried with their owners, and many famous grave hoards have been found in burial sites around Northern Europe. The present sword was found near the River Thielles, a tributary of the Aare which runs into Lake Neuchatel in Western Switzerland.

Literature:

Jean Boissonas, Armes Ancienne de la Suisse : Collection Charles Boissonas, 1910, p. 18, no. 107, pl. XXV.

Ada Bruhn Hoffmeyer, Gammelt Jern, E.A. Christensens Våbensamling, Copenhagen 1968, no. 29, fig. 13.

Antiques Arms & Armour including items from the E.A. Christensen Collection, Bonhams, London, 28th November 2012, Lot 57.

David Aaron Ltd, 2022, No. 4.