

## Elms Farm, Heybridge HYE94

### Copper Alloy Hairpins

#### Catalogue

The group numbers are those given in Cool 1990.

There were thirty-six copper alloy hairpins, eight of them fragments which were not definitely hairpins. Many of the hairpins were in very poor condition.

#### **Group 2** Knob on cordon heads

Five examples

Pins in this group can date from anywhere in the Roman period, although both the examples from datable contexts are from Period III. SF4170, which appears to have affinities with group 21 may be similar in date to that group. (Old CP 10ish?)

Context	SF no.	Description
4899	SF4170	Hairpin, point missing; allied to Cool group 2, with one cordon, but very similar in profile to members of group 21 (cf. fig. 11.9), with a similar incised circumferential line. It is perhaps best seen as a form of group 21 without the cup. Surviving L. 59mm, head diam. 8mm. Layer, K, Period III <b>D 4.3</b>
5927	SF3562	Hairpin, complete and bent. It has a sub-globular head, and the cordons are sharply moulded, with a bulge below the cordon. Cool group 2A. L 122mm, head diam. 5.5mm. Layer, J, Period III
6210	SF1682	Hairpin, with no surviving surface, bent. It had a swollen shaft, pointed at one end, with a thickened terminal at the other. The terminal is relatively long and slender, and comprises a small block element, with a groove above, and an elongated cone-shaped head, possibly with a square section. As with SF6967, it is probably a variant of Cool group 2. A hairpin from Colchester (Crummy 1983, 30, no. 504; context dated c. 250-300) has a similar cone terminal, with multiple reels below. The swollen shaft is relatively rare on copper alloy hairpins, but is a feature of most late Roman bone pins. L. 92mm. <b>D100</b>
11000	SF3578	Hairpin, bent and incomplete. Sub-globular head with two cordons. Cool group 2. L 59mm, head diam. 6mm. Machining layer.
17000	SF6967	Hairpin, incomplete and bent. It has a narrow, elongated head with traces of either cross-hatching or pine-cone decoration, with two collars below. Variant of Cool group 2. The form is paralleled on a silver pin from Baldock (Stead & Rigby 1986, 128, no. 206) which is very similar bar a small knob at the top of

Context	SF no.	Description
		the head, and less pronounced collars. L65mm. Machining layer. <b>D 3.5</b>

### **Group 3** Curved units between cordon heads

#### Five examples

This is a disparate group, with many different variations. Sub-group A is likely to be early Roman. Three of the pins (SFs 328, 3552 and 6263) are very similar.

Context	SF no.	Description
5000	SF328	Hairpin, complete and bent. It has a button head narrower than the shaft, flaring below the head to a cordon, and belongs to Cool group 3. Very similar to Sfs 3552 and 6263, and cf. Crummy 1983, 30 no. 108, from a later 3rd. cent. context. L. 92mm. Machining layer, J. <b>D 4.2</b>
5229	SF1291	Hair pin, bent and in poor condition, with little detail surviving. The head is missing. This is almost certainly Cool group 3, sub-group A, with a curved unit at the top of the shaft with two? grooves below. It was probably similar to fig. 2.5. L 96mm. Post-hole 5232, J, Period IV-VI
5453	SF3552	Hairpin, complete and bent; very similar to SF328, except that the neck below the button head is more slender. Cool group 3. L c 97mm. Layer, J, V-VI
13332	SF5115	Hairpin, bent, with the point and head missing. The moulding at the top of the shaft is unusual, comprising a square-sectioned moulding between two square cordons, rather than usual rounded profiles. Cool group 3. L 97mm. Pit 13433, I, Period IV <b>D 4.1</b>
14743	SF6263	Hairpin, point missing. The shape of the head is similar to SF328, but is slightly more elongated. Cool group 3A. C1-2? L 48mm. Stoke hole 14744, L, Period V

### **Group 5, sub-group D** Simple grooved heads

#### One example

The bulk of the dated examples are 2nd century, although they can occur earlier.

