

Small Finds recovered from Structural and other Non-Grave Contexts

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A wide range of finds was recovered from 'non-grave' contexts. Numerically, the finds principally comprised iron nails. The nails had flat heads with square or rectangular-sectioned shanks and may derive from a number of uses although, no doubt, many are from destroyed timber coffins. Occasional large nails are likely to have come from structural timbers.

Other small finds recovered from the non-grave contexts are summarized here by period. Objects that may be independently dated have been emphasized. A catalogue description of selected, illustrated items has been included at the end of each structural period summary.

Structural Period 1

A small group of Anglo-Saxon material was recovered from 16 contexts of Period 1C. Of interest were the indications of textile processing and comb-making activities, and the early occurrence of a horseshoe. Residual Roman items were also identified.

A bone spindle-whorl of plano-convex shape (no. 1) was found in a buried ground surface (F1670) south of, and cut by, the wall of the Anglo-Saxon chancel. Three rectangular plates of sawn antler were found (F1321, F1383 – no. 2 and F1633). They are tooth-plate rough-outs, components awaiting construction into a composite comb. Two of these plates came from a surface (F1383 and F1633) pre-dating the Middle Saxon earthwork, the other from a clay deposit (F1321) forming part of the earthwork. Comb-making evidence of this sort has been found at York, in Anglo-Scandinavian deposits at Coppergate and Anglian deposits at Fishergate (MacGregor *et al.* 1999, 1918). An antler tine with saw marks was found residually in the fill of a late grave (F7014).

⁷ Report completed in 2003 and checked in 2010. Full catalogue entries for material discussed but not illustrated will be found in the database table 'Finds'.

Dress accessories

A brass pin with a hollow, hemispherical head filled with lead (Fig. 439 no. 5) was recovered from a buried soil (F1661). It is possible that the pin is intrusive from a later context, since several graves were cut into this buried soil, and a pin might easily have fallen or been moved by animal action. A second pin with a lead-filled head was found in a Saxo-Norman soil layer, however, suggesting that the pin is perhaps contemporary.

Transport

Fragmentary remains of a horseshoe of pre-Conquest type (Clark 1995, 85, type 1) were recovered from a metalled floor surface (F747), along with pottery dating from the fifth to the seventh century. This represents a particularly early occurrence of a horseshoe, although late Saxon examples are recorded from a number of locations, particularly urban, from the late ninth century onward (Clark 1995, 93).

Structural fittings

The remains of two clench-bolts and 15 iron nails were found in Period 1 deposits, two of the nails had mineralized wood present, one with a joint clearly visible.

Residual Roman material

A broken copper-alloy strip bracelet of later third- or fourth-century date and a fragment of copper-alloy wire, which may be broken from a wire strand bracelet of similar date, were found in layers making up the Middle Saxon earthwork (F1321 and F1398), which also contained pottery dating between the fifth and seventh centuries.

Fig. 842

- 1 Bone spindle-whorl, plano-convex shape with large central hole. Complete. D 38 mm, hole D 10mm, Ht 13mm, Wt 20g. F1670.
- 2 Antler rectangular plate, sawn, straight edges and smooth upper face. Almost complete. L 55 mm, W 21mm. F1383.

