

Section 48 Personal adornment and dress, toiletry and pharmaceutical

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Cross-references to Digital Supplement in red
Cross-references to Printed Synthesis in brown

Category 12 Personal adornment and dress

Brooches

Seven copper-alloy brooches were found dating to the Roman, Anglo-Saxon, and medieval periods. Brooches in the medieval period are almost exclusively annular or derivative of this form (A Goodall 1981, 68). A total of four brooches, three annular [48.01/416-418] and one annular cinquefoil [48.01/419], were recovered. The plain forms, usually with oval-sectioned rings and a looped rectangular-sectioned pin with moulded ridge, are entirely functional. The more ornamental types usually have a recessed pin. Excavated parallels have been found in contexts dating to the 13th to 14th centuries.

The worn and damaged condition of both the Roman and Anglo-Saxon brooches indicate redeposition.

The single fragment of a Roman P-shaped brooch is of the divided bow variant [48.01/413]. Hattatt states that this type is of Continental origin (1985, 127), while Crummy (1983, 15 cat no 72) notes the type usually derives from military sites. The earliest dated example in Britain comes from Severan occupation deposits, beginning in the first decade of the 3rd century, from Carpow (Snape 1993, 21).

Two forms of Anglo-Saxon brooch, a saucer and a small-long brooch, were identified and reported on by Martin Howe:

The relatively large size of the saucer brooch [2.10=48.01/414] shows affinities to brooches from Thames Valley cemeteries such as Dorchester, Oxfordshire (Dorchester III, Grave 102). When such brooches are found in burials they occur in pairs at the shoulder and acted as dress fasteners, frequently accompanied by strings of glass or amber beads worn across the chest. The Salin Style I decoration and size of the saucer brooch indicate a date in the middle years of the 6th century. Similar brooches have been found from Shefford, Bedfordshire, Holdenby, Northamptonshire, and Barrington, Cambridgeshire (Leeds 1912, Pl xxvii nos 8, 9, and 3 respectively).

The small-long brooch recovered from the site is of the Leeds trefoil-headed type (Leeds 1945, 8) commonly found throughout East Anglia and the Midlands. The La Grava example [2.11=48.01/415] is notable for the precision of its ornament and the fully-developed shovel foot. In form it can be compared with brooches of a similar size from the Bancroft Roman Villa site, Milton Keynes (brooch in possession of P Woodfield) and a brooch found near Cambridge which is in the Hattatt collection (no 3298). A damaged brooch from Abingdon (Ashmolean Museum reg no 1955.235Ab) is of similar form.

The punchwork design is a particularly popular device on cruciform and small-long brooches. Two small-long brooches from East Shefford (Ashmolean Museum reg no 1955.346) and Kempston (Bedford Museum reg no 2857) show the use of a very similar punch. Given the proximity of the sites this is unlikely to be coincidental.

The small-long brooch type is traditionally associated with the Anglian peoples whose cemeteries are mainly concentrated in the East Midlands and East Anglia. The La Grava brooch belongs to a group which extends from Cambridgeshire into Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, and Buckinghamshire. The deep bow of this brooch indicates that it was used to hold together gathered up material unlike the small-longs with flat bows which secured looped tapes. When found in cemeteries, the small-long brooches were invariably worn by women and were located at each clavicle with the head of the brooch normally pointing downwards. The decoration and form of this brooch suggests a mid-6th-century date.

Roman brooch 48.01/413

48.01/413

Sf 815 T13 C751 [P5.5 S16A]

Much-worn portion of a P-shaped brooch with divided or double bow. Only the cylindrical spring-cover and portion of the double bow survive

Anglo-Saxon brooches 48.01/414-415

48.01/414=2.10

Sf 795 T13 C641 [P6.1 S17];

Sf 808 T13 F656/46 (CF29) [P5.2 S17A];

Sf 1942 T13 C677 [P5.1 S17D]

Approximately half of a cast saucer brooch, about 86mm diameter, severely damaged (three joining pieces). The brooch decoration consists of two friezes of crouching Style I animals separated by two irregular raised lines. The centre of the brooch probably had a single raised boss or stud

48.01/415=2.11

Sf 2232 T30 F19/1 [P5.6 S33D]

A cast small-long brooch, Leeds trefoil headed type. The plate is of trefoil form, each wing decorated along its margins and inner edges with single lines of horseshoe-shaped punches. The bottom edge of the foot is decorated with incised notches across its width. The single pin lug and catch-plate are broken. Lth 67mm

Medieval brooches 48.01/416-421

48.01/416

Sf 2694 T30 C651 [P6.1 S65A]

Annular brooch or buckle (diam 38mm), plain oval-sectioned frame with rectangular-sectioned pin looped over frame. The cast pin has a raised ridge just below the loop

48.01/417

Sf 1007 T4 FF [P6.1 S35D]

Annular brooch (diam 25mm), circular in cross-section, recessed bar and plain frame. The cast pin is cruciform in shape with three punched dots across the width of the cross

48.01/418

Sf 1606 T13 F1039/23 [P5.3 S53A]

Annular brooch (diam 30mm), oval in cross-section, recessed bar and plain gilded frame.
Pin missing

48.01/419

Sf 2029 T30 C1 [P6.2-7]

Cinquoil brooch (diam 32mm), plano-convex in section with recessed bar for pin. Plain tapering pin of sheet metal

Brooch pins 48.01/420-421

Five detached copper alloy brooch pins were also recovered. Two are cast [48.01/420] and have moulded ridges as on the brooch [48.01/416]. The three other pins are of a less robust nature [48.01/421] and are likely to have been used on brooches with recessed bars. All the brooch pins were from deposits of phases 6.1 and 6.2.

48.01/420

Sf 714 T13 L479 [P6.1 S17]

Cast pin with moulded decoration in the form of three transverse ridges, below the loop/hook. Rectangular in section, lth 43mm

48.01/421

Sf 1373 T7 us

Brooch pin formed from sheet metal, slight protrusion of width below the loop/hook. Rectangular in section, lth 23.5mm

Beads

Anglo-Saxon beads 2.12=48.01/422-423

Of the three beads of probable Saxon date, two are poorly made of rust-red opaque paste. One (Sf 2368 T30 C1 P6.2-7) is monochrome while the second [2.12, 48.01/422] has a marvered whirl pattern of opaque white paste. Opaque red and terracotta coloured glass beads were not common in Britain until the post-Roman period, perhaps due to the technical difficulties in producing this glass (Guido 1978, 17). At Dover (Evison 1987, 61), rust-red beads were most popular from AD 575-700, tailing off in popularity from AD 700-748.

A single cylindrical *reticella* bead [2.12, 48.01/423] was found. Similar beads, although of a more complex pattern, were recovered from Dover in contexts dating from AD 525-600 (Evison 1987, fig 12 D66-68). All three of the Saxon beads from La Grava were found in deposits of phase 6.1 and Period 7 indicating, as with the Anglo-Saxon brooches, redeposition.

48.01/422=2.12

Sf 1242 T7 C615 [P6.1 S16]

Rust-red opaque bead with white opaque swirls radiating from the off-centre perforation. Discoid in section, oval in plan. The reverse face is indented and chipped to the left of the perforation perhaps from an initial attempt to perforate. Ht 9mm, lth 18.25, wth 15.3mm

48.01/423=2.12

Sf 1857 T23 C135 [P5.2-6.1 S23A]

Cylindrical *reticella* bead with two irregular bands of dark green and yellow twists on an opaque rust-red ground. The perforation was drilled from one side. Lth 14.65mm, dia 8mm

Late medieval to post-medieval beads 48.01/424–429

A total of ten beads, of glass, jet, amber, and bone, were identified, dating to the Anglo-Saxon and late medieval/post-medieval periods.

Beads were used in large quantities as dress trimming in the late medieval period. The size of the jet and ‘black’ glass examples [48.01/424–425] could also suggest use on rosaries. Beads of similar form, in both amber and jet, were found at Rievaulx Abbey (Dunning 1965, fig 9.1), Coventry (Woodfield 1981 fig 10.1e) and Wallingstones (Bridgewater 1972, fig 15.58); dates ranging from the late 14th to the mid-16th centuries.

It has been suggested (J Cherry and M Campbell, pers comm) that the single squared amber bead with bevelled edges [48.01/426] may originally have been from a casket or reliquary (cf Trusted 1985, 44, 52–3) or a Paternoster from an ornate rosary. Medieval amber beads and manufacturing waste were recovered from London in deposits spanning c 1270 and 1400 (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 305–9). Beads manufactured from skeletal material are seldom found prior to the post-medieval period (MacGregor 1985, 99–100). Recent evidence from London, in the form of turning-waste panels and unfinished beads, indicates that manufacture of such beads may have been as early as the late 13th and 14th centuries (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 310–15). The three bone beads found [48.01/427–429] can be paralleled by finds from Northampton (Oakley and Jones 1979, fig 21.23; Oakley and Harman 1979, fig 141.94–95), all dating to the post-medieval period. None of the La Grava examples were found in phases prior to 6.1.

