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FINDS FROM ST. MARY'S CHAPEL, VIRU-NIGULA PARISH

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In May 1998, some fragments of objects bearing the traces of fire were found in an area of about 7 sq.m, in the field, 30–35 m south-east of St. Mary's chapel, by Mihkel Tammet and Toomas Mägi. The objects were three fragments of a sword blade, a fragment of a sword handle, a triangular sword pommel, a strap divider with two trapezoid fittings of thin bronze sheet, two broken bronze bracelets, and a fragment of a middle part of a silver penannular brooch (AI 5832: 2–6). In the same place, a fragment of a sword was found also in 1987 (AI 5832: 1; Tamla 1993, 25–26). Inhumation burial(s) with some potsherds and a javelin head belonging to the end of the 12th – first half of the 13th centuries (AM 803: 1–3), were discovered in a trial pit by the southern wall of the chapel in 1996. Burials were partly destroyed by the building of the chapel (Tamla 1996). It is known that some medieval, or even later, coins have also been found near the chapel.

The discovered fragments belong to an H-type sword (Fig. 1). These swords have a straight guard and triangular pommels, both decorated with ornaments of copper or silver wire, hammered into the fine parallel grooves. According to Mati Mandel, eight almost whole H-type swords have been found in Estonia, and besides them, more pommels and guards. Although these swords and fragments cannot be dated precisely, none are later than the 9th century. The fragment of a sword blade with guard found in 1987 near the St. Mary's chapel also belonged to a sword of H-type. Relying upon the report, the fragment was found in the field about 25 m south of the ruins of the chapel, probably from a cremation burial (Mandel 1991, 103, 114, Tab. pp. 104–105).

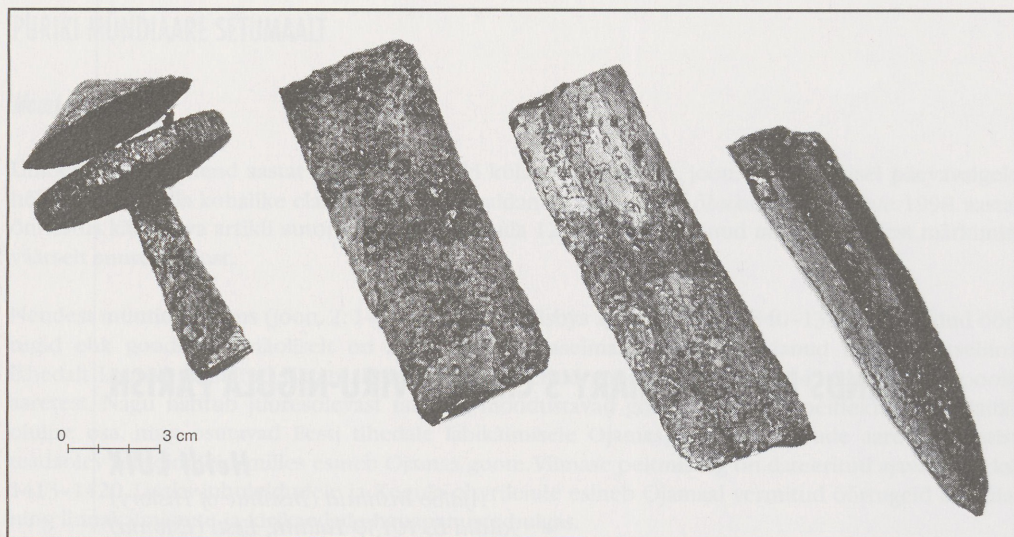


Fig. 1. Fragments of a sword (AI 5832: 2).

Joon. 1. Mõõga katkendid.

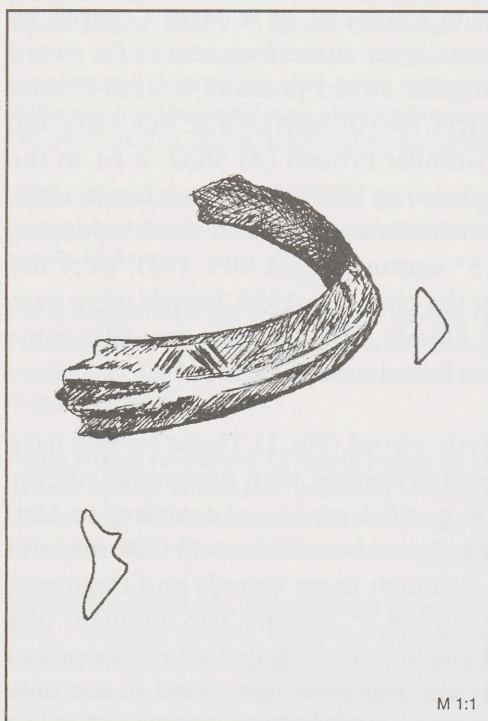


Fig. 2. Fragment of a bracelet with thickening ends (AI 5832: 3).