(not illus.) Iron horseshoe fragments with a

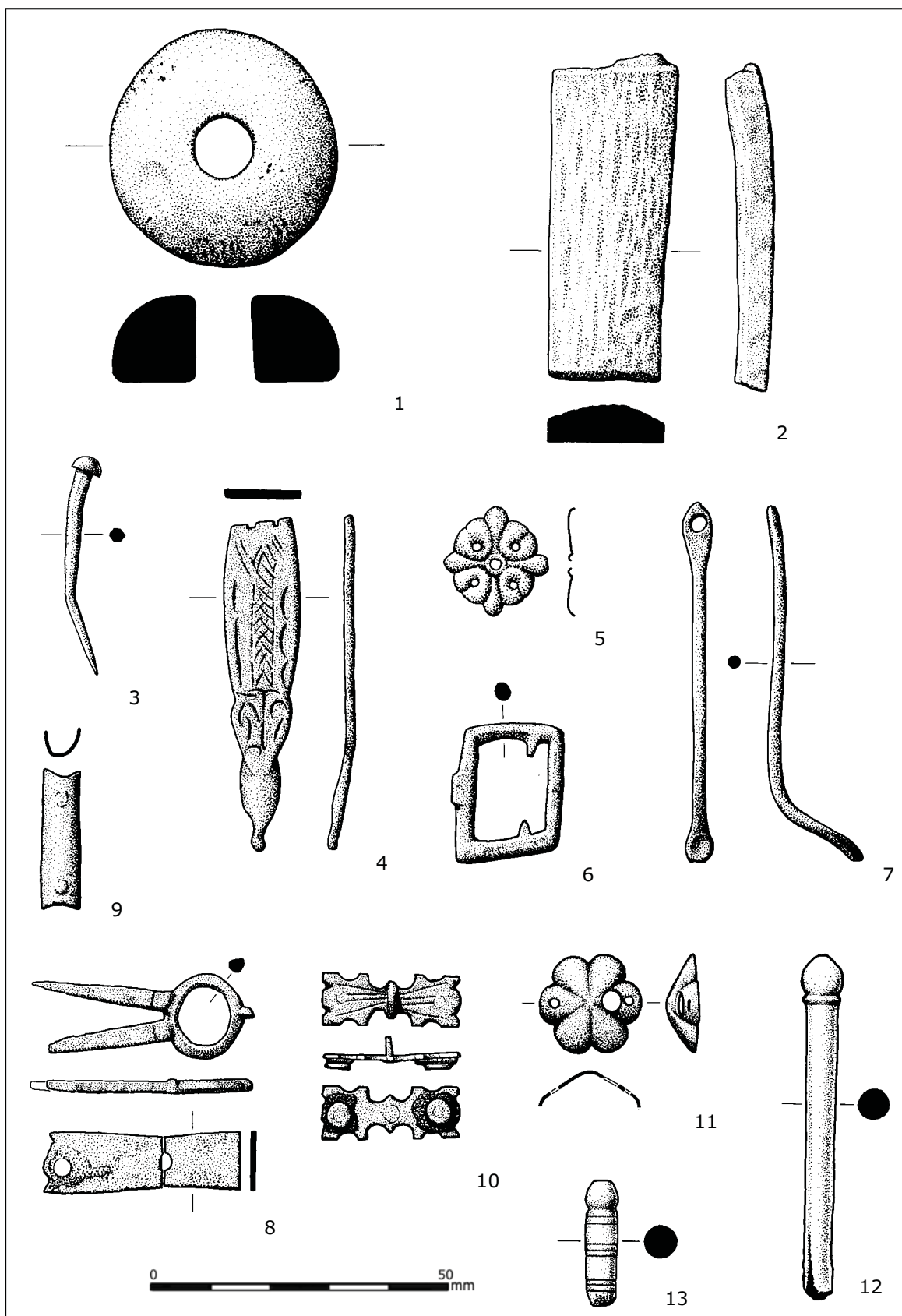


Fig. 842: Small finds from Period 1 (nos.1-2), Period 2 (no. 3), Period 3 (no. 4), Period 4 (no. 5), Period 5 (nos. 6- 7), and from the Period 7 pit 5342 (nos. 8-12). (1-11— copper alloy; 12-3—bone). Drawing Simon Hayfield.

round nail hole within a rectangular countersunk hole. Incomplete, heavily encrusted. Web W 28mm. F747.

Structural Period 2

A small group of material was recovered from seven contexts. A copper-alloy dress pin (Fig. 839, no. 2) was found in layer F156, lying on the mortar floor of the Anglo-Saxon chancel. The pin head has incised decoration and the stem is slightly swollen to prevent it from slipping through the fabric.

A copper-alloy tack or small pin (no. 3) with a gilded head, possibly of applied foil, was found (with pottery dating from the fifth to the eighth centuries) in a construction deposit (F1583) to the north of the Anglo-Saxon chancel. Another pin with no gilding surviving was found nearby in a linear constructional feature (F7302) that ran north from the doorway of the tower (Period 2 or 3). Other examples occurred residually in late grave fills and soils (F7056, F3112 and F7098). The occurrence of similar tacks in cemetery deposits at Winchester has suggested associations with coffin fittings and they are considered further under this category of object (p. 224).

A round-sectioned, pointed stem of iron, likely to be a textile processing spike, was found in layer F5444; a fiddlekey nail from a horseshoe was also recovered from a Period 2 layer.

Fig. 842

3 Copper-alloy tack with domed head and curved, round-sectioned, forged stem changing to a lozenge section at the pointed tip. Head is gilded, possibly an applied foil. Complete. L 36 mm, head D 6mm. F1583.

Structural Period 3

Small finds were found in eight contexts.

Dress accessories

A ninth-century decorated copper-alloy strap-end was found in a levelling layer within the Saxo-Norman chancel (F1537) associated with pottery dating from the late

ninth to mid-eleventh century and is discussed on p. 1025-6.

Two dress pins were recovered. A bone pin with a large disc head decorated with ring-and-dot motif (Fig. 839 no. 1) was found in a soil lens overlying the primary floor in the western annexe (F767). A brass pin (Fig. 839 no. 6) with a spherical head with a central core of lead was found in an earth floor in the tower (F580). These are discussed on p. 1007-9.

Fig. 842

4 Copper-alloy strap-end. F1537. See detailed description, p. 1024.

Structural Period 4

Small finds were recovered from 26 contexts allocated to Period 4 and two allocated to Periods 1-4. The majority comprised iron nails, and clenched bolts were found in seven contexts.

A fragment likely to come from a buckle plate was found in a make-up layer (F5329) over the eastern boundary ditch of the churchyard, with eleventh-century pottery. A mount of stamped sheet (no. 5) with fluid vegetative decorative motifs, quite Art Nouveau in feel, was found in the Norman defensive ditch fill (F5417) containing pottery of the mid-to-late twelfth century. The exact stratigraphic provenance of the mount is, however, open to question: it may have intruded from a modern cable trench.

An iron strip, possibly a fragment of a very narrow blade, was found in the palisade trench associated with the Norman defensive ditch, with pottery of twelfth-century date. An 'eared' horseshoe nail was found along with a residual clenched bolt in a wall foundation (F314). Eared nails were used with horseshoes in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Clark 1995, 96).