48.01/424

Sf 1650 T20a C3 [P6.1–6.2]

Barrel-shaped bead of ‘black’ glass with central perforation. Lth 8mm, dia 9.2mm

48.01/425

Sf 1401 T6 C87 [P6.1 S19]

Barrel-shaped bead of jet with narrow central perforation. Lth 11.5mm, dia 9.5mm

48.01/426

Sf 1413 T7 C679 [P5.3–5.6 S16]

Amber bead of square plan and faceted faces, hexagonal in cross-section. Narrow central perforation. Lth 17.5, wth 17.5mm, ht 9mm

48.01/427

Sf 2006 T30 C1 [P6.2–7]

Cylindrical, lathe-turned bone bead with decorative mouldings and slightly off-centre perforation, lth 10.5mm

48.01/428

Sf 2129 T30 C50 [P5.3–6.1 S43]

Discoid bone bead with central circular perforation, rectangular in section. Dia 11mm

48.01/429

Sf 2298 T30 C1 [P6.2–7]

Oval bone bead, D-shaped in section, with central circular perforation. Obverse surface smoothed. Lth 10.5, wth 10mm

Earring, finger ring, and bracelet 48.01/430–432

Single examples of an earring [48.01/430], finger ring [48.01/432] and a possible bracelet [48.01/431] were found. None have any diagnostic features and the earring and finger ring are both long-lived forms.

48.01/430

Sf 790 T13 C118 [P6.2 S63D]

Small penannular earring (Allason-Jones (1989) Type 1) of silver. Lozenge-shaped in cross-section, tapering ends. Breadth 15.4mm

48.01/431

Sf 2265 T30 F69/1 [P6.2 S50D]

Curving cast copper-alloy strip, plain, with raised rectangular boss, tapering toward one end. Possibly bracelet fragment, the boss serving as a catch. Width 4.4mm, thickness 2.2mm, estimated dia 50mm

48.01/432

Sf 1375 T7 L579 [unph S16]

Copper-alloy finger ring, plain exterior, interior retains traces of gilding and (?)decorative notching (or illegible inscription). A short length of solder is visible on the ring's circumference suggesting previous repair. D-shaped in section. Dia 20.6mm

Pins

Six hundred and sixty pins were identified from the finds assemblage, 657 of which are medieval and post-medieval in date. The pins are discussed chronologically and, where appropriate, sub-divided into types. Of the 657 pins of late medieval and post-medieval date, 614 were complete enough to be assigned to one of five types. Marked concentrations of pin Types 1 to 4 were found in layers in the vicinity, or in destruction deposits, of S63 (61%) and S16 (27%), the majority (44%) from destruction deposits of S63 (49%) and S16 (15%).

Roman hairpins 48.02/433–434

Two cast copper-alloy Roman hairpins were identified [48.02/433–434], one ballister-headed and the second spherical-headed with reel and spool decoration below. These pins are closely paralleled by examples recovered from Colchester, Essex (Crummy 1983, 2 and fig 27). The heavily-abraded condition of the pins from La Grava and the suggested early 2nd- to 3rd-century date of the Colchester parallels indicate, as in the case of brooch [48.01/413], redeposition.

48.02/433

Sf 1307 T7 C561 [P6.1 S16A]

Cast, copper-alloy, ballister-headed pin with tapering, circular-sectioned shank. Lth 61mm

48.02/434

Sf 1545 T13 us

Cast, copper-alloy pin, with reel and spool decoration culminating in spherical head. Circular-sectioned shank. Lth 53.5mm

Early medieval hairpin 48.02/435

Bone pin [3.12=48.02/435] with its with hipped shank and zoomorphic head, shares characteristics with 11th-century Viking forms in that its zoomorphic head is aligned with the shank (MacGregor 1985, 119; Graham-Campbell 1980, 60 nos 211–212). The Viking pins are however longer, being in the region of 110mm in length. The hipped shank and shorter length of the La Grava pin is more suggestive of the 12th-century bone pins from Castle Acre (Margeson 1982, fig 47.39–40). These pins range in length from c 30mm–40mm and have looped or perforated heads and hipped shanks. Margeson has suggested that these may have been associated with head-dress, the loops or perforations serving to tie or thread the pins in place.

48.02/435=3.12

Sf 1894 T23 C194 [P5.1 S18]

Carved bone pin; zoomorphic head (serpent's head, open jaws and protruding tongue, incised eyes) with collar at junction of head and shank. The head is perforated through the animal's jaw. Hipped shank, circular in section. Lth 49.2mm

Later and post-medieval hairpins Types 1, 2, 3

The shanks of Types 1–3 were made of circular-sectioned copper-alloy wire, the shanks frequently showing longitudinal striations due to the wire-drawing process. All three types were constructed in a similar manner, the wire drawn to the desired lengths and sharpened. The heads, formed of a twist or two of wire of the same gauge as the shank, were threaded onto the shank and pushed up to the blunt end. The heads of Type 1 pins may have been soldered to ensure a firmer fix. The heads of Types 2 and 3 were also wire-wound, but a further stage, that of stamping the head into a smooth round ball, was added.

Pin Types 1–3 were used for fixing women's head-dress and in general instead of buttons for fastening clothes, as well as for pinning papers, and for other uses such as sewing (Biddle and Barclay 1990, 560).

Pins of Types 1–3 were recovered from St Peter's Street, Northampton (Oakley and Webster 1979, 260–262), Chelmsford (Caple 1985, 47–50), London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 299–301) and Winchester, Hampshire (Biddle and Barclay 1990, 560–66). Biddle and Barclay cite both documentary and stratigraphic evidence for the existence of 'sewing pins' as early as the 13th century. Although a small number of pins from 13th-century deposits in London were found, the majority came from 14th- and early 15th-century layers.

Type 1 32 pins [48.02/436]

Of circular-sectioned copper-alloy wire (diameter 1–1.2mm) with flat, un-moulded wire-wound heads (diam 1–3mm). Lengths ranged from 36mm to 48mm.

48.02/436

Sf 454 T13 C149 [P6.1–6.2 S63D]

Type 1 pin, flat wire-wound head (dia 3mm), circular-sectioned shank (dia 1mm). Lth 41mm

Type 2 91 pins [48.02/437]

Over 30mm in length (lengths 31–60mm), of circular-sectioned copper-alloy wire (diameter 0.5–2mm), with wire-wound heads moulded into a spherical shape (diam 1–4.5mm).

48.02/437

Sf 1842 T7 C502 [P7 S16D]

Type 2 pin, wire-wound head, stamped into spherical shape (dia 3.8mm), circular-sectioned shank (dia 1.2mm). Lth 46.5mm

Type 3 485 pins [48.02/438]

30mm or less in length (lengths 16–30mm), made of circular-sectioned copper-alloy wire (diameter 0.5–1mm), with wire-wound heads which are moulded into a spherical shape (diam 1–2.2mm).

48.02/438

Sf 162/23 T13 F70/1 [P6.2-7 S63A/64A]

Type 3 pin, wire-wound head, stamped into spherical shape (dia 1.2mm), circular-sectioned shank (Dia 1mm). Lth 26mm

Five Type 4 pins of circular-sectioned wire, either iron or copper alloy (diameter 1–2mm), with spherical heads (diameter 4–6mm) which have been pushed onto the pin shank and soldered(?) into place. Lengths ranging from 46mm to 89mm were identified.

These pins have larger spherical heads which are not wire-wound. Two of the examples have iron shanks and leaded heads while the remainder have copper-alloy heads and shanks. The heads were formed separately, pushed onto the blunt end of the pin and soldered into place. Due to their larger size they were most likely intended mainly for fixing folds and draperies and for securing garments (Groves 1973, 49).

These pins are paralleled by an example from Exeter, Devon (A Goodall 1984, fig 193.172) dating from 1660–1700 and Winchester (Biddle and Barclay 1990, fig 151.1450, 1452) dating from the 13th and 15th centuries respectively. Only one example from La Grava derived from a phase 5.2 deposit, the remainder were from contexts of phase 6.1 and later.

48.02/439

Sf 1278 T7 C502 [P7 S16D]

Type 4 pin, separate spherical head pushed onto head (dia 4mm), circular-sectioned shank (dia 1.2mm). Lth 52.5mm

48.02/440

Sf 1024 T6 C1 [P6.1 S19]

Type 4 pin, separate spherical head, leaded, pushed onto shank (dia 6mm), circular-sectioned iron shank (Dia 2mm). Lth 53mm

Type 5 1 pin [48.02/441]

Cast, copper-alloy head-dress pins with a scoop terminal and bifurcated stem. Only one example of this type was found and this was incomplete. The final form, Type 5 pins were cast and of single-piece construction. Type 5 was used solely as a head-dress pin (S Margeson pers comm). Type 5 is of 17th-century date and can be seen in use on an early 17th-century portrait by Cornelius van der Voot (Margeson 1993, 8–9) The sole example [48.02/441] from La Grava was from an unphased deposit.