Joon. 2. Jämenevate otstega käevõru katkend.

The fragment of the bracelet with thickening ends decorated with longitudinal grooves, has a triangular cross-section in the middle part (Fig. 2). The end, only partly preserved, is deformed. Its cross-section was probably also triangular. At the end of the longitudinal groove, slanted lines can be observed; in other places ornamentation is not preserved. The bracelets with thickening ends decorated with longitudinal grooves have either lozenge, oval or triangular cross-sections and sometimes they are also decorated with slanted lines (Tamla 1991, Fig. 1, 2, 11; Mägi-Lõugas 1995, Fig. 2: 7, 8; 11: 1, 2). Toomas Tamla dated the bracelets with thickening ends to the 11th century and the first half of the 12th century (Tamla 1991, 142). In the typology of bracelets produced by Marika Mägi-Lõugas, based on their ornamentation, the smaller ones with lozenge and oval cross-sections belong to the variant

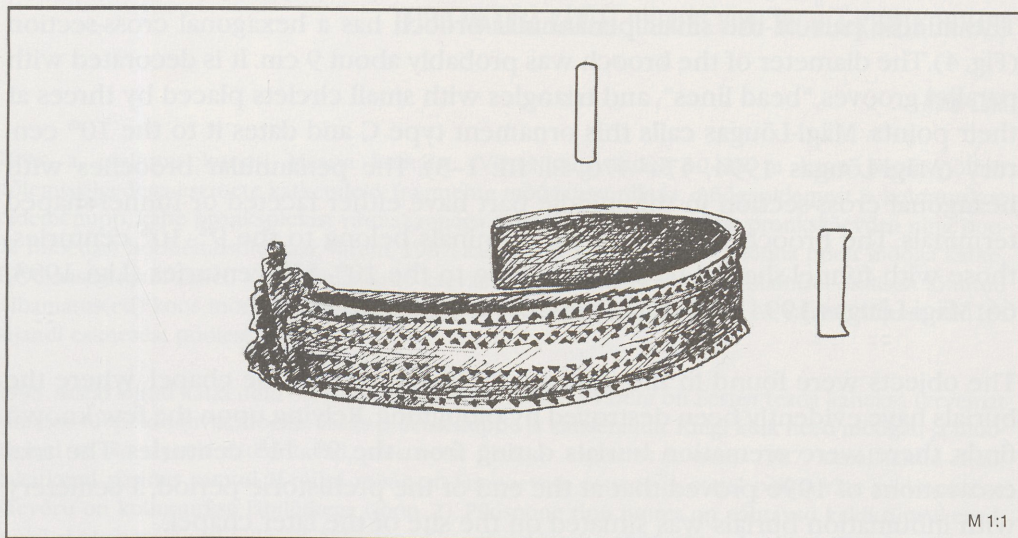


Fig. 3. Fragment of a bracelet (AI 5832: 4).

Joon. 3 Käevõru katkend.

I:2. The bracelets of type I, by Mägi-Lõugas's opinion, were used until the beginning or the middle of the 10th century. Larger bracelets with triangular cross-sections belong to the variant III:1, dated to the second half of the 10th and to the 11th century (Mägi-Lõugas 1995, 283, Fig. 30).

One end of the massive bracelet with tapering ends and quadrangular cross-section is broken (Fig. 3). Triangular indentations at the edges of the bracelet point outwards, in the middle of the bracelet they are placed in four lines, by pairs, pointing towards each other. The decoration is rather irregular, the lines sinuous and the triangles in some places alternately, in others almost end to end. Mägi-Lõugas calls the ornamentation of miniature triangles occurring on penannular brooches, type A and dates it to the 9th-10th centuries (Mägi-Lõugas 1994, 471-473, Pl. D), similar decoration has also been used on bracelets with thickening ends (*op. cit.* 471; Tamla 1991, Fig. 1, 2, 5-7, 9-11).