Fig. 842

5 Copper-alloy stamped sheet with central rivet hole and holes in the centre of the four sides. L. 16mm, W. 15mm. F5417.

Structural Period 5

Finds, principally nails and small personal

items, were recovered from 31 contexts.

A narrow, rectangular, folded buckle-plate of copper alloy was found in a path surface outside the north door of the tower (F7146). The plate, 9 mm in width, was recessed for the buckle pin and had been secured by a single rivet. Pottery recovered from this context dated between the early thirteenth and mid-fourteenth century. A rectangular framed strap loop (no. 6) was found in a boundary feature (F5349), one of several marking earlier eastern limits of the churchyard. Pottery from the same context dated between the late thirteenth and early/mid-fourteenth century. These strap loops were current in London from the late twelfth to the late fourteenth century (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 233, fig. 149).

A copper-alloy pin from a brooch or small buckle was found with late thirteenth- to early fourteenth-century pottery in a clay deposit, part of the fill of the Norman defensive ditch (F5373). A headless pin of copper alloy (fig. 839 no. 3), with a pair of transverse mouldings on the stem, was found in the lower fill of a large hollow or pit (F5359). The pit appeared to straddle the eastern churchyard boundary, and contained pottery of mid-twelfth- to early thirteenth-century date. A humped pin from a penannular brooch occurred residually in F1246.

A copper-alloy aiglet with a butted seam and a rivet to secure the lace was found on a chalk gravel path (F5229) at the east end of the north aisle. An ear-scoop (no. 7) was found in a construction deposit (F7241) in the angle between the tower and the north aisle. The pierced terminal indicates that it was suspended, probably as part of a cosmetic set.

The branch of a small horseshoe, apparently of Clark's type 1 (pre-Conquest and possibly continuing into the twelfth century) (Clark 1995, 95) was found in the fill (F5347) of a palisade trench. Pottery from this deposit dated from the late twelfth to early thirteenth century.

Fig. 842

6 Copper-alloy rectangular framed strap loop with a pair of small

pointed internal projections. The outer edge of the frame has a wide central collar. Complete. Ht/W 23mm, L. 18mm. F5349.

7 Copper-alloy ear-scoop with rectangular-sectioned stem; scoop terminal at one end, the other flattened and pierced for suspension. Complete. L 61 mm, Max W 6mm. F7241.

Structural Periods 4-6

Small finds, chiefly nails, were recovered from four contexts loosely attributed to Periods 4-6. The heel of a horseshoe was found in the tower in layer F576, which contained pottery dating between the mid-twelfth and early thirteenth century, and pre-dated the sixteenth-century bell-pit (F511). A small chip of coloured vessel glass was found in a possible floor layer of the tower (F601).

Structural Period 6

Small finds were recovered from 30 contexts, again principally comprising small numbers of iron nails and dress accessories. A copper-alloy pin with a solid head and a small brass 'dress-making' pin were found. A fragment of decorated knife handle of bone and a circular rove of copper alloy were found in a spread of chalk rubble (F3627). A fragment of bone with a drilled hole was found in F1168 and the terminal of an iron nailed binding, perhaps from a hinge, was recovered from layer F1101. An 'eared' horseshoe nail was incorporated in an earth floor (F382).

Structural Period 7

Small finds were recovered from 62 contexts. A barbed arrowhead of iron (no. 16), a multi-purpose form used for both hunting and in combat (Jessop 1996, 197, type MP7), was found in a sleeper trench (F551) in the western annexe, along with a faceted, decorative knife handle of ivory and pottery of the mid-twelfth to early thirteenth century. Dated examples of this type of arrowhead from elsewhere are thirteenth century. A small, round-sectioned socket of iron, an arrowhead of Jessop's MP9 (twelfth to fifteenth centuries)

was found in a path layer (F5210) around the east end of the chancel, where it was associated with pottery of early thirteenth- to mid-fourteenth-century date. This type may have been developed specifically for archery practice, which could account for its occurrence here, since churchyards were commonly the location of butts where both practice and competition was undertaken (Reeves 1997, 99). Marks left from sharpening arrowheads are present inside the tower (p. ##).

A complete knife blade and fragments from a second were found along with nails and a nailed binding in the bell-pit (F511) under the tower. The complete whittle-tanged blade had the tip bent round in a curve (no. 17). The pit, which had been used for two bell casting operations, contained pottery dated from the late fifteenth to early seventeenth century in its fill.

Of interest was a rubbish pit (F5342) to the north of the chancel: it contained a large group of domestic and personal items of copper alloy, writing implements, as well as iron nails, horseshoe nails and a small hinge pivot. Pottery from the pit dated to the early-to-mid fourteenth century.

Dress accessories from the pit included pins, buckles and bar-mounts. Seven pins with wire-wound heads and four with solid, spherical heads (e.g. Fig. 439 no. 8) were recovered. A small copper-alloy buckle and buckle plate (no. 8) is of a type popular in the mid-fourteenth to early fifteenth century (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 78–82). Two sheet bar-mounts (no. 9) were found and a sexfoil mount (no. 11) comparable with another from Billingsgate, London, from a context dated c. 1350–1400. A decorated bar-mount from a locking clasp (no. 10) was also recovered. Plain examples have been recovered from Swan Lane, London, in deposits dated c. 1270–1350 (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 120, fig. 79, nos. 570–1). The locking clasp may have been used on an item of dress or as a book fastening.