48.02/441

Sf 1374 T7 C572 [unph S16]

Type 5 pin, cast, incomplete headdress pin consisting of a scoop terminal, rectangular-sectioned stem (3.8x1.2mm) bifurcating for 14mm, opposite end broken off. The stem has a series of decorative notches on either edge of the bifurcation. Lth 46.7mm

Braid

Two fragments of a woven braid trimming [48.02/442=9.10] were found in phase 6.2. Elisabeth Crowfoot reports

the use of braids is a noticeable feature in the decoration of fashionable garments of the 16th and early 17th centuries. Various techniques can be seen, the silk and wool tablet weaves of the 'Spanish' fashion (Streiter and Weiland 1985) and later metal bobbin laces (Arnold 1985 334–38); the style of the La Grava braid, with metal threads and boldly picoté edges, is well represented. It is in the fashions of the 1500s, with their fitted tailoring that braiding becomes most important – parallel rows on cloaks and collars, diagonal striping on sleeves, 'wings' and 'skirts' of doublets, and outlines on more magnificently embroidered 'guards'.

Examples of the La Grava style of braid can be seen in garments surviving in museums and private collections (Arnold 1985, 133–37, 140–42, 193, 268, 288–91) and in contemporary portraits (Arnold 1985, 90 (1567), 190 (1618), 295 (1581), 332 (1570); Burckhardt 1953, 247 (1545), 349). Two very similar braids with silk and metal threads and picoté edges come from Edlingham Castle, Northumberland (AM Lab Report 5/88) and Norwich City Survey (site 148N, Magdalen Street, Sf 473).

Braid 48.02/442=9.10

Sf 560 T13 L120 [P6.2 S63D]

Woven braid, lengths about 130mm and 290mm, width 7–8mm.

The warp is of three different threads: (1) at the edges, very fine silk, yellow (undyed), slight S-spin; (2) pattern, silver-gilt strip, would round a yellow (undyed) silk S-spun core and (3) ?silver strip, would round a similar silk core, and plied 2Z. Weft threads, coarse, ?silver as in (3), but used single, not plied; metal strip about six twists on 2mm. The braid is reversible, the weave at each edge tabby on five silk warps; the centre pattern is on five warps, one pair silver-gilt, one plied silver, one pair silver-gilt, weave extended tabby over groups of four wefts. Alternate weft returns are extended and twisted to form a picoté edge. In the longest fragment of braid, two pieces have been joined together, overlapping after 60mm, rather roughly sewn with S-ply silk similar to that of the metal-thread core.

Lace-tags

A total of 139 lace-tags were identified. These were divided into three categories, based upon manufacturing techniques. Types 1 and 2 are as defined by Oakley and Webster (1979, 260–61) and Type 3 by Bayley *et al* (1985, 47).

All the lace-tags were examined by microscope (x 20 magnification) to determine if any trace of the laces remained *in situ*. Traces of organic remains could be seen in 32 lace-tags; 8 of Type 1 and 24 of Type 2. These lace-tags were submitted to E Crowfoot and H M Appleyard for further identification. They report

remains of the laces are still visible inside a number of the metal lace-tags. In most cases these are mineralised but five fibres were sufficiently preserved to be identified – four of animal fibre and one probably vegetable (identifications of fibres by Appleyard). In the small cords and ribbons on which these tags were used, animal fibres could be sheep's wool, hair, or silk; the appearance of the only vegetable fibre identified suggested flax.

In seven of the eight Type 1 lace-tags, all copper alloy, the laces seem to have been leather, either a rounded thong or a narrow flat strip curled round by the rolling of the metal. In the one silver lace-tag (SF 1340 T7 L633 P6.1 S65A) the lace, whose appearance suggests silk, had probably been a woven cord of circular construction, perhaps from the clear wefts visible, a tubular tabby [9.11].

Seven of the 24 Type 2 lace-tags contained leather while the remaining tags contained fibres. One appeared to be the untwisted end of a soft wool string. Eight were flat tapes or plaits, either woven on a small band-loom or on two-holed tablets. Six round plaits were identified, the lie of the threads suggesting little cords made with a lucet or perhaps the development of this technique where the threads are taken round pins on a circular or rectangular base to produce a tabular cord or belt, known to children as 'French knitting' (Hald 1975, 42–6; Hald 1980, 240–51). Two were probably the four-thread whip-cords that are often made with bobbins.

Laces preserved in tags have been recorded from other late medieval sites: at Chelmsford, one leather thong and one diagonal silk plait (Bayley *et al* 1985, 47,57); with burials at St Margaret, Norwich, two four-thread whip-cords, one probably of flax; one at Exeter, described as 'plain tabby' (A Goodall 1984, 339). A similar variety of laces to those at La Grava seem to be present in the large collection of tags of the 16th and 17th centuries from Acton Court.

Lace-tags formed an essential part of clothing, serving to attach the hose to the paltock or doublet and on sleeves and bodices. E Crowfoot suggests that the leather laces in the riveted tags at La Grava may indicate use on boots or solid leather garments such as jerkins. She notes that

the mass of tags on textile laces from the 15th to 17th centuries indicate the fashions seen in paintings and portraits, particularly those of Holbein, where the sleeves and the bodice are attached separately, allowing the shirt underneath to puff out between the fastening laces; on some of these the metal tags are clearly shown. The large numbers of tags found together at sites such as La Grava and Acton Court must indicate the date when this fashion gave way to more rigid tailoring in which laces and tags had no place.

Dating evidence from excavated lace-tag assemblages suggest that Type 1 tags enjoyed greatest popularity in the 15th to 16th centuries, continuing with lesser frequency into the 17th century (Oakley and Webster 1979, 260–61; Bayley *et al* 1985, 47). Earlier instances of Type 1 tags occur at Northampton (Oakley and Webster 1979, 260–261) and London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 281) and indicate a start date in the late 13th or early/mid-14th centuries. At La Grava the earliest occurrence is in phase 5.5 (two examples), the greatest number occurring in phase 6.1 (eleven examples).

At La Grava lace-tags were concentrated in deposits, and surrounding areas, of S63 (62% of the assemblage) and S16 (19%). The majority of tags from both structures were from destruction deposits.

Type 1 lace-tags consist of a sheet of metal rolled round a lace with butting or overlapping ends, usually tapering to a point [48.02/443–444]. Normally this type has one or two rivets inserted a few millimetres from the top of the tag. The configuration of rivet holes can be one hole on one side of the tag only, a

transverse hole through the tag or two parallel holes, one above the other. Alternatively, the lace may have been tightly pinched to hold the lace.

Thirty-one examples of this type were found, 30 of copper alloy and one of silver. Ten examples retained their rivets *in situ*; of these six were iron, three copper alloy and one silver. Only eight lace-tags were complete, ranging in length from 20mm to 37mm. The majority of tags have suffered some flattening, distorting the normal circular cross-sections.

48.02/443

Sf 1157 T6 C31 [P4-7 S13A]

Type 1 lace-tag of copper alloy, one rivet hole with iron rivet *in situ*. Lth 24.8mm

48.02/444

Sf 242 T13 C63 [P6.2 S63D]

Type 1 lace-tag of copper alloy, one rivet hole, rivet not *in situ*. The tag is bent, the inner edge of the fold retaining traces of gilding. Lth 36.5mm

Type 2 lace-tags consist of a sheet of metal rolled into a cylinder with the edges folded inward to pierce the lace [48.02/445-447]. Rivet holes are normally absent from this type.

One-hundred and five examples of this type were identified, all of copper alloy. Only one example had a rivet. Thirty-five tags were complete, lengths ranging from 18.7mm to 41mm. As with Type 1, many of the tags had been flattened or partially unrolled. Six tags were decorated, three with transverse grooves and three with a lattice pattern [48.02/446-447]. Similar decoration was found on lace-tags from Chelmsford (Bayley *et al* 1985, 47).

Type 2 tags, while overlapping in use with Type 1 in the 16th, became more abundant in the 16th and 17th centuries. Phase 6.1 saw the first appearance of Type 2 at La Grava (five examples) but the greatest number were recovered from phase 6.2 (67 examples).

48.02/445

Sf 490/02 T13 C163 [P6.2 S63D]

Type 2 lace-tag of copper alloy. Lth 27mm

48.02/446

Sf 119 T13 C32 [P6.2 S31]

Type 2 lace-tag of copper alloy, surface decorated with transverse grooves giving a segmented appearance. Lth 32.7mm

48.02/447

Sf 524 T13 C177 [P6.1 S17D]

Type 2 lace-tag of copper alloy, surface decorated with a lattice pattern. Lth 30.5mm

Type 3 lace-tags were made from a wire bent in the middle and looped to form an eye, the two ends were tightly wound together [48.02/448]. Three examples of this type were identified, all of copper alloy. Only one example was complete, measuring 33.1mm in length.

Type 3 tags were never as popular as Types 1 and 2. Three examples of this type were found at Chelmsford from contexts dating from the late 16th to early 18th centuries, while a single example from Exeter dated to the late 13th to 14th century (A Goodall 1984, 347). This type is also depicted on a portrait of late

15th-century date (Bayley *et al* 1985, 47). Type 3 tags did not appear at La Grava until phase 6.2.

48.02/448

Sf 1206 T6 C2 [P6.2 S19A]

Type 3 lace-tag of copper-alloy wire. Lth 33.1mm

Clasps

The term clasp has been used here to describe a variety of garment fasteners made of copper or iron wire. Four forms were identified, the most numerous being hook-and-eye fasteners. All the clasps from La Grava came from deposits of phase 6.2 and Period 7 and those not from topsoil deposits were restricted in distribution to destruction and associated deposits of S16 and S63.