Context	SF no.	Description
5157	SF1272	Hair pin, in good condition, with the point missing. Small, low conical head, slightly faceted on top. There are two grooves, with a shallow groove on the cordon between them. Second half of C1 to early C2. L 94mm, head diam. 4mm. Pit 5158, J, Period III <b>D 3.3</b>

Context	SF no.	Description
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## **Group 6** Button and cordon heads

Three examples

Hairpins of this group are common in eastern England, and were produced in the late 1st century, into the 2nd century.

Context	SF no.	Description
4899	SF4167	Hairpin, in poor condition, with the point missing. Cool group 6, with two cordons below a sub-globular head. It is similar to fig 5.6. Surviving L 90mm, head diam. 9mm. Layer, K, Period III
5602	SF6499	Hairpin, in poor condition and incomplete. Cool group 6, with two cordons below a flattened spherical head. Surviving L 75mm, head diam. 8mm. Cleaning layer, I, not dated <b>D 3.4</b>
10174	SF1070	Hair pin in poor condition, point missing. Sub-globular head with one cordon. Cool group 6. L 62mm, head diam. 6mm. Layer, F, Period III

## **Group 9** Triple unit standard heads

Two examples

This is a small group of pins which may have been made at a single workshop. Most examples found have been from south-east England. Both of the examples from Elms Farm came cleaning layers. The group was in use by AD 125.

Context	SF no.	Description
5703	SF3218	Hairpin head; a flat ring with the top missing, with a rectangular collar below, a variation on the examples illustrated by Cool, which have a rectangular section at this point, but no collar as such. Below this is a cross-hatched drum. Surviving L 28mm, head W 9mm. There is a very similar hairpin from Kelvedon (Rodwell 1988, fig. 49, no. 59). Cleaning layer, J, not dated. <b>D 4.4</b>
6515	SF3392	Hairpin, in poor condition and incomplete. Most of the head is missing. It has a rectangular collar, as SF3218. Cool group 9. L 48mm. Cleaning layer, H, not dated.

## **Group 10, sub-group A** Knob head with grooved triangle decoration

One example

Sub-group A of this group is common in Essex. The type was in use by AD125.

Context	SF no.	Description
15516	SF6646	Hairpin head. Bi-conical, with three pairs of grooves forming a triangle on the top, and a circumferential groove on the base of the head. Cool group 10, sub-group A. This is similar to a pin from Chignal Roman Villa, though with a flatter head (Major 1998, 74, no. 37). L. 34mm, head diam. 8mm. Slot 15517, M, Period III (Not illustrated)

## **Group 12** Knob heads with incised cross decoration.

One example

Context	SF no.	Description
4149	SF408	Hair pin; the shaft is in good condition, but the head is poor. Complete but bent. The top of the head has a cross formed by intersecting double lines, with a single line round the edge. Any incised decoration which may have been present on the underside of the head is masked by corrosion. Cool group 12, in use by AD 125. Cool notes that the cross pattern is unusual, and that the pins show a high degree of similarity. While the head on this one is similar to the illustrated examples, the top of the shaft is treated somewhat differently, comprising a rather delicate baluster moulding between two small cordons. The top of the shaft expands slightly below the cordon. The distribution is in North Kent and London, and this may be the only example from Essex. L 100mm, head diam. 8mm. Cleaning layer, K, not dated <b>D 3.2</b>

## **Group 14B** Heads with glass insets

Two examples

There were two dissimilar examples of Cool group 14, sub-group B, which is of late 3rd to 4th century date. One of the examples is from a context earlier than the date given by Cool for the sub-type, layer 6790, which is later 1st – mid 2nd cent. The other example is from layer 6025, which physically overlay 6790, and it is possible that the hairpin from the earlier context was intrusive.