Two bone *styli* for use in writing on wax tablets were found, one plain, the other with a decorated stem (nos. 12–3). Other items within the deposit included small, broken,

cast fragments of copper alloy including the rim from a large vessel possibly a bell, and the lower half of a spherical copper-alloy rumbler bell. Rumbler bells were used on horse harness and small examples were also worn as dress accessories on clothing in the late medieval period. In London, rumbler bells of brass and of tin were found from the late thirteenth century (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 336–41). It is believed that these small bells were worn by priests and pilgrims, as well as by jesters and acrobats, before they became more widely adopted as a fashion in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century (*ibid.*, 336).

In all, the remains of six rumbler bells were found at St Peter's, the majority occurring residually. The squashed hemisphere from a second example was found along with pins and aiglets in a layer (F5175) with sixteenth-century pottery. A complete example with a suspension loop of copper-alloy strip, and still containing an iron 'pea' within, was found in grave soil (F7075). Another (Fig. 13.59, no. 8) came from the fill of grave F7063, while the upper hemisphere of a fifth example was found in the fill grave F7019 (both Phase A). Crushed fragments from a sixth example were unstratified in Area 14.

A range of small dress accessories was recovered from a path (F5210) around the east end of the chancel, and the levelling layer below (F5175). A range of pins were found, including an example with a solid spherical head, but principally small brass pins with wound-wire heads, including a group of 19 in layer F5175 (Fig. 840 group no. 2). A copper-alloy pin with a large domed head (Fig. 839 no. 7) was found in the north east corner of the churchyard (F5233). Another with a small, faceted, head (Fig. 839, no. 9) came from a rubble deposit (F7071) to the north-west of the north aisle, probably construction debris from the clerestory. Small brass pins with wire-wound heads were found in several other contexts attributed to Period 7.

A number of easily-lost dress accessories were also recovered. The arm from a copper-alloy locking buckle (from F5146) is likely to date to c. 1350–1450. Six aiglets were recovered from various locations, and