Form A, of which fifteen were found [48.02/449–452].

The majority of these fasteners were made of iron wire, only two being of copper alloy. Excavated examples date from 16th/17th centuries to modern periods.

48.02/449

Sf 260 T13 C93 [P6.2 S63D]

Form A Eye, made of circular-sectioned iron wire, lth 10mm

48.02/450

Sf 450 T13 C77 [P6.2 S63D]

Form A Eye, made of circular-sectioned copper-alloy wire, lth 17.5mm

48.02/451

Sf 183 T13 C78 [P6.2-7]

Form A Hook and eye made of circular-sectioned iron wire, lth: eye 11.5mm, hook 13.5mm

48.02/452

Sf 13 T13 L4/5/6 [P6.2-7 S16A]

Form A Hook, made of circular-sectioned iron wire, lth 35mm

Form B, wire loops with twisted ends [48.02/453].

The function remains uncertain despite the numbers recovered from post-medieval deposits (cf Caple 1985). They may have served as an alternative form of eye or as a button-fastener. Finds of these objects positioned along the arms of inhumations from Norwich confirm their use as fasteners (Margeson 1993, 20).

48.02/453

Sf 419 T13 C131 [P6.2 S63D]

Form B Twisted wire loop, made of circular-sectioned copper-alloy wire, ends twisted together, lth 14mm

Form C [48.02/454]

May have been used as a cloak fastener. Excavated examples are limited, the closest parallels being from Great Linford (Mynard and Zeepvat 1992, fig 55.62) and America (Hume 1978, fig 20.8), the latter dating to the mid-17th century. A hooked annular brooch, dating to the 15th century, from London is also of similar form (cf Egan and Pritchard 1991, fig 64.1338).

48.02/454

Sf 559 T13 C141 [P6.2 S63D]

Form C Hooked loop (?) of circular-sectioned copper-alloy wire, made of two pieces of wire, lth 30mm

The final form of fastener, Form D, although incomplete, strongly resembles a kilt or safety pin [48.02/455], and is paralleled by a similar object from Norwich (Margeson 1993, fig 9 no 85).

48.02/455

Sf 1268 T7 C502 [P7 S16D]

Form D Clasp resembling a safety pin, made of a length of circular-sectioned iron wire.

Incomplete, lth 58mm

Buttons

Evidence from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 272–80) indicates that buttons come into the repertoire of everyday dress in England in the early 13th century. Twenty-two buttons were found at La Grava and these have been divided into types based upon shape and manufacturing technique. Concentrations of all button types were noted from deposits in and associated with S16 (ten examples) and S63 (five examples), in particular from destruction deposits.

Type 1 A and B

These are spherical, hollow buttons made either from sheet (1A) or cast (1B) metal. Type 1A buttons are made of two domed sheets soldered together, with wire loops inserted for attachment [48.02/456–458]. Twelve examples, six near complete, were found, all of copper alloy. The majority were plain, falling between 10mm and 12mm in diameter. The single exception [48.02/457] was 16mm in diameter and decorated with a geometric pattern [48.02/457].

Hollow composite buttons from London were found in contexts dating from c 1270 to c 1348. However, the type had a long life, surviving well into the post-medieval period with little change. All the La Grava examples came from deposits of phase 6.1 and later with the single exception of [48.02/457], which was phased to 5.2. This button can be paralleled by examples recovered from 14th-century deposits in London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, fig 179) which may indicate that [48.02/457] was intrusive.

Cast, hollow buttons (Type 1B) occur in alloys of copper (one example) and lead (two examples) [48.02/459]. All have ‘blowholes’ near the shank to allow gases to escape during casting, and are of a greater diameter than Type 1A. This form is generally thought to date to the post-medieval period, examples from La Grava restricted to phase 6.2 and Period 7.

48.02/456

Sf 35 T13 C1 [P6.2–7]

Type 1A button; two domed copper-alloy sheets, soldered together, with wire loop inserted. Oval in plan (12.8 x 12.4mm), ht 8.5mm

48.02/457

Sf 726 T13 C517 [P5.2 S31A]

Half a Type 1A button; convex sheet of copper alloy with twelve punched holes and incised lines creating a geometric pattern. 16mm dia, ht 6mm

48.02/458

Sf 1343 T7 C706 [P6.1 S16]

Type 1A button; two domed copper-alloy sheets soldered together with inserted wire loop; a small punched hole near the shank. Dia 9.8mm, ht 13mm

48.02/459

Sf 1694 T13 C1 [P6.2-7]

Type 1B button; cast lead alloy with inserted iron wire loop. Two blow holes near the loop and a portion of the casting seam remains between the loop and one blowhole. Dia 21mm, ht 25mm

Type 2

Cast disc buttons can have integral, Type 2A [[48.02/460](#)], or separately-attached, Type 2B [[48.02/461](#)], shanks. Excavated parallels do not appear before the post-medieval period (cf A Goodall 1984, fig 191.134; Goodall 1976, fig 9B.53), the three examples from La Grava occurring in phase 6.2 and Period 7.

48.02/460

Sf 1312 T7 C502 [P0 S16D]

Type 2A button of cast copper alloy with integral, perforated shank. The disc is slightly convex in section, the obverse face decorated with a flower petal and ring motif. Dia 26.4mm, ht 10.3mm

48.02/461

Sf 1346 T7 C520 [P0 S16D]

Type 2B button of cast copper alloy with inserted iron shank. The button is plano-convex in section and has a raised 'nipple' on the obverse face from the shank insertion. Dia 16.7mm, ht 6.2mm

Type 3

These are made of two sheets of copper alloy, the front slightly domed and the back flat. The edges of either the front or back sheet were folded over and a wire loop inserted in the back [[48.02/462](#)]. Excavated examples, including three at La Grava, date from the 17th to 20th centuries.

48.02/462

Sf 987 T2 C1 [P6.2 S35]

Type 3 button of copper alloy. The button is of hollow, plano-convex section with inserted wire loop. The upper sheet edges are folded over the base sheet. The obverse face has two roosters opposing each other in profile standing on grass. The reverse face is decorated with scrolled floral border surrounding an inner swirled line pattern. Dia 22.2mm, ht 10mm

Type 4

A single example of a spherical button of purplish-black opaque glass with inserted wire loop [[48.02/463](#)] was found from a Period 7 deposit. Examples from Winchester (Biddle and Cook 1990, cat 1710-11) dated to the 15th and 16th centuries, while two from Norwich were recovered from 17th-century deposits (Margeson 1993, 20).

48.02/463

Sf 1311 T7 C538 [P7 S16D]

Type 4 button of purplish-black opaque glass with inserted wire loop, oval in section. Dia 12mm, ht 17mm

Type 5

The final form of button, represented by a single example, is a thin bone disc with central perforation [[48.02/464](#)]. It is not definite that these are buttons, the method of attachment is not obvious, but the size and thickness resemble modern equivalents. A bone button from Norwich (Margeson 1993, fig 11, no

112) illustrates a possible method of attachment. Excavated parallels from Exeter (A Goodall 1984, 351), Southampton (Platt and Coleman-Smith 1975, cat 1948) and Great Lindford (Mynard and Zeepvat 1992, 146) indicate a 15th- to 17th-century date, with the La Grava example phased to 5.6.

48.02/464

Sf 2196 T30 C135 [P5.6 S43]

Type 5 button of bone, faces sawn and smoothed, edges lathe-turned. Centrally perforated. Dia 20.9mm, ht 3.9mm

Buckles

Buckles were used as clothing fasteners on men's and women's girdles, belts, shoes, armour, and on spurs and horse harness. Some forms of buckles were used for a variety of purposes and unless found with other finds which indicate a specific use, it is not possible to assign them a particular function with any certainty. Generally the pattern of distribution by structure was not of assistance in ascribing specific functions to buckle forms. For this reason all the buckles are discussed together; possible uses are mentioned in the text.

One hundred and fifteen buckles, or portions, were identified. These were made from iron, copper, or lead alloys. In addition, five buckle pins were recovered separately. One-hundred and one buckles were complete enough to assign to eleven categories based on form following Goodall (1980a, 171–77).

In addition to the looped pins *in situ* on buckles, five iron buckle pins were found, lengths from 55mm to 89mm. The buckle pins were of similar form and date range to those *in situ* on buckle Types 1A, 4B, and 5. The size of the pins and their parallels indicate use on harness buckles. They were recovered from deposits of phases 5.4 to 6.2.

As with the majority of the finds, concentrations were noted in and around S16 (26 buckles) and S63 (16 buckles), mainly from phase 6.2 destruction deposits. Four buckles each, of varying types, were found associated with S19 and S27.

Type 1, D-shaped buckles are the most common medieval form. They have been subdivided into two categories, 1A plain and 1B decorated. Their shape varies, from an elongated, pointed, or rounded D-shape [[48.03/465–472](#)].

The twenty **Type 1A** buckles [[48.03/465–468](#)] identified range in length from 20mm to 80mm, and are of iron (nineteen examples) and lead alloy (1 example). The abundance of this form suggests that it was used for a wide variety of purposes; the larger examples perhaps on harness. This form is in use throughout the medieval and into the post-medieval periods. The earliest occurrence at La Grava was in deposits of phase 5.4 (three examples), with a continuing presence into Period 7.