Context	SF no.	Description
6025	SF892	Hairpin head of Cool group 14, sub-group B, in poor condition, with the top of the cup incomplete and damaged. The head is square sectioned, with a sub-globular green glass inset (now detached) and grooves below the head. The sides of the head have incised decoration, probably V's. Surviving L. 38mm, head W. 6mm, glass inset diam. 4mm. Layer, H, Period V-VI <b>Draw</b>
6790	SF3439	Hairpin, incomplete and in fairly poor condition, of Cool group 14 with the glass inset missing. Circular sectioned head with moulded cross-hatching, as fig. 9.5, but with a cordon below,

Context	SF no.	Description
		above a single reel at the top of the shank. Surviving L. 70mm, head diam. 6mm. Layer, H, Period III. <b>Draw</b>

## Group 15 Faceted heads

### One example

This group is very variable. It is one of the predominant forms of late Roman pin (late 3rd - 4th. cent), occurring in other materials as well.

Context	SF no.	Description
14528	SF6229	Hairpin, complete but in three pieces, with an applied faceted head, now detached. It is slightly bent. Cool group 15, late C3-C4. The type does not specifically mention two-piece pins, but fig. 9.9 and 9.14 appear to be possibly two-piece. The faceting on the head is not very regular, and in this aspect it resembles fig. 9.9. L 52mm, head W. 5mm.. Well 14529, K, VI

AS notes that the corrosion products at the head of the shaft indicated the possibility of a slightly different composition, or some kind of solder, and the detached head had similar corrosion products.

## Group 21 Hollow spherical heads

### Four examples

The four hairpins in this group are of some importance, as they are the only ones of this type to have been found outside Colchester, and included the first ones from dated contexts. Cool suggested a 1st-2nd century date on stylistic grounds, and the dates for contexts 11113 and 13639, spanning CP9 to CP11, bear this out.

Three of the pins are extremely similar, with diamond cross-hatching on the top of the head, and incised or moulded circumferential lines; the fourth differs only in that the cross hatching is absent. In one (**or two?**) decayed glass survives in the cup.

Sent to Justine Bayley for analysis. [\[All four are no longer in the Hairpin box, JC - 02/06\]](#)

Context	SF no.	Description
3999	SF8134	Hairpin head, in poor condition, surface flaked. Cupped head with no glass or enamel inset surviving. The top of the head has incised cross-hatched decoration, with two moulded circumferential lines. There are traces of a cordon round the top of the shank. Surviving L. 16mm, head diam. 8mm. Cool Group 21, similar to fig. 11 no. 9. Spoil heap.
4000	SF970	Hairpin head in poor condition, very similar to SF8134, but with one incised and one moulded circumferential line on the head. It

Context	SF no.	Description
		is broken above the cordon, if there was one present. There is no trace of glass or enamel in the setting. Cool group 21, as fig. 11.9 but with crosshatching. Surviving length 9mm, head diam. 8mm. Machining layer.
11133	SF5803	Hairpin, bent and incomplete. It has cross-hatched decoration on the head, as SFs 970 and 8134, one incised and one moulded circumferential line on the head, and a cordon below the head. There may be decayed glass or enamel in the central cup. Surviving L. 68mm, head diam. 7.5mm. Cool group 21. Pit 11221, N, Period II <b>DRAW</b>
13639	SF6094	Hairpin, shank incomplete, with decayed glass in the top. It is similar to the other hairpins in this group from the site, but lacks the incised cross-hatched decoration. It has one incised and one moulded circumferential line on the head, and a cordon at the top of the shank, which is almost square sectioned. Cool group 21. Surviving L. 59mm, head diam. 7.5mm. Pit 13640, I, Period III A. <b>DRAW</b>

### Group 22/13?

Context	SF no.	Description
6000	SF5632	Hairpin in poor condition, distorted and incomplete. The top of the head has vertical grooved lines, with a circumferential groove round the middle. The bottom of the head appears plain. There is possibly a groove round the top of the shaft, but this is unclear on the X-ray. This pin is closely similar to Cool groups 13 and 22, whose distribution is in the West Country. The top of the pin is less of a 'cap' than on the illustrated examples of group 22, but the underside of the head is convex rather than concave, a principal feature of group 13. A source in the West Country is therefore very likely. The date is possibly later C2-C3. L 66mm. Cleaning layer, H, not dated. <b>D 3.1</b>

### Other fragments

Context	SF no.	Description
3999	SF8192	Probable hairpin head, with a sub-globular head, possibly with a cordon below. Alternatively it could be a tack head; the shank is rather irregular. Surviving L 12mm, head diam. 7mm. Cool Group 2? Spoil heap.  Analysis by AS indicated an ordinary copper-tin alloy with a small amount of lead and the considerable presence of iron, which had caused an unusually thick dark patinated surface to occur.