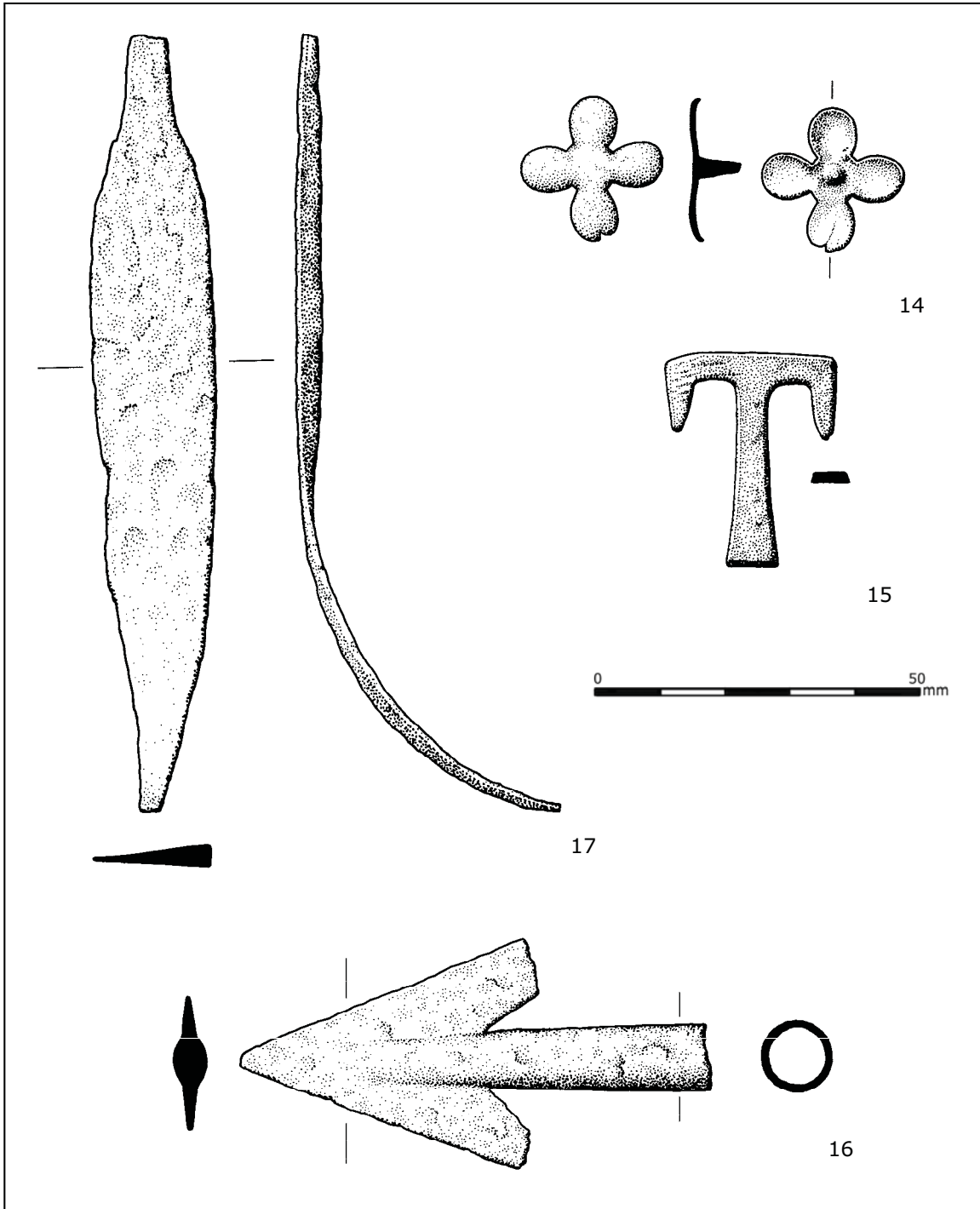


Fig. 843: Small finds from Period 7 contexts. (14-5—copper alloy; 16-7— iron). Drawing: Simon Hayfield.

fibres from the leather laces within the aiglets were preserved in two instances. In addition to these, a long, decorated aiglet (Fig. 764, no. 1) was found in a cut (F5301) to the east of the chancel. Long aiglets, and those with decoration, are generally of post-medieval date. The cut in which it was found was possibly filled by a slump of later material and the aiglet is likely to be intrusive from a later level. A quatrefoil mount of gilded copper was recovered from construction debris (F5278), north of the vestry.

Particularly significant for the history of memorials at Barton is a letter 'T' from an inscription (no. 15); it is of cast copper alloy and was recovered from rubble (F5281) filling a hollow over graves to the north of the vestry. Pottery from the context dates to the early or mid-fourteenth century. The deposit cut the rubbish pit F5342, mentioned above.

Fig. 842
Group from pit F5342

- 8 Copper-alloy small, oval buckle frame with triangular lip on the outer edge and raised moulding at the junction with the two forked spacers. Remains of two sheet composite buckle plates, the end of each plate is peaked at the centre and pierced with a rivet hole. Almost complete. L 35mm, W 14mm.
- 9 Copper-alloy rectangular, hollow sheet bar-mount with curved section; an iron rivet at each end. Complete. L 23 mm, W 6 mm.
- 10 Copper-alloy bar-mount locking clasp, with decoratively shaped edges and incised linear decoration. Held by a rivet with a circular washer at each end; leather present around each rivet. In the centre is a swivelling, crescent-headed tab, also held by a rivet. Complete. L 23 mm, W 9mm, leather Th. 2mm.
- 11 Copper-alloy sexfoil, domed mount, with two small rivet holes

and a larger round hole between placed off centre. Complete. D 17 mm.

- 12 Bone stylus with round-sectioned stem and spherical head with a collar at the neck. Remains of the iron point present at the other end. Almost complete. L 56 mm. D mm, head D 7 mm.
- 13 Bone stylus with round-sectioned stem and spherical head; eight incised lines below producing a moulded profile. Incomplete. L 21+mm, D 6 mm.

Fig. 843
Other items from Period 7 contexts

- 14 Copper-alloy (gilded copper) quatrefoil mount with integrally cast central shank. Upper face corroded but shows signs of gilding. Complete. L 23mm, Ht 8mm. F5278.
- 15 Copper-alloy cast letter 'T' of rectangular section, from a memorial slab; the lower face is rough, to aid the adhesion of mastic. Complete. Ht 33 mm, W 27 mm. F5281.
- 16 Iron arrowhead with triangular head with long barbs, narrow neck and round-sectioned, nailed socket. Almost complete. L 73 mm, W 34 mm. F551.
- 17 Iron whittle tang knife with straight back and edge tapering to a pointed tip, now bent. Tang set mid-way between the back and edge. Complete. L 140 mm. W 18 mm, back Th 4 mm. F511.

Structural Period 8

Small finds were recovered from at least 120 contexts attributed to period 8. Many contained coffin furniture and small objects from disturbed burials, and a range of small personal items lost by those visiting the church and the churchyard. A number of residual finds could be identified within the deposits.

Of interest was a mason's chisel or bolster (no. 18), found in the fill of a nineteenth-century(?) posthole (F956), which appears to be one of a series of scaffold settings running parallel to the north face of the south arcade, and potentially dating from c. 1806.

Amongst the domestic items found were three brass thimbles and the finger-loop from a pair of copper-alloy scissors. A large, scale-tang knife with a broken blade, apparently a domestic carving knife, was recovered from small rubble associated with the latest brick floor inside the church (1859).

Recreation and refreshment in the churchyard is suggested by items such as a stone 'marble' from a charnel pit (F3042) near the west wall of the south aisle; a glass 'marble' lemonade bottle-stopper, found alongside the tower; and a cork bottle-stopper from an old excavation trench within the area of the Anglo-Saxon chancel⁸.

Residual material in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century deposits included five medieval arrowheads. A warhead of late fourteenth-century date (no. 20 - Jessop 1996, 198, type M1) was found in a make-up deposit (F258) under pews in the nave. An arrowhead of conical socket type (no.19) dating to the twelfth to fifteenth century (*ibid.*, 197, type MP9) was in upcast (F4579) from the construction of the north boundary wall of the churchyard. Three arrowheads were found in grave soil (F7010): an armour-piercing arrowhead (*ibid.*, 198, type M5) and an example with a leaf-shaped blade (no. 21) date to the mid-thirteenth century, and in addition a round-sectioned socket may be either an arrowhead of Jessop's type MP9 or a socket broken from an example of different form.