Type 1B buckles are less robust and more decorative forms of **Type 1A** [[48.03/469–472](#)]. Nine examples were identified, all of copper alloy, ranging in length from 12mm to 22mm. Decorative features include 'lipped', moulded and scrolled frames. The size and decorative nature suggest use on personal clothing. Evidence from London suggests that this form of buckle was relatively long lived, in use from the late 12th to the late 14th centuries (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 76). The findings from La Grava reinforce this view, examples having been found in deposits of phase 5.4 onwards.

48.03/465

Sf 926 T1 C2 [P7 S6D]

Type 1A iron buckle, D-shaped in plan, no pin surviving, rectangular in section. Lth 41mm

48.03/466

Sf 1403 T6 C12 [P6.2 S19A]

Type 1A iron buckle, pointed D-shaped in plan, looped pin *in situ*, pin and frame rectangular in section. Lth 75mm

48.03/467

Sf 1750 T23 C15 [P6.1 S23D]

Type 1A iron buckle, elongated D-shaped in plan, no pin surviving. Lth 40mm

48.03/468

Sf 2758 T30 C813 [P5.4 S41]

Type 1A iron buckle, D-shaped in plan, no pin surviving. Lth 38mm

48.03/469

Sf 842 T13 C926 [P6.1-6.2 S27A]

Type 1B copper-alloy buckle, D-shaped in plan with moulded frame. No pin surviving, decorated buckle-plate *in situ*, decorated with incised curved and zigzag lines. Buckle rectangular in section. Lth 16mm

48.03/470

Sf 826 T13 C927 [P6.1 S27A]

Type 1B copper-alloy buckle, D-shaped in plan, no pin surviving. The frame of the buckle has a scrolled decoration incised and retains traces of gilding. Recessed bar but no pin surviving. Lth 25mm

48.03/471

Sf 1715 T23 C1 [P6.1-6.2]

Type 1B copper-alloy buckle, pointed D-shaped in plan, plain buckle plate and pin *in situ*. Lth 18mm

48.03/472

Sf 2667 T30 C1 [P6.2-7]

Type 1B copper-alloy buckle, D-shaped in plan, shaped frame. Pin *in situ*, recessed bar. Lth 16mm

Type 2 buckles have rectangular frames and occur in copper alloy and iron. They can be plain [48.03/473-474] or decorated [48.03/475-476] and vary considerably in size. Hence they probably had a variety of uses. Examples from London do not appear prior to the late medieval period (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 95-7). At La Grava the earliest occurrence was in phase 5.5, with the majority from phase 6.1 and later.

48.03/473

Sf 497 T13 C112 [P6.2]

Type 2 iron buckle, rectangular in plan, looped pin *in situ*. Lth 28mm

48.03/474

Sf 2123 T30 C56 [P5.5 S43A]

Type 2 copper-alloy buckle, rectangular in plan, looped pin *in situ*. File marks visible on surfaces. Lth 23mm

48.03/475

Sf 2291 T30 C1 [P6.2-7]

Type 2 copper-alloy buckle, rectangular in plan, frame decorated with three grooves.
Buckle plate *in situ*, decorated with double lines of rouletted triangles; fragment of pin.
Lth buckle 13mm

48.03/476

Sf 2673 T30 C734 [P6.1 S40D]

Type 2 copper-alloy buckle, sub-rectangular in plan, frame decorated with moulded
grooves. Portion of decorated stamped flower pattern; buckle-plate and pin *in situ*. Lth
buckle 22mm

Type 3 buckles consist of a rectangular frame with central dividing bar [48.04/477-480]. Of the eight examples found, five were iron. It is probable that the majority of these were used on spurs, as evidenced by the presence of an attachment plate on [48.04/477]. Three were of copper alloy. Two, of similar size and decoration [48.04/480] and Sf 1824 T23 C97/02 P7 S23A), are closely paralleled by examples from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, fig 62.447; 450). The third example (Sf 1378 T7 C509 P7 S16D/65D) consists of a portion of decorated frame including housing for a rotating central bar.

Excavated buckles from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 97-9), Exeter (A Goodall 1984, fig 190.82-84) and Hull (A Goodall 1987, fig 116.166) indicate a date range starting c 1350, continuing into the post-medieval period. The earliest phase in which this form occurred at La Grava is 5.6 [48.04/480], while the remaining buckles came from phase 6.2 and Period 7.

48.04/477

Sf 2687 T30 C754/01 [P6.2 S41A]

Type 3 iron buckle, rectangular in plan with central dividing bar. Pin and hooked attachment plate, for use on spur, *in situ*. Lth 28mm

48.04/478

Sf 17 T13 C4/5/6 [P6.2-7 S16A]

Type 3 iron buckle, rectangular in plan with central dividing bar. Pin *in situ*. Lth 31mm

48.04/479

Sf 1002 T7 C502 [P7 S16D]

Type 3 iron buckle, sub-rectangular in plan with central dividing bar and waisted frame. The frame is decorated with 6 dots of silver inlay, 3 on each side of the frame. Pin *in situ*. Lth 24mm

48.04/480

Sf 1702 T18 C7 [P5.6 S51D]

Type 3 copper-alloy buckle, square in plan with central dividing bar. The outer frame is decorated with pairs of diagonal incised grooved. Pin not surviving. Lth 42mm

Type 4 buckles have revolving arms set between the looped ends of the side arms of either rectangular (4A) or trapezoidal (4B) frames [48.04/481-482]. Only one complete buckle of each type was identified, both of iron and undecorated; [48.04/481] retains traces of tinning. Two separate revolving arms, lacking their frames, were identified. This form of buckle was probably used on harness, the revolving arm allowing free passage of a strap with the minimum of chafing. It appears to have been in use throughout the medieval and into the post-medieval periods (Goodall 1980a, 173).

48.04/481

Sf 716 T13 C455 [P5.6 S27D]

Type 4A iron buckle, rectangular in plan with revolving arm. Looped pin *in situ*. Evidence of tinning remains on the surface. Lth 47mm

48.04/482

Sf 2207 T30 C1 [P6.2-7]

Type 4B iron buckle, trapezoidal in plan with revolving arm. Looped pin *in situ*. Lth 50mm

Type 5 buckles have trapezoidal frames, with the pin commonly, although not invariably, mounted on the longer of the parallel arms [48.04/483–485]. Of twenty-two examples identified, fourteen possess an iron sheath which encloses the shorter of the parallel arms. The latter would have served the same function as the revolving arms of Type 4, and may also indicate use on harness, although only one buckle (Sf 2731 T30 C398 P6.1–6.2 S38/37D) was found within a barn or byre.

Of the La Grava buckles only one is of copper alloy, the remainder iron. The majority are undecorated, only [48.04/484] and [48.04/485] possessing decoration on the sheath or pin. This is one of the most common forms found at La Grava. Excavated examples (Goodall 1980a, 172) indicate a date range from the 14th to 16th centuries. The earliest phase in which this form occurs at La Grava is 5.4 (Sf 2159 T30 C30 S56), with the remainder from phase 6.1 and later.

48.04/483

Sf 1048 T7 C537 [P6.1 S65]

Type 5 iron buckle of trapezoidal plan, short bar sheathed. Looped pin *in situ*. Lth 52mm

48.04/484

Sf 1415 T7 C502 [P7 S16D]

Type 5 iron buckle, trapezoidal in plan, short bar sheathed, sheath decorated with three pairs of double grooves. Looped pin *in situ*. Lth 37mm

48.04/485

Sf 1919 T7 C562 [P6.1 S16]

Type 5 iron buckle, trapezoidal in plan. Looped pin *in situ*, pin has two grooves below the loop. Lth 37mm

Type 6 buckles have circular frames with looped-over pins [48.05/486–487]. All seven examples found were plain and of iron or pewter. Six were 20mm or less in diameter and were likely to have been shoe buckles. This type is thought to date from the 13th century and later (Goodall 1980a, 174) and it is noteworthy that none of the examples found in London precede c 1270 (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 57–62). The six buckles below 20mm in diameter were found in deposits of phase 6.1 and later. The slightly larger buckle [48.05/486] was phased to 5.2 and may be intrusive.

48.05/486

Sf 1561 T13 C1146 [P5.2 S20A]

Type 6 iron buckle, circular in plan with looped pin. Surface retains traces of tinning. Dia 28mm

48.05/487

Sf 2114 T30 C66 [P6.1 S59D]

Type 6 iron buckle, circular in plan with looped pin. Dia 14mm

Type 7 buckles have either circular frames or oval frames with a central dividing bar [48.05/488–491]. Of the six examples recovered, the majority were comparatively small, length no greater than about 35mm, and occur in a variety of metals. The plain iron examples were probably used on spurs cf [48.02/323], while the more decorative buckles may have adorned clothing and footwear. A single buckle exceeded this length [48.05/489]. Similar sized examples are known from London (Ward Perkins 1940, 278–9) and also depicted on a sculpture of late 14th-century date (Egan and Pritchard 1991, fig 34). This buckle type is considered a late medieval to post-medieval form. All the examples found at La Grava were from phase 6.2 and Period 7.