Context	SF no.	Description
4000	SF794	Tapering rod, bent towards the tip. The other end is flat, and apparently complete. This is possibly a simple hairpin of Cool's group 24. L 80mm. Machining layer.
5146	SF576	Point of hairpin or needle, probably the former. Slightly bent. L 44mm.
5539	SF2277	Tapering rod, bent, both ends missing. Possibly a hair pin shaft. L 87mm.
5539	SF2279	Hairpin shaft, head and point missing, but probably nearly complete. A slender pin, in poor condition. There is a small collar with a rounded profile at the top of the shaft. L 64mm.
5601	SF5865	Rod fragment, possibly a hairpin shaft. Broken at both ends. L 25mm.
9427	SF3278	Hairpin in poor condition, head damaged and point missing. The top of the shaft had at least one square sectioned block element. Possibly group 11. L 57mm.
11000	SF2355	Rod fragment in very poor condition, possibly not a hairpin. Both ends are broken, and there is little or no apparent taper. One end has four grooves, with rounded elements between. Such rounded elements are rare on hairpins, but occasionally occur; cf fig 4.5, which is similarly robust. L 103mm.
15002	SF5941	Hairpin terminal? Very corroded, not X-rayed. It may have a sub-globular or onion shaped head with two cordons below. Possibly a Cool group 2. L 14mm.
16166	SF7176	Hairpin or tack head. Roughly globular, with a poorly finished shank; similar to SF8192. L 17mm, head diam. 5mm..
23025	SF7836	Hair-pin? A slender rod, complete as buried, with a bent point. It is probably a hairpin with the head snapped off. L. 104mm.

## Cool group dates

Group 1B - concentrated in Dorset/Devon, probably one workshop, C2?

Group 2 - throughout Roman period

Group 3A - C1-2?

Group 5 - throughout Roman period

Group 6 - large group, concentrated in Eastern England. second half C1-early C2

Group 9 - small group, mostly from south-east. In use by AD125

Group 10 - in use by AD125

Group 12 - examples from North Kent and London. In use by AD125

Group 14 - Dating depends on subgroup

Group 14B - C3-C4

Group 15 - Late C3-C4

Group 21 - All known examples come from Colchester. None are dated. Possibly C1-2

Group 22 - Distribution limited to West Country. None from dated contexts. Later C2-early C3?



## Context dates

Context	Type	F	Area	Period	Cool Type	Type date
15516	Slot	15517	M	III	10	In use by AD125
4149	Cleaning layer		K		12	In use by AD125
6025	Layer		H	V-VI	14B	C3-4
<b>6790</b>	<b>Layer</b>		<b>H</b>	<b>III</b>	<b>14B</b>	<b>C3-4</b>
14528	Well	14529	L	VI	15	Late C3-C4
5927	Layer		J	III	2	Roman
6210	Pit	6209	H	IV	2	Roman
11000	Machining				2	Roman
17000	Machining		Q		2	Roman
4899	Layer		K	III	2; 6	Roman; In use by AD125
4000	Machining				21	C1-2?
11133	Pit	11221	N	II	21	C1-2?
13639	Pit	13640	I	III A	21	C1-2?
3999	Spoil heap				21; 2?	C1-2?; Roman
6000	Cleaning layer		H		22/13?	C2-3?
5000	Machining		J		3	C1-2?
5229	Post-hole	5232	J	IV-VI	3	C1-2?
5453	Layer		J	V-VI	3	C1-2?
13332	Pit	13433	I	IV	3	C1-2?
14743	Stoke hole	14744	L	V	3	C1-2?
5157	Pit	5158	J	III	5D	Roman
5602	Cleaning layer		I		6	In use by AD125
10174	Layer		F	III	6	In use by AD125
5703	Cleaning layer		J		9	In use by AD125
6515	Cleaning layer		H		9	In use by AD125