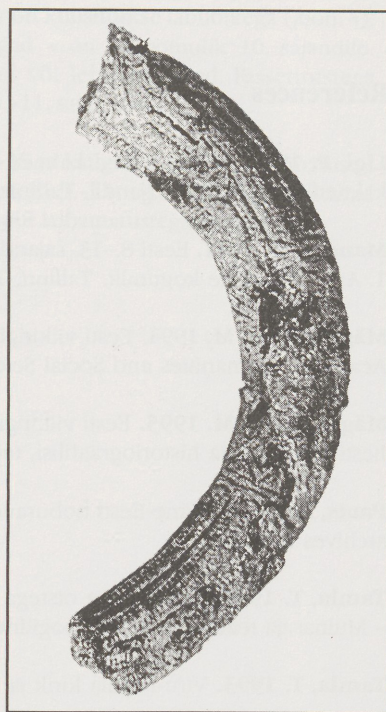


Fig. 4. Fragment of a penannular brooch (AI 5832: 5).

Joon. 4. Hoburaudsõle kaare katke.

The middle part of the silver penannular brooch has a hexagonal cross-section (Fig. 4). The diameter of the brooch was probably about 9 cm. It is decorated with parallel grooves, "bead lines", and triangles with small circlets placed by threes at their points. Mägi-Lõugas calls this ornament type C and dates it to the 10th century (Mägi-Lõugas 1994, 474–476, Pl. III: 1–5). The penannular brooches with hexagonal cross-section in the middle part have either faceted or funnel-shaped terminals. The brooches with faceted terminals belong to the 9th–10th centuries, those with funnel-shaped terminals belong to the 10th–11th centuries (Ligi 1993, 66; Mägi-Lõugas 1994, 474–476; Pauts 1995, 37, 55–56, 58).

The objects were found in the field about 25–35 m from the chapel, where the burials have evidently been destroyed by ploughing. Relying upon the few known finds, there were cremation burials dating from the 9th–11th centuries. The trial excavations of 1996 proved that at the end of the prehistoric period, a cemetery with inhumation burials was situated on the site of the later chapel.

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LEIUD MAARJA KABELI JUUREST VIRU-NIGULA KIHELKONNAST

Heidi LUIK

1998. a. maikuus korjati Maarja kabelist (Viru-Nigula khk.) 30–35 m kagu poolt põllult põlemisjälgedega esemete katkendeid: fragmente mõõgateramikust, mõõgapidemest ja kolmnurkne pidemenupp, kahe pronksplekist rihmakannaga rihmajagaja, kaks katkist pronkskäevõru ning poolik hõbedast hoburaudsõle kaar. Varem, 1987. aastal leiti kabelist u. 25 m lõuna poolt mõõga katke. 1996. aastal saadi kabeli lõunaseina äärde kaevatud prooviaugust kabeli ehitamisel osaliselt lõhutud laibamatus(ed) koos mõne savinõukillu ja heiteodaotsaga, mis pärinevad 12. sajandi lõpust või 13. sajandi esimesest poolest.

1998. aastal leitud katkendid on H-tüüpi mõõgast (joon. 1). Varem on Eestist teada kaheksa tervemat samasse tüüpi kuuluvat mõõka, lisaks pidemenuppe ja kaitseraudu. Kuigi kõik need mõõgad ja mõõgaosad ei ole täpselt dateeritavad, pole neist ükski 9. sajandist hilisem. 1987. aastal leitud mõõgakatkend pärines samuti H-tüüpi mõõgast. Jämenevate otstega ja otstel paiknevate pikisoontega käevõru on kolmnurkse läbilõikega (joon. 2). Pikisoone tipu juures on nähtavad kaldkriipsukesed, mujal ei ole ornamendi säilinud. Niisugused käevõrud kuuluvad 10.–11. sajandisse. Kitsenevate otste ja ristkülikukujulise läbilõikega massiivsel käevõrul on üks ots murdunud (joon. 3). Ehte kaunistuseks on kolmnurkadest täkkeread. Niisugust ornamendi esineb hoburaudsõlgedel ja jämenevate otstega käevõrudel 9.–10. sajandil. Hõbedast hoburaudsõle kaar on kuusnurkse läbilõikega (joon. 4). Sõle ornament – paralleelsed sooned, pärliread ja kolmnurgad – on iseloomulik 10. sajandile. Kuusnurkse kaareläbilõikega sõlgede otsanupud on fassetitud või lehtrikujulised. Fassetitotstega sõled kuuluvad 9.–10. sajandisse, lehterotstega eksemplarid 10.–11. sajandisse.

Kõik seni teadaolevad juhuleiud on saadud Maarja kabelist 25–35 m kauguselt põllult, kus matused on segamini küntud. Leidude põhjal on tegemist põletusmatustega 9.–11. sajandist. Nagu näitavad 1996. aasta proovikaevamised, oli kabeli asukohal muinasaja lõpul laibamatustega kalmistu.