48.05/488

Sf 23 T13 C1 [P6.2-7]

Type 7 buckle of iron, circular in plan with central dividing bar and moulding at junction of bar and angled frame. No pin surviving. Dia 24mm

48.05/489

Sf 2689 T30 C714 [P6.2 S41D]

Type 7 buckle of copper alloy, circular in plan with central dividing bar. Surface has a series of diagonal notches and retains traces of silvering, possibly mercury-gilded silver. Looped pin *in situ*. Dia 53mm

48.05/490

Sf 818 T13 C1 [6.2-7]

Type 7 buckle of copper alloy, oval in plan with central dividing bar. Obverse face of frame is decorated by a series of cast raised bosses interspersed with ridges. Pin does not survive although traces of corrosion indicate that it was of iron. Lth 28mm

48.05/491

Sf 1377 T7 C509 [P7.0 S16D/65D]

Half of Type 7 buckle of lead alloy, oval in plan. Central dividing bar is missing but frame retains half of a socket on each arm for positioning the bar. Obverse face of the frame is decorated with a series of circular bosses, insets missing, interspersed with ribs. This decoration appears to have been applied. Surviving Lth 15mm

Type 8 figure-of-eight or double buckles, consist of two oval or D-shaped loops of equal size situated either side of a central bar. The central bar is shorter than the maximum width of the frame, giving the buckle a waisted look [48.05/492]. Of the ten buckles of this type recovered from La Grava, five are iron and five copper alloy. The majority are of fairly small size, 27–32mm, although three range in length between 36–40mm. Only one has any decoration [48.05/492] consisting of a rounded ‘boss’ on either end of the central bar. This type of buckle is frequently used on spurs and shoes. Double buckles were common in the post-medieval period although they were probably first in use in the 15th century (Ward Perkins 1940, 278). The evidence from La Grava appears to support this date range as these buckles first occurred in phase 6.1.

48.05/492

Sf 1339 T7 C603 [P6.2 S16D]

Type 8 buckle of copper alloy with waisted central dividing bar. Frame pointed-oval in plan, with two bosses at either end of central bar. No pin surviving. Lth 39mm

Type 9 buckles with looped necks, are mainly used on spurs. The loop or hook was attached to the terminal on the outer side of the spur and the buckle was used to adjust the straps (Goodall 1980a, 175). Three examples were identified, all of iron. Two have short necks [48.05/493–494] one with a circular, and the other with a rectangular, frame. The third is long-necked with a circular frame [48.05/495]. Buckles with short necks come principally from 11th- to 14th-century contexts, while those with elongated necks come from the 13th century and later (Goodall 1980a, 175). At La Grava both varieties first occurred in phase 5.4; two [48.05/494–495] from within barn/byres.

48.05/493

Sf 445 T13 C130 [P6.2 S63D]

Type 9 iron buckle, rectangular frame with rectangular terminal and short neck. Fragment of looped pin remains. Lth 40mm

[48.05/494](#)

Sf 2760 T30 C552 [P5.4 S36]

Type 9 iron buckle, circular frame with circular terminal and short neck. Looped pin *in situ*. Surfaces retain traces of tinning. Lth 42mm

[48.05/495](#)

Sf 141 T13 C73 [P5.4 S30]

Type 9 iron buckle, circular frame with circular terminal and long neck. Looped pin *in situ*. Lth 62mm

Type 10 buckles are T-shaped in plan and made of iron [[48.05/496](#)]. Two examples were recovered. This form is not common, and all the excavated examples are lacking pins as at La Grava (Goodall 1980a, 172). Although their use is not certain, Goodall notes that some examples may have been used on armour. Excavated examples come principally from 13th- and 14th-century contexts; the La Grava buckles were from phases 5.2 and 5.3.

[48.05/496](#)

Sf 751 T13 C534 [P5.2 S20]

Type 10 buckle of iron, T-shaped in plan, two pairs of decorative grooves visible on x-ray, surface tinned. No pin surviving. Lth 46mm

Type 11 buckles have an oval frame with a smaller, rectangular slot joined to it to take a strap or belt. The single example found [[48.05/497](#)] is of plain iron. This buckle type is generally uncommon, but excavated examples indicate it is a 15th-century form (Oakley and Webster 1979, 253 fig 108.24; Geddes 1985, fig 49.17). The single example from La Grava came from a late fill of the fishpond CF33, phase 6.2.

[48.05/497](#)

Sf 1817 T23 F97/03 [P6.2 S23A]

Type 11 buckle of iron consisting of an oval frame with conjoining rectangular frame. Lth 19mm

Buckle plates

Seven of these buckle plates retain decoration. The most common theme is a single or double (opposed) rouletted border of triangular impressions [[48.03/475](#)] and [[48.06/500](#)]. Other schemes include a series of diagonal notches scoring the plate's edge [[48.06/501](#)], random incised diagonal and curving lines [[48.03/469](#)], and a stamped multi-petalled flower motif [[48.03/476](#)]. All these forms of decoration were practiced by medieval craftsmen (A Goodall 1981, 63).

Excavated parallels span from the 13th through the 15th centuries. The La Grava buckle plates support these findings, over half occurring in phases 5.3 to 6.1 and the remainder in topsoil and destruction deposits of phase 6.2 and Period 7. A total of 26 buckle plates, ten *in situ* on buckles, were identified; 23 copper alloy and three iron. These have been allocated to three categories.

Type 1 buckle plates consist of a rectangular piece of sheet metal folded in half and riveted with from one to five rivets.

Type 1A plates display a roughly rectangular recess on the folded edge to allow for siting of a buckle-pin [[48.06/498–499](#)]. These are the most common form, 15 in total.

48.06/498

Sf 1556 T13 C1338 [P5.2-5.3 S21A]

Type 1A buckle plate of copper alloy, surfaces mercury gilded. Shield-shaped in plan with incised border around edge. Recessed to take pin. Copper-alloy rivet *in situ*. Lth 17.5mm

48.06/499

Sf 2502 T30 F69/06 [P6.2 S50D]

Type 1A buckle plate of copper alloy, rectangular in plan. Type 5 buckle *in situ*, recessed to take pin. Single rivet *in situ*. Lth of plate 33mm

Type 1B plates have no recess and may have been used with buckles, such as Type 11, which did not require a pin [48.06/500-501]. Alternatively, they may have been used on folding clasp straps and hinged strap ends (Egan and Pritchard 1991, fig 7.6; 10). Two examples of this type were found.

48.06/500

Sf 1370 T7 us [16A]

Type 1B buckle plate of copper alloy, rectangular in plan with rouletted border of two opposing rows of triangles. Two rivet holes and remains of buckle survive. Lth 24mm

48.06/501

Sf 2802 T30 C236 [P5.4 S7]

Type 1B buckle plate of copper alloy, surfaces tinned. Sub-rectangular in plan with seven decorative grooves along the sides of the plate. One iron rivet *in situ*. Lth 19mm

Type 2A buckle plates consist of a rectangular strip of iron with one end looped over and either riveted or forged. They possess a rectangular recess for the buckle pin [48.06/502].

48.06/502

Sf 368 T13 C48 [P6.2 S63D]

Type 2A buckle plate of iron, rectangular in plan, recessed to take pin, one rivet hole visible. Incomplete, lth 94.6mm

Type 2B buckle plates do not possess the recess [48.06/503]. The size and robustness of these examples strongly suggest use on harness. One of each form was identified, both phased to 6.2.

[48.06/503]

Sf 240 T13 C8 [P6.2 S63D]

Type 2B buckle plate of iron, rectangular in plan, Type 5 buckle *in situ*. Three rivet holes with two iron rivets *in situ*. Lth of buckle plate 75mm

Type 3 buckle plates are constructed in three pieces, a forked frame and two sheets, usually soldered in place. Two examples were noted, one retaining a portion of a forked frame [48.06/504] and the other consisting of one of the flat sheets which would have been attached to a frame [48.06/505]. This type was current in the second half of the 14th century (Fingerlin 1971, fig 180-81, 183).

48.06/504

Sf 2124 T30 C56 [P5.5 S43A]

Type 3 buckle plate of copper alloy with Type 1B buckle *in situ*. The forked spacer plate is damaged and incomplete

48.06/505

Sf 887 T13 C1009 [P6.1 S29]

Portion of a Type 3 buckle plate consisting of a sub-rectangular copper-alloy sheet with two rivet holes at one end. Three edges retain a whitish staining indicating the presence of solder. Lth 42mm

Strap loops 48.06/506–508

Strap loops served to hold down the free end of straps. Two forms have been identified, those with a pair of opposed internal projections [48.06/506] and those with rivets [48.06/507]. Both forms are present. Evidence from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 231) indicates that loops with projections are the earlier form, in use from the late 12th to the late 14th, while those with separate rivets appear to be a late 13th-century introduction, continuing in use throughout the 14th century. A single strap loop with internal projections was from a phased deposit, 5.5, while those with separate rivets were not recovered from contexts prior to phase 5.6. A third form of strap loop, consisting of a rectangular frame has been tentatively identified [48.06/508]. Goodall cites three plain iron slides of 13th- to 15th-century date (1980a, K286–288).