A lobed-pendant suspension mount of copper alloy from horse harness and a fiddlekey horseshoe nail found in an old excavation trench over the south wall of the Anglo-Saxon chancel are of medieval date. So too is a broken pair of shears from a construction trench for a brick burial vault

(F28) at the west end of the nave, and small annular buckle of iron from grave soil (F7104) to the north of the tower. A broken copper-alloy book clasp or page-turner belonging to the later medieval period was residual in the filling above a vault (F1012). A copper-alloy annular shoe buckle with chip-carved decoration and buckle plate dating to c. 1660-1720 was found in levelling material (F5173) below the most recent path around the east end of the chancel, associated with pottery of mid-sixteenth-century date. This deposit contained a group of small personal items including wire-wound headed pins, aiglets and a fragment likely to be broken from a purse frame.

Coffin fittings and other items derived from burials of Phase 8 were found in a large number of structural contexts.

Fig. 844

- 18 Iron chisel or bolster with flat, round head, round-sectioned stem thickening towards the base before flattening to a small, shouldered straight edge. Complete. L 145 mm.; blade W 58 mm. F956.
- 19 Iron arrowhead with small, lozenge-shaped head and conical socket. Almost complete. L 42 mm, W 16mm, Socket D 12mm. F258.
- 20 Iron arrowhead; comprising only a small conical socket. L 37 mm, D 12 mm. F4579.
- 21 Iron arrowhead with leaf-shaped blade, small midrib and round-sectioned socket. Almost complete. L 78 mm, blade W 20mm. F7010.

Items from grave soils

A broken iron key came from the upper fill of a late coffined burial (4574).

Residual in grave soils attributed to structural period 8 and cemetery period A graves

A small cast oval buckle frame with a central notch and lip and offset pin bar of a type commonly found in late thirteenth to fourteenth century contexts (Egan and

⁸ Fragments of post-medieval and modern glass beer and wine bottles were also recovered.

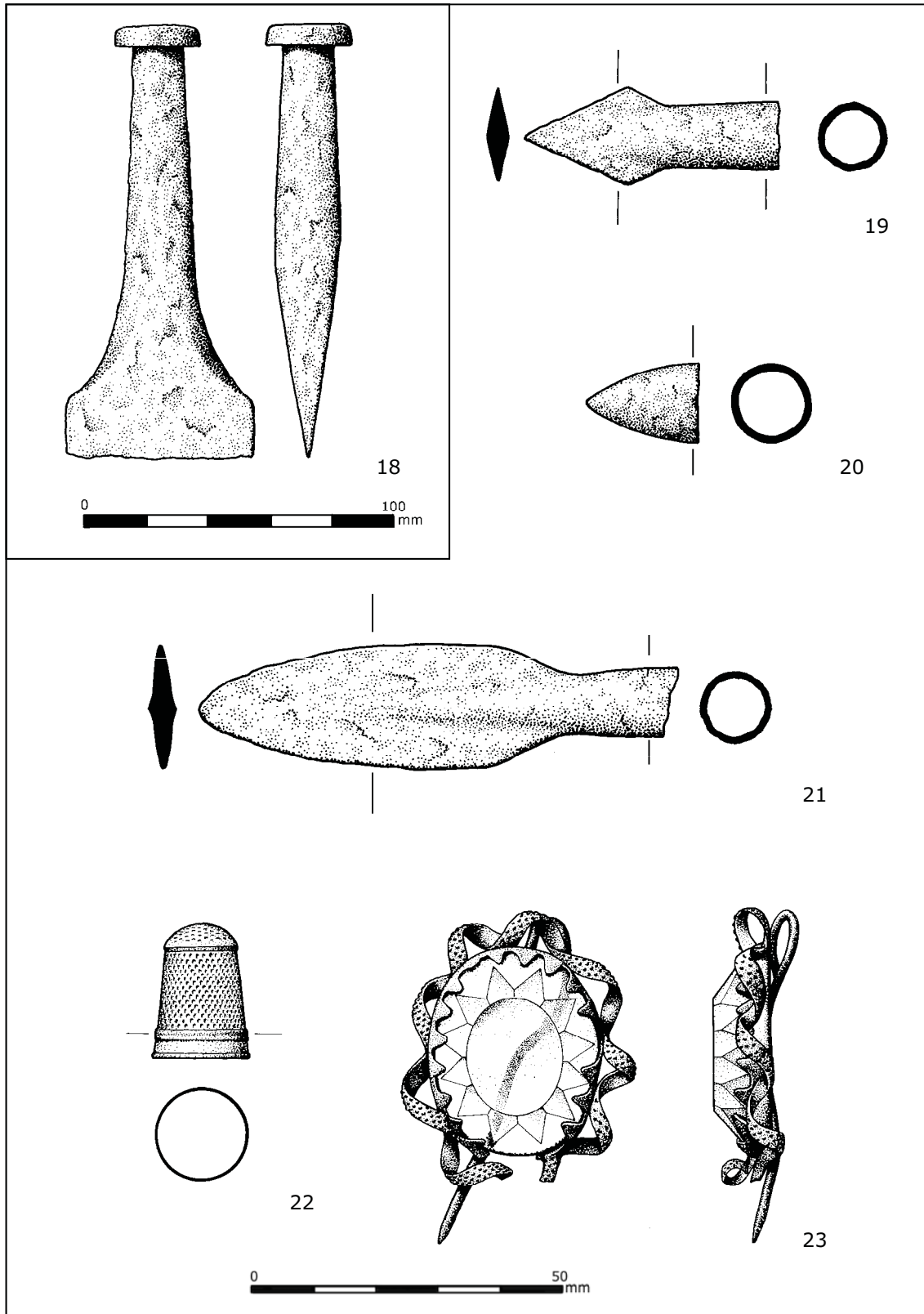


Fig. 844: Small finds from Period 8 (nos. 18-21) and unphased (nos. 22-3) contexts. (18-21— iron, 22-3— copper alloy). Drawing: Simon Hayfield.

Pritchard 1991, 74 and fig 45 nos. 306-10), was found in grave soil (3034) to the south of the tower. This layer contained a range of eighteenth and nineteenth century coffin furniture and other small items including a cast copper alloy drape ring (Egan 1998, 62 fig 43 no 135-7) and a brass thimble.

A blazer button unlikely to date before the eighteenth century, and an annular buckle, comparable with a pair (Fig. 700, nos. 6-7) in a medieval burial (7246), were found in grave soil (3108) to the south of the tower, indicating the mixed nature of the deposit.

A whittle tang knife broken at the tip with a noticeably thick back suggesting a craft function was recovered from the fill lying over several graves (1527) in the east end of the nave. Pottery from the same context dated to the mid twelfth to early thirteenth century. At least 21 timber nails, three with wood joints preserved, apparently coffin fittings, were found in the same context.

Unstratified and unphased contexts

A range of items, including post-medieval coffin furniture, a pair of shears and small personal items such as buttons, shoe buckles, buckle plates, tweezers, a brass thimble (Fig. 844, no. 22) of late seventeenth or early eighteenth-century type, and pins were recovered from unstratified contexts. Of interest was a large copper-alloy pin (Fig. 839, no. 13) worn as a head-dress ornament in the Low Countries in the first quarter of the seventeenth century (Margeson 1993, 8-9, fig. 4, no. 21).

A copper-alloy dress brooch (no. 23) was found in the nave, after the removal of the pews and flooring, and is likely to have been lost by a member of the congregation. The object was researched by Elena Baldi (1998): the brooch is of 'Pinchbeck' metal, has a yellow glass 'stone' and was worn with the pin pointing downwards, probably to hold a scarf around the shoulders. The filament is typical of the early nineteenth century.

Curiously, the bowl of a large pewter spoon was found by G.H. Varah in the mortar of the exterior of the north aisle, just to the east of the porch, when refacing the wall in the 1960s.

Fig. 844

22 Copper-alloy (brass) thimble, cast with machine made indentations. Complete. Ht 21 mm, D 15 mm. U/S

23 Copper-alloy brooch with oval collet with 19 claws (two now missing) to hold a stone in place. Faceted 'stone' of clear dull yellow glass, surrounded by a ribbon-like filament soldered to the case in four places and decorated on the upper face with raised dots possibly in imitation of 'granaglia' pattern. The pin is soldered to the base of the case. Copper alloy identified by XRF analysis as pinchbeck. Almost complete. L. 24mm W/Ht 20mm, L with pin 28mm U/S. Pl. 119.

A ninth century strap end

Gabor Thomas⁹

Fig. 842 no. 4; fig. 237.

Description

Copper-alloy strap-end which is split to accommodate a strap at its upper edge; the latter is damaged across a pair of circular holes which would have originally carried attachment rivets. At the opposite end is a terminal in the form of a stylised animal head seen from above with a pair of large oval ears, each marked internally with upper lunate and lower longitudinal incisions, a pair of large lentoid eyes and an elongated snout which bulges outwards at its tip. The central convex-sided panel bears crudely incised ornament, partially enclosed at each of its longer sides, by three conjoined inward facing lunate incisions, which define the inner sides of a plain outer border. Within this enclosed area is a column of closely spaced chevrons contained within parallel borders. On the split-end below the rivet holes, the borders diverge to enclose a

⁹ Report rewritten in 2010.

triangular area which is similarly occupied by incised chevrons, the upper pair of which fail to converge at an apex. The reverse of the strap-end is plain and the surface of the metal covered with patches of invasive and encrusted corrosion. Length 56.2mm, Width 13.3mm, Thickness 1.8-2.6mm

Discussion

The form of the strap-end places it firmly within a standardised ninth-century class of which over 900 examples have been recorded from sites as distant as Trehiddle in Cornwall and Westness, Orkney, Scotland (Thomas 2000). The majority of finds made within England fall to the south-east of a line drawn from the Bristol Channel to Whitby on the coast of North Yorkshire, the highest concentration coming from East Anglia, Lincolnshire and Humberside, a pattern in no small part influenced by the recording metal-detector finds (see Dobinson & Denison 1995). Finds to the north and west of this geographical line are relatively dispersed and predominantly coastal. This widespread distribution encompasses the totality of the contemporary Mid-to-Late Saxon settlement pattern, from *emporia*, royal *vills* and monastic sites through to rural settlements both with and without an ecclesiastical component.

The class can be confidently attributed to the ninth century on the basis of examples from coin-dated hoards including Sevington, Wilts (c. 850) Trehiddle, Cornwall (c. 868) Talnotrie, Dumfries & Galloway, Scotland (c. 875) and Cuerdale, Lancs (c. 905) (Blackburn & Pagan 1986), and by a growing number of finds from independently dated archaeological contexts, including examples from *Hamwic* (Hinton 1996, 37-44), Whithorn, Dumfries & Galloway (Nicholson and Hill 1997, BZ19a), and York (Moulden, Logan and Tweddle 1999, no. 78). While not necessarily refuting the suggestion that the origins of the class may lie in the eighth century (Graham-Campbell 1974, 234), the weight of current dating evidence suggests that the class had reached its *floruit* by the second half of the ninth century, remaining dominant until the

start of the following century by which time a new form of tongue-shaped strap-end, modelled on continental examples, had come into ascendancy (Thomas 2003).

This class of strap-end displays numerous decorative manifestations. At the top of the range come de luxe examples in silver and niello featuring Trehiddle-style decoration (see, for example Webster in Webster & Backhouse 1991, nos 246g, 248a; Thomas 2006). These are outnumbered by a more modest repertoire of base-metal versions carrying simplified designs either punched or incised into the metal, typified by the Barton-upon-Humber example. Whilst some of the decorative variants appear to represent regional styles and workshops (Thomas 1996), strap-ends bearing simple geometric designs have widespread distributions encompassing much of later Anglo-Saxon England. As the parallels identified below demonstrate, it is impossible to localise the Barton-upon-Humber strap-end to any one particular region or workshop. It should be noted, however, that the area within a 10-mile radius of Barton-upon-Humber has yielded a high concentration of finds of the general class. Prominent amongst this material is an excavated assemblage of sixteen complete and fragmentary 9th-century strap-ends from the high-status settlement at Flixborough (Thomas 2009); numerous examples have also been recorded locally from metal-detected sites in the parishes of Melton Ross and Barnetby-le-Wold (accessioned by Kevin Leahy at Scunthorpe Museum).

Bearing simplified ornament that would have been within the capabilities of most jobbing metalworkers, it is hardly surprising that stylistic elements of the Barton-upon-Humber strap-end can be paralleled individually and in combination within the corpus ninth century strap-ends. For example, the use of conjoined lunate incisions to frame a central field of incised decoration may be directly paralleled on two strap-ends from St Neots, Cambs (Addyman 1973, 95, fig. 118, no. 8) and Bradwell, Essex (Anon. 1947/8, 27, pl. ix); however, in both these cases the enclosed field carries a lattice

pattern rather than chevrons. While the use of chevrons as a decorative motif can be paralleled fairly widely, occurring, for example, on strap-ends from Whitby, N. Yorks (Peers and Radford 1943, 58, fig. 11, 3) and Winterbourne Whitechurch, Dorset (Keen 1986, 195, fig. 2, no. 1), the herringbone pattern exhibited on the Barton-upon-Humber example represents a new variation on this common theme.

It is likely that the triangular zone of decoration located below the rivet holes is a stylised representation of a foliate palmette, a motif which appears in the same position on a large percentage of the class, often within a self-containing fan-shaped border. The ultimate derivation of this motif can be traced back to the crisply executed examples on strap-ends such as that from Westmeston, Sussex (Webster in Webster & Backhouse 1991, no. 193); the level of stylistic degeneration seen on the Barton-upon-Humber strap-end, however, is typical for poorer quality examples in base metal (see, for example, those from Fishergate, York, Rogers 1993, nos. 5317 & 5321).

The zoomorphic terminal, though having an unusually long snout, belongs to the dominant form of animal head found on this class of strap-end characterised by oval ears with lunate incisions; a comma-eared variety appears on a smaller number of strap-ends with a distribution concentrated north of the River Humber

(Thomas 2006).

Strap-ends of this form were likely to have been used as decorative terminals for a variety of textile straps and silk ribbons affording the service of protecting their ends from fraying and in certain functional contexts also weighting the straps down so that they hung attractively. One of their most widespread uses may have been as terminals to silk or textile girdles (Wilson in Wilson & Blunt 1961, 97). This proposition gains indirect support from the discovery of several matching pairs and evidence for the declining use of belt buckles during the eighth and ninth centuries, which combined, suggests that contemporary girdles were tied leaving both ends free to hang down below the waist (Owen-Crocker 1986, 100; Hinton 1990, 507)

The strap-end was discovered in a secondary deposit interpreted as a measure to raise the internal floor level within the Saxo-Norman apsidal extension to St Peter's. Given that evidence for Late Saxon activity in Barton-upon-Humber covers a comparatively wide area extending beyond the site of the present-day church and its associated cemetery it is impossible to locate a specific source for the deposit and thus any of the cultural material incorporated within it. On the other hand, the strap-end does at least confirm that ninth century occupation is present in the vicinity.