48.06/506

Sf 2160 T30 us [unph]

Copper-alloy strap loop, sub-rectangular in plan with internally projecting lugs and a raised boss on the frame. Lth 18mm

48.06/507

Sf 2063 T30 C1 [P6.2–7]

Copper-alloy strap loop, pentagonal in plan, traces of iron rivet remain in perforation. Lth 19mm

48.06/508

Sf 1376 T7 C502 [P7 S16D]

Copper-alloy strap loop or slide, rectangular in plan with obverse face decorated with an abstract pattern of circles and curling lines (floral?). Lth 54mm, brdth 17mm

Strap-ends

Fifteen strap-ends for belts/straps were identified. These were divided into five types based upon form.

There was no distinctive pattern to the distribution of the strap-ends, examples occurring in both domestic and agricultural buildings. Two strap-ends were found in destruction deposits of S19 and three from destruction and associated deposits of the final phases of S16. Unlike the majority of other artefacts, none were recovered from S63.

Type 1, folded strap-ends

These consist of copper-alloy strips folded in half and secured with rivets through both plates, sandwiching the leather strap between [48.07/509–511]. Eight examples were identified, three of which were decorated with incised rouletted designs; herringbone, zigzag, and linear dashes. One example [48.07/511] appears, from the positioning of the rivet holes, to have been constructed from a reused copper-alloy sheet. Due to their simple construction, these objects are difficult to date closely. Parallels from Exeter were recovered

from contexts dating to the later medieval period, while the majority from Winchester and London date from the mid-13th to early 16th centuries (Hinton 1990a, 505–06; Egan and Pritchard 1991, 126–9, 158–61). A single example from La Grava was found in a phase 5.3 deposit, the remainder occurred in contexts of phase 5.6 and later.

48.07/509

Sf 2685 T30 F763 [P5.6 S31A]

Folded strap-end, herringbone decoration on exterior edges, four rivet holes, two rivets *in situ*. Organic material (leather) surviving between plates. Lth 21mm

48.07/510

Sf 2378 T30 C27 [P5.6–7 S56D]

Folded strap-end, obverse face decorated with zigzag pattern formed of rouletted dashes, reverse face with double linear dashed border. Five rivet holes, two rivets *in situ*. Mineralised leather survives between plates. Lth 36 mm

48.07/511

Sf 1330 T7 C571 [P6.2 S16A]

Folded strap-end made from reused strip. One border decorated with zigzag pattern, three rivet holes, two from original use, the third with rivet *in situ*. Lth 24mm

Type 2, split strap-ends

These comprise a shaped terminal and a split stem for the insertion of a strap. The strap was held in place by a rivet. Two examples, both iron, were found. No close parallels have been found for [48.07/512] although more ornate strap-end hooks are illustrated in the London Museum Catalogue (Ward Perkins 1940, PI LXXVI 7–10) dating to the late 15th century. [48.07/513] is paralleled by an example from London, also tinned, found in late 14th-century deposits (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 132).

48.07/512

Sf 1467 T7 C502 [P7 S16D]

Split strap-end of iron, rounded stem with knop, iron rivet *in situ*, terminal hooked. Lth 48mm

48.07/513

Sf 2840 T30 C107 [P5.4]

Split strap-end of iron, rectangular-shaped stem with iron rivet *in situ*. Rounded terminal with remains of inlaid (tin?) decoration visible on x-ray. Lth 44.2mm

Type 3, two- and three-piece strap-ends

These have been subdivided into two sub-groups; three-piece (3A) and two-piece (3B). Three-piece strap-ends consist of a forked spacer-plate with two flat sheets soldered in place with rivets to secure the strap [48.07/514]. Two examples were identified, both closely paralleled by finds from Austin Friars, Leicester (Clay 1981, fig 48.29) and London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 140–48) dating to the mid-14th and early 15th centuries.

Two-piece strap-ends consist of a cast upper plate and a sheet back. One example of this type, with a circular stem with elaborate leaf-terminal, was found [48.07/515]. Larger strap-ends, often with elaborate leaf-terminals, are thought to date to the late 14th to early 15th century (Ward Perkins 1940, 268). A similarly-constructed strap-end from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, no 614) was dated to the late 14th century.

The catalogued examples are copper alloy.

48.07/514

Sf 1855 T23 C112 [P5.4–6.1 S23]

Three-piece strap-end, forked spacer plate with two flat sheets soldered on either side. Two rivets *in situ*. Lth 24mm

48.07/515

Sf 1296 T7 C555 [P6.2 S16A]

Two-piece strap-end, cast upper plate, circular in plan, with incised decoration and leaf terminal. The back of the plate has a raised lip part way round the circumference. Separate flat lower plate affixed by four rivets, three *in situ*. Lth 44.6mm

Type 4, single-piece socketed strap-ends

This group comprises larger strap-ends which were cast in a single piece, the stem forming a socket. The terminals are large and frequently elaborate. One example of this type was found [48.07/516] and it is closely paralleled by an example from Broken Wharf, London and belongs to a group of strap-ends dating from 1390–1410 depicted on brasses (Ward Perkins 1940, 268).

48.07/516

Sf 2725 T30 C567 [P5.4–5.6 S36]

Cast copper-alloy belt strap-end, elaborate terminal depicting St Christopher in a pear-shaped frame terminating in a leaf. Socketed stem with incised N and two rivet holes. Lth 87mm

Type 5, hinged strap-ends

These consist of a copper-alloy strip folded in half, as in Type 1, but with a cast, hinged terminal [48.07/517]. The single example found has a cast sub-oval terminal with a perforated zoomorphic head and is closely paralleled by examples from Austin Friars, Leicester (Clay 1981, fig 48.29), London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 154–5) and the continent (Fingerlin 1971, 140). These excavated examples indicate a date range of the 14th and 15th centuries. It has been suggested that these items were paired and may have functioned as book fasteners (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 155).

48.07/517

Sf 2002 T30 C1 [P6.2–7]

Folded strap-end, upper plate decorated with double-dashed linear border, two rivet holes. Cast hinged terminal with zoomorphic head, terminal and head both perforated. Lth 54mm

Strap-mounts

Thirty strap-mounts were recognised from the assemblage. Medieval belts and straps were frequently decorated with small mounts which may also have served to reinforce the strap (A Goodall 1981, 67–8). They take various forms and are of either cast or sheet metal, usually copper alloy. Five forms were identified from the assemblage at La Grava. Most forms of mounts were secured to the straps by one or two rivets. These rivets were sometimes hammered over small washers at the back of the strap cf [48.07/522]. The *Articles of the London Girdlers* of 1344 stated that ‘no-one shall make girdles or garters barred unless there be a rowel beneath the bar’ (A Goodall 1981, 67–68 quoting Riley 1868, 216).

The distribution pattern of the mounts from La Grava was not particularly distinctive, finds occurring in a variety of domestic and agricultural buildings.

S59 however yielded four from phase 6.1 deposits, two, both of Form 1, from the same context – [48.07/520] and Sf 2241 T30 C40.

Form 1

These are narrow rectangular strips of copper alloy, varying in length from 10mm to 45mm. In section the strips are flat or plano-convex [48.07/518-520]. Twelve examples of Form 1 mounts were identified. Parallels include a leather strap fragment with five similar mounts *in situ* from Hull (A Goodall 1987, fig 117.191) dating to the early 14th century, several examples from Winchester (Hinton 1990b, 542–44) dating from the 13th to the 15th centuries and numerous examples from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 209–13). Type 1 mounts first occurred in phase 5.2 deposits at La Grava.

48.07/518

Sf 530 T13 C169 [P6.2 S63D]

Rectangular strap-mount, one rivet hole either end, convex in section. Lth 10mm

48.07/519

Sf 1345 T7 C674 [P5.2 S16D]

Rectangular strap-mount with chamfered end, two rivets *in situ* both with washers. Additional strip riveted on squared end. Lth 20mm

48.07/520

Sf 2229 T30 C40 [P6.1 S59A]

Narrow rectangular strap-mount, one rivet hole on either end, plano-convex in section. Lth 26.4mm

Form 2

These are rectangular mounts with incised decoration, flat in cross-section. A single example was recognised, the obverse of which has an incised letter A [48.07/521]. Incised letters decorate belt tags, hooks, and chapes (Ward Perkins 1940, pl LXXVI.10 and fig 85.2 and 6) of the 13th and 14th centuries. The La Grava example may have been worn on a belt, spelling out a name or religious phrase, for example *Ave Maria*, or on a book-cover. J Cherry suggests that the mount dates to the late 14th to early 15th century (pers comm).

48.07/521

Sf 518 T13 C175 [P6.1 S27D]

Copper alloy rectangular mount, one rivet at either end *in situ*. Obverse face has an incised letter A on a zigzag ground. Lth 34mm

Form 3

These are centrally-riveted, circular mounts, usually convex in section [48.07/522-524]. Eleven examples were recognised, ten of copper alloy and one of iron, with [48.07/522] retaining leather between the mount and washer. Excavated parallels date from the late 13th into the 16th century (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 165ff; Oakley 1979c, fig 16. 6–9). Seven of the La Grava mounts consist of a plain circular sheet with central rivet and washer. The earliest phase in which this form occurred was phase 5.3, the majority occurring in phase 6.1 and later. The catalogued examples are copper alloy.

48.07/522

Sf 2751 T30 us [unph]

Circular mount, convex in section, with central rivet and small circular washer *in situ*. Remains of leather survive between the mount and the rivet. Dia 16mm

48.07/523

Sf 1051 T6 C81 [P5.6 S19]

Circular mount with central perforation for rivet, convex in section. The obverse face has been stamped with a six-petalled rosette design and tinned. Dia 18.2mm

48.07/524

Sf 1778 T23 C1 [P6.1-6.2]

Flat, circular mount with six notches cut along the outer circumference, forming a rosette; central perforation. Dia 17.6mm

Form 4

Two examples of cast copper-alloy mounts with two integral shanks were identified [48.07/525-526]. Cast mounts with a single integral shank were recovered from deposits of the 14th and 15th centuries from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 167-70), while examples from Norwich with two integral mounts are thought to be of 16th-century date (Margeson 1993, 40). These mounts first appeared at La Grava in deposits of phase 5.6.

48.07/525

Sf 31 T13 C1 [P6.2-7]

Cast oval mount with two integral rivets. Obverse face has a petalled flower motif. Lth 11mm

48.07/526

Sf 2600 T30 C469 [P5.6 S43]

Cast mount, sub-rectangular face with rounded edges and crescentic extension at the top. Two integral rivets. Surface mercury gilded. Lth 17.4mm

Form 5, un-riveted mounts or appliqués

These were made from sheet metal (usually copper alloy) and were possibly sewn on to garments. The three mounts come in a variety of shapes; hearts, rosettes, and fleur-de-lys, and frequently have stamped decoration [48.07/527-529]. Lead/tin mounts lacking rivets were found in deposits of late 13th to 15th centuries in London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 238-9). At La Grava the mounts did not appear before phase 6.1.

48.07/527

Sf 1133 T6 C30 [P6.1 S19D]

Appliqué of sheet copper alloy, stamped and cut in shape of fleur-de-lys, obverse face tinned. Lth 18mm

48.07/528

Sf 2092 T 30 C1 [P6.2-7]

Heart-shaped copper-alloy appliqué, with remains of solder on reverse. Lth 20mm

48.07/529

Sf 1181 T6 C19 [P6.1-6.2 S19D]

Rosette-shaped appliqué of tinned iron. Dia 12mm

Purse frames

Metal purses did not come into fashion until the end of the medieval period. Prior to this, simple sack-shaped bags were in use. Metal purses appear to have had a short lifespan, representations on monumental brasses occurring between 1460 and 1520 (Ward Perkins 1940, 150). Post-1520 frames rarely occur on

brasses, but a few of the later types can be seen on portraits of the third quarter of the 16th century.

There is an absence of a dated series classification for these frames although Ward Perkins suggested that it was possible to make broad distinctions of type based on relative length of the horizontal bar. The single purse frame recovered [48.08/530] has been identified as a Type B5 (Ward Perkins 1940, 167–69). Similarly-proportioned purses made their appearance on monumental brasses soon after 1500 and continued, although in fewer numbers, after 1520. The La Grava example is closely paralleled by a purse frame from Netherton, Hants (A Goodall 1981, fig 67) dating to the late medieval period.

48.08/530

Sf 873 T13 C280 [P6.1 S28D]

Type 5B purse frame of cast copper alloy; square swivel loop, short moulded bar with integral attachment plates, each with three perforations. Remains of two perforated pendant loops survive. Lth 70mm

Patten rings and shoe irons

Patten rings 48.08/531–532

Portions of five iron patten rings were identified [48.08/531–532]. A patten is a form of overshoe consisting of a wooden sole, raised at the arch and recessed at the back, to take the shoe's heel, which was supported on an iron ring. The ring was attached to the wooden sole by means of riveted terminals; a single rivet at the toe and a double rivet at the heel. Shoes were secured by straps to the pattens, thus raising the wearer's feet above the dirt and mud.

Pattens with iron rings were used during and after the 17th century (Swann 1982, 21, 30). The crinkly-edged ring was one of the earliest forms, thought to have been in use by 1625. This was superseded by the plain oval loop by 1720 (Goodall 1976, 63). Although in the 17th century patten rings appear to have been worn by all classes of society, by the 18th century they had become associated mainly with country folk and the poorer classes in towns (Swann 1982, 30). The presence of oval hoops on two of the La Grava rings and the greater height of the arms indicates an 18th-century date (Swann 1982, 30).

The patten rings were concentrated in destruction and associated deposits of S16, as were two of the shoe irons.

48.08/531

Sf 33 T13 C1 [P6.2–7]

Double-riveted heel terminal, two rivets *in situ*, upright arm and beginning of curving ring survive. Ht 70mm (including nails)

48.08/532

Sf 1166 T7 C538 [P7 S16D]

Single-riveted toe terminal, upright arm and approximately half of a plain oval ring. Ht 69mm

Shoe irons 48.08/533–534

Shoe irons were riveted to the soles of clogs and workman's boots to enhance the length of wear. They were probably introduced in the late 17th century and continued in use into the 20th century.

Six portions of shoe irons were identified, all incomplete. The irons are narrow in width (11–21mm) and have rectangular nail holes. Four have a rounded curve and may be heel irons [48.08/533], one has a more pointed arch indicative of a toe iron [48.08/534], and the sixth is squared in outline and may be from the heel of a workman's boot. Parallels for the La Grava shoe irons were found at Ardingly Fulling Mill and Forge (Goodall 1976, fig 9b.46) from contexts dating to the 18th century, and at Chelmsford, Essex (Goodall 1985a fig 34.87), from contexts of 1670–1700 date. All the La Grava examples of shoe irons were from destruction deposits of phase 6.2 and Period 7.

48.08/533

Sf 1147 T7 C538 [P7 S16D]

Portion of a heel iron retaining four rectangular nail holes; wear apparent along the back of the heel. Lth 83mm

48.08/534

Sf 1010 T4 C134/2 [unph]

Portion of an arched toe iron with remains of four rectangular nail holes. Lth 71mm

Category 13 Toiletry

Toiletry items are poorly represented at La Grava. Only a single pair of tweezers can definitely be ascribed to the medieval period, based upon phasing evidence, while the post-medieval period is represented solely by combs, although in slightly greater numbers.

Combs

Nine single-piece, or simple, bone combs, and three fragments of teeth or ends, were recovered. The descriptive terminology used here follows Galloway (1976).

Simple one-piece combs gained favour over the more elaborate composite combs in the 11th century. These combs are generally square in outline and had two opposing sets of teeth, coarse and fine. Combs of the early medieval period and up to the 13th and 14th centuries were lentoid in section. Simple combs of square outline but with flatter, more slender cross-sections came into use in the late medieval period and were most common in the 16th to 18th centuries (MacGregor 1985, 81–81; Dunlevy 1972, 23–26).

Eight double-sided simple combs with flat slender cross-sections were found at La Grava [48.08/535–536]. The teeth were sawn obliquely, the coarse teeth being between 1mm and 3mm apart. Some of the combs had incised lines marking the boundaries of the solid zone and providing a guide for the depth at which the teeth were to be sawn. All are thought to be 16th to 18th century in date and were recovered from deposits of phase 6.1 to Period 7, the majority from the environs of S16.

Single-sided simple combs, Dunlevy's Class K (1972, 24–26), were a development of the 12th- or 13th-century double-sided simple combs, and were in use between the 13th/14th century and the late 18th/19th century. The single example of this form [48.08/537] has a flat, slender cross-section and is therefore of late/post medieval date. Unlike the majority of Class K combs, this example has fine teeth and is likely to have been used for combing hair or wigs (as well as removing nits) as opposed to hair decoration (cf Dunlevy 1972, 27). As with the majority of double-sided combs, [48.08/537] was also found associated with S16.

48.08/535

Sf 1238 T7 L604 [P6.1 S16]

Double-sided simple bone comb, incomplete, one end missing. Teeth obliquely cut, 11 coarse and 39 fine teeth *in situ*. Lth 41.5mm

48.08/536

Sf 1318 T7 L567 [P7 S16A]

Double-sided simple bone comb, incomplete, one end missing, opposite damaged. Teeth obliquely cut, 13 coarse and 41 fine teeth *in situ*. Lth 43mm

48.08/537

Sf 15 T13 F4/5/6 [P6.2–7 S16A]

Single-sided simple bone comb, incomplete, one end missing. Incised line served as depth indicator for teeth, 22 teeth *in situ*. Lth 31.5mm

Tweezers

The simplest form of tweezers was made by bending a strip of copper alloy in half, the fold forming a loop. Without the presence of a slide or decoration these objects are undatable, having been in use from Roman to post-medieval times. Two examples of this form of tweezer were found at La Grava, neither retaining diagnostic features [48.08/538-539].

48.08/538

Sf 2329 T30 C1 [P6.2-7]

Copper-alloy tweezers, incomplete, one arm missing. End slightly flared, edges bordered with single incised line. Lth 53.5mm

48.08/539

Sf 1505 T13 F1049 [P5.4 S28]

Copper-alloy tweezers(?), flattened. Diagonal file marks on surface. Lth 